



Annual Report

1 July 2011 – 30 June 2012



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HISTORY AND PROFILE

In July 2007 the Local Government Reform Commission concluded its examination of local government area boundaries, classes, names and electoral arrangements. The Commission recommended the amalgamation of Esk Shire and Kilcoy Shire Councils and a new local government, Somerset Regional Council, was formed on 15 March, 2008, comprised of a Mayor and six Councillors.

This regional local government is an hour west of Brisbane and is the fastest growing local government area in southeast Queensland. It has strong agricultural, environmental, heritage and tourism values. It contains important vegetation and forest, areas of high scenic and landscape amenity and significantly, the key water catchments for southeast Queensland.

The Somerset region has an area of 5379 sq km, includes the main townships of Esk, Fernvale, Kilcoy, Lowood and Toogoolawah, and as of June 30, 2010, was home to 22,519 people with a growth rate of 4.2 per cent. Somerset's neighbouring local governments are Lockyer Valley, Ipswich City, Brisbane City, Moreton Bay, Sunshine Coast, Gympie, South Burnett and Toowoomba.

As part of the transitional arrangements a logo was adopted to represent Somerset Regional Council. It is a clean and simple representation of the two dams, with the larger body of water representing Wivenhoe and the smaller body being Somerset. The overall shape of the icon with the water flowing from Somerset to Wivenhoe creates the shape of a clear "S", which uniquely identifies this water graphic to be that of Somerset Regional Council.

The previous Councils of Esk and Kilcoy had adopted floral and faunal emblems. The continued use of these emblems is basically symbolic, given that none of these emblems are reflected in the logo. On 19 December, 2008 Council adopted the following emblems.

Floral:	Weeping bottlebrush (<i>Callistemon viminalis</i>)
	Native frangipani (<i>Hymenosporum flavum</i>)
Faunal:	Red deer (<i>Cervus elaphus</i>)

Deer were first introduced into Queensland in September 1873 when two stags and four hinds were released at Scrub Creek, Cressbrook Station. These deer were from Windsor Great Park and were a gift from Queen Victoria to the Acclimatisation Society of Queensland. Today, the descendants of the original release are well entrenched in the ranges of the Brisbane and Mary Valleys and it is estimated that large numbers exist in the region.

Somerset Regional Council covers the largest land area of all southeast Queensland councils and currently has the smallest rate base. In spite of the challenges, the region continues to develop in an economically, environmentally and socially sustainable manner and will continue to attract new residents because of the community, lifestyle and amenity on offer.

MAYOR'S REPORT

It is with pleasure that I present the Annual Report for Somerset Regional Council for the period 1 July 2011 to 30 June 2012.

This year much of Council's work concentrated on moving forward after the January 2011 floods. It was Council's primary objective to rebuild vital infrastructure as quickly as possible while ensuring residents continued to have access to primary care and services.

Much of the flood repair work on roads, bridges and causeways was completed during the past financial year. It has been a long road to recovery but Council is committed to ensuring all flood recovery projects are completed by the end of the 2012/13 financial year. Council was able to complete the majority of its flood recovery projects through funding provided by the government's Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Fund.

This financial year also saw the start of several community flood recovery projects. It has been wonderful to see our residents get involved in these vital projects. These community orientated art projects help build resilience, patience and perseverance within our community.

Council also made significant progress with the multi-million dollar civic centre at Esk. Named the Somerset Civic Centre, the facility was built after the former Lyceum Hall community facility in Esk burnt down in May 2007. The new \$5 million dollar facility was funded by a \$2 million Federal Government grant, insurance money and Council funds.

I am confident this new facility will provide the community with a state-of-the-art precinct like no other in the Somerset region. The centre will have the capacity to seat 800 people in the main auditorium as well as up to 300 standing in the foyer. It is hoped that this facility will attract larger productions to our region and become a well used facility by the region's many and varied community and cultural groups.

In April, Somerset constituents went to the polls and elected new Council representatives. Seven Councillors, myself included, were sworn in at a ceremony in May to represent the interests of residents living in the Somerset region. Four new faces joined the Council team. I have no doubt that over the next four years, Councillors will continue to represent the region as best they can while acting in the best interests of our community.

I am confident after the many successes and achievements we accomplished during this financial year that next year will be even brighter.

Cr Graeme Lehmann
Mayor
Somerset Regional Council

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

Council has made significant progress during the past 12 months to reconnect a community severely challenged by the impacts of the January 2011 floods.

Repairing the region's road and bridge network and bringing vital infrastructure back up to standard were key considerations of the past year. This is in addition to infrastructure projects that were already scheduled for the 2011/12 financial year. Council has worked very hard across many sectors to reinstate the regions road network.

During the past financial year, Council attracted more than \$35.5 million in government grants to the region. About 75% of these grants were for natural disaster relief and recovery purposes.

The overall level of grants received was pleasing and Council was appreciative for the funding support received particularly in respect of flood restoration. However, Council was disappointed at advice from the Queensland Local Government Grants Commission that the Commission will no longer provide recognition of population dispersion in determining untied grants.

Local governments like Somerset that seek to provide a reasonable level of service across an array of relatively small towns in a wide geographical area suffer disadvantage in trying to provide a reasonable level of service for all residents.

As outlined in a submission to the Commission, these services include the provision of evacuation centre options and other disaster response infrastructure, waste facilities, libraries, swimming pools, sporting and other facilities which often need to be duplicated in locations that are physically distant from one another.

Council will continue to advocate for better representation of rural councils across various sectors well into the future.

I am pleased with the community support forthcoming during what has been a tough 12 months of rebuilding and moving forward in Somerset. I hope to continue this positive relationship well into the future for the benefit of our region.

I thank all Council staff for their efforts during the past 12 months and look forward to another year of hard work and commitment.

Robert Bain
Chief Executive Officer
Somerset Regional Council

ELECTED MEMBERS

Somerset Regional Council has seven elected representatives who are responsible for formulating Council policies, corporate plan and operational plan, and making decisions to achieve the Council's goals.

Somerset Region is undivided for electoral purposes. Each Councillor represents the overall public interest of the whole area. The Mayor and Councillors are elected by all voters within Somerset Region. Elections are conducted every four years with the next to be held in 2016.



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FINANCE HIGHLIGHTS

- Overall expenditure was contained within budget limits
- Somerset Regional Council achieved another favourable audit certificate from the Queensland Audit Office with the certificate received two days after the target date outlined in Council's Operational Plan. The Operational Plan objectives for the year for the finance department were otherwise met in full as were financial objectives in the Long Term Community Plan and Corporate Plan.
- Purchases made by Council to suppliers of goods and services based within the Somerset Regional Council area during the 2011/2012 financial year represented the equivalent of more than 70% of Council's total net rates and charges revenue for the same period. This figure has been based on narrowly defined criteria and excludes, for example any payments made to Council employees, the majority of whom live in the Council area and excludes payments made to suppliers based outside of the Somerset Regional Council area with operations based within the Council area.
- Council attracted around \$6.8 million in contract works income into Somerset Region during the year with 97% of this income received from State government transport entities.
- Council maintained systems to meet the extensive requirements of agencies administering Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements for funding of the restoration of assets following severe flooding and lodged a number of successful claims for funding incorporating significant volumes of supporting documents as evidence.
- Council attracted more than \$35.5 million in government grants into Somerset Region during the year. Around 75% of these grants were for natural disaster relief and recovery purposes.
- While the overall level of grants received was pleasing and Council was very appreciative for the funding support received in respect of flood restoration in particular, Council was disappointed at advice from the Queensland Local Government Grants Commission that the Commission will no longer provide recognition of population dispersion in determining untied grants. Local governments such as Somerset that seek to provide a reasonable level of service across a large array of relatively small towns in a wide geographical area suffer disadvantage in trying to provide a reasonable level of service for all residents. As outlined in a submission to the Commission, these services include the provision of evacuation centre options and other disaster response infrastructure, waste facilities, libraries, swimming pools, sporting and other facilities which often need to be duplicated in locations that are physically distant from one another. The severe flooding of January 2011 highlighted the issue of population dispersion and the Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry recommended that local disaster management groups plan for isolation of communities which is a natural consequence of population dispersion. Somerset is the largest local government by area in south east Queensland and was physically divided into 6 sections as a consequence of the January 2011 floods.

- Council administered the introduction of a new differential rating category for banked development land during the year - believed to be the first of its kind in Queensland - and introduced other new differential rating categories in order to help equitably fund extensive new capital and operating expenditure.
- Council authorised the commencement of 38 sale of lands for overdue rates actions during the 2011/2012 financial year and in all but one case was able to avoid the holding of an auction to recover the relevant rates.
- Residential land sale proceeds for the year were around \$489,000 following the sale of nearly all lots at Council's Haslingden Park Estate in Lowood. This result compared to the 2010/2011 financial year proceeds of \$4.2 million. Net land sales proceeds have been retained by Council in a cash reserve for future strategic purposes which had a balance of \$10.4 million at 30 June 2012.
- Prudent investment practices within the boundaries of Council's investment policy returned interest revenue on cash investments of around \$4.1 million to the community during the reporting period in an environment of declining interest rates with no loss of any principal under investment. The interest revenue was offset by interest costs of around \$0.4 million for the year incurred on a temporary working capital facility related to flood restoration work. The net interest earnings of around \$3.7 million for the year represented the equivalent of 24% of total net rates and charges revenue for the same period.



Pipeliner Park, Esk

CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

SOMERSET CIVIC CENTRE



Below is an extract from the 2011 – 2012 Annual Report of the Department of Regional Australia, Local Government, Arts & Sports (Commonwealth of Australia) viewed via the Department's website < http://www.regional.gov.au/departement/annual_report/2011-12-annual-report.html/featured-projects/chap04_feature01.html> as at 26 November 2012:

The local community of Esk in Queensland will benefit from a new 350-seat civic centre funded under Round One of the RDAF.

The township of Esk, 100 kilometres north-west of Brisbane in south east Queensland, received a \$2 million grant towards construction of the new Somerset Civic Centre, due to be completed in 2012. The centre will be a focal point for the region, hosting concerts, performances and recitals. It will include an auditorium with stage, backstage areas and dressing rooms, together with a multifunction room and associated amenities. Space will also be devoted to disaster coordination activities.

Somerset Regional Council Mayor, Graeme Lehmann, said the centre will be the first cultural and civic centre to be located within the Somerset region. It will allow many new communities and families to participate in cultural activities and will enhance the liveability of the region.

"Somerset Civic Centre will be very much appreciated by the whole community and this announcement follows months of extensive consultation by the council with the community, including local artists and cultural groups," Cr Lehmann said.

During the construction phase, there will be significant local employment opportunities and, once operational, the Somerset Civic Centre will provide employment for one to two full-time employees. It will complement and form part of a network of civic centres across the wider Brisbane hinterland area.

The new centre will be a major piece of cultural infrastructure in the Somerset region, and will fill a void left by the loss to fire of the 101-year-old Lyceum Hall in May 2010. It will also provide a boost to morale for the local area, which suffered heavily in the January 2011 floods.

The project was endorsed by RDA Ipswich and West Moreton, and is aligned with its Regional Roadmap. The RDAF investment of \$2 million leveraged an additional \$2.4 million investment in this major growth area of south east Queensland.

SOMERSET LIBRARIES

This report has been prepared by the Regional Librarian and details Somerset Libraries activities for the period 01 July 2011 – 30 June 2012.

SOMERSET LIBRARIES MISSION

“to provide access to library services which assist in meeting the recreational, information and cultural needs of residents of the region”.

INTRODUCTION

Somerset Libraries are a contemporary and vital library service that comprises four branch libraries in Esk, Kilcoy, Lowood and Toogoolawah. Our customers have access to an online library catalogue and a support network of library professionals to ensure an outstanding level of service, events & activities, and a wide range of quality resources.

2012, the National Year of Reading has provided Somerset Libraries with the opportunity to program and market a diverse range of regular and ‘one off’ events with a National focus. These include activities such as author talks with comedian Mandy Nolan and Masterchef contestant Marion Grasby.

Strategic and operational planning within Somerset Libraries ensures that all actions are in accordance with the following council wide plans and policies;

- Somerset Regional Council Corporate Plan 2009-2014
- Somerset Regional Operational Plan 2011-2012
- Service Level agreement for the Public Library Service provision between Library Board of Queensland and Somerset Regional Council 2011 – 2014.

NATURAL SOMERSET

Relaxed:

Somerset Libraries offer a pleasant, enjoyable and welcoming space. Each branch is well signed with themed sections, offering attractive bookshop style displays with comfortable lounge areas for people to use and access to the internet and e devices such as ipads.

VIBRANT SOMERSET

Healthy:

In order to overcome some of the barriers that prevent local residents from leading a healthier lifestyle, including limited access to facilities and equipment, Somerset Residents can borrow a significant collection of sport, health and fitness resources and equipment through any four of the Somerset Library branches. Along with 183 issues, Somerset Libraries participated in program delivery at the School Holiday Programs and the Rail Trail Fun Run.

Cultural:

Somerset Libraries provide services which meet the recreational, information and cultural needs of the regions residents, and demonstrate the relevance of library services and networks to the people of Somerset through a program of outreach events and activities.

Somerset Library staff attended outreach events throughout 2011/2012 with an increased attendance of 42.29% (Table 2.5)

Visitor and loan figures have declined slightly with a reduction in visitor numbers of -4.57% (Table 1.1) and decline in loan figures of -8.70% (Table 1.6) The decline in loan figures may be explained in part by the fact that libraries are currently facing ever increasing competition from the retail sector. People are increasingly choosing to buy their own books and eBooks are now more popular than ever.

Somerset Libraries currently operate within traditional 9 - 5pm opening hours with no branches open on weekends or in the evenings.

It is important to note however that while core statistics such as loans have declined, programming, outreach and IT training attendance have significantly increased. This trend reflects the fact that the Somerset population are increasingly aware of the diverse activities that libraries have to offer. Somerset Libraries offer more than books; they are a community centre, a place to access the internet, foster lifelong learning and access free events and activities. They are a place to connect and create.

Somerset Libraries continue to defy national and international trends with more people joining our libraries than ever before. Somerset Libraries saw an increase of 9.8% in new library membership applications and of the total resident Somerset population, 48.05% are library members. (Table 1.4)

Onsite information inquiries answered by staff increased by 34.45% (Table 1.5). This statistic reflects that customers come to Somerset Libraries when they cannot independently find the information themselves or when the information they need is unique to our collections.

Reservations and interlibrary loan requests increased by 18.98% and 36.3% respectively (Table 1.7 & 1.8). Reflecting an increased awareness and use of library information services.

PROSPEROUS SOMERSET

Growing:

180 storytime sessions were held onsite reaching an audience of 2581 children and adults across four branch libraries. This reflects a significant increase of 9.18% (Table 2.4). Research consistently shows that motivating children to read is an important factor in student achievement and creating lifelong successful readers. Studies have shown that children who are motivated and spend more time reading do better in school.

Skilled:

Somerset Libraries are increasingly maximising technology to enhance service delivery and customer reach. Attendance of the federally funded Broadband for Seniors scheme has increased by 161.69% with Somerset Library staff consistently guiding Over 50's residents into Broadband for Seniors Training and signposting them to further online training opportunities. (Table 2.2)

Educated:

Through the soon to be launched ReadUp! program, Somerset Libraries will continue to support and promote the role of reading and literacy in children aged eight and under, and their parents and carers. Due to be launched in June 2012, children will have the opportunity through the ReadUp! Program to share reading experiences and broaden their own reading interests in a fun and energising way.

WELL PLANNED SOMERSET

Connected:

In May 2012 Somerset Libraries participated in the 12th annual National Simultaneous Storytime. The program was part of the National Year of Reading which celebrates and promotes the value of reading for very young children and Australian Authors. In 2012, 58 adults and children took part across Somerset Libraries in the simultaneous reading of *The Very Cranky Bear* by Nick Bland.

Progressive:

As our local community and population changes, technology evolves and community expectations grow. Somerset Libraries have responded by purchasing 5 I pads for branch libraries. These are incorporated into regular storytime sessions and are available for use within the library setting. 276 loans of E devices were recorded throughout Somerset Libraries from July 2011 – June 2012. (Table 2.2)

UNITED SOMERSET

Proactive:

In early 2012 Somerset Libraries were successful partners in a funding application to Queensland State Library . Through developing and maintaining partnerships with other organisations to further library goals, Somerset Libraries have proactively obtained a total of \$ 8 895 in funding during the 2011 – 2012 financial year.

Forward Thinking:

In 2011/ 2012 Somerset Libraries continued to strengthen its focus and expertise in reader-centred programs. Highlights of our outreach program include the Ipswich District Literature Festival and Food Tales Author talk. With over 300 adults and children attending, these programs promote enjoyment of reading and library collections and facilitate opportunities to share reading experiences.

Proud to Belong:

The library volunteer program has 8 members who contribute their time, experience, skills and knowledge to the libraries work, and support us through their advocacy of Somerset Libraries.

Engaged:

Somerset Libraries continues to foster community cohesion and involvement through its continued coordination of the Somerset & Lockyer Valley Readers Cup. The Cup challenges children to read widely, work as a team and continue to develop a love of reading. 23 schools took part this year, three more schools than 2011 with over 120 children attending from schools throughout the Somerset and for the first time, Lockyer Valley Region.

SUMMARY OF STATISTICS - JULY 2011 TO JUNE 2012

APPENDIX A

Table 1.1

Visitors	2012/2011	2011/2010	2010/2009
Esk Library	30168	17399	14664
Kilcoy Library	48086	49820	29482
Loowood Library	44143	46903	48639
Toogoolawah Library	5161	5334	4938
Total	97390	102057	83059

Visitor figures
down -4.57 %

Table 1.2

Opening Hours	2012/2011	2011/2010	2010/2009
Esk Library	40	40	40
Kilcoy Library	40	40	25
Loowood Library	40	40	40
Toogoolawah Library	22:30	22:00	22.3
Total	142.3	142.3	127.3

Table 1.3

Total Members	2012/2011	2011/2010	2010/2009
Esk Library	1866		
Kilcoy Library	2955		
Loowood Library	4608		
Toogoolawah Library	969		
Total	10 398	9191	8220

Membership
increased by
13.13%

Table 1.4

New Members	2012/2011	2011/2010	2010/2009
Esk Library	227	177	
Kilcoy Library	366	339	
Loowood Library	531	508	
Toogoolawah Library	108	98	
Total	1232	1122	1383

New member
increase by 9.80%

Table 1.5

Onsite information inquiries	2012/2011	2011/2010	2010/2009
Esk Library	5041	2532	2293
Kilcoy Library	5802	4791	3345
Loowood Library	4370	4305	3837
Toogoolawah Library	2354	1437	927
Total	17567	13065	10402

Enquiries
answered
increased by
+34.45%

Table 1.6

Loans	2012/2011	2011/2010	2010/2009
Esk Library	16587	15444	19813
Kilcoy Library	28651	32270	28491
Lowood Library	27316	33202	31455
Toogoolawah Library	10658	10230	10497
Total	83212	91146	90256

Loans down -8.70
%

Table 1.7

Reservations	2012/2011	2011/2010	2010/2009
Esk Library	4831	2640	4752
Kilcoy Library	4076	3409	3735
Lowood Library	965	2814	2811
Toogoolawah Library	1526	716	585
Total	11398	9579	11883

Reservations
increased +18.98 %

Table 1.8

Interlibrary Loans	2012/2011	2011/2010	2010/2009
Esk Library	160	141	180
Kilcoy Library	476	448	636
Lowood Library	473	301	392
Toogoolawah Library	269	121	164
Total	1378	1011	1372

Interlibrary loans
increased +36.3%

Table 1.9

Stock	2012/2011	2011/2010	2010/2009
Esk Library	6400	5254	5125
Kilcoy Library	8679	8952	8732
Lowood Library	10845	12389	12086
Toogoolawah Library	5410	5838	5695
Total	31334	32433	31638

Table 2.0

Public internet terminals	2012/2011	2011/2010	2010/2009
Esk Library	4.00	4.00	3.00
Kilcoy Library	5.00	5.00	3.00
Lowood Library	5.00	5.00	3.00
Toogoolawah Library	1.00	1.00	1.00

Table 2.1

Computer usage	2012/2011	2011/2010	2010/2009
Esk Library	956	1521	1511
Kilcoy Library	1199	1370	781
Lowood Library	1777	2608	2863
Toogoolawah Library	376	352	350
Total	4308	5851	5505

Table 2.2

Digital Literacy Programs	2012/2011	2011/2010	2010/2009
Esk Library	294	257	121
Kilcoy Library	306	21	0
Lowood Library	172	17	121
Toogoolawah Library	0	0	0
Total	772	295	121

Digital Literacy
Programs
increased
+161.69%

Table 2.3

E Devices (loans)	2012/2011	2011/2010	2010/2009
Esk Library	108		
Kilcoy Library	124		
Lowood Library	22		
Toogoolawah Library	22		
Total	276		

Table 2.4

Family & Early Literacy	2012/2011	2011/2010	2010/2009
Esk Library	578	522	588
Kilcoy Library	651	700	46
Lowood Library	912	657	43
Toogoolawah Library	440	485	48
Total	2581	2364	732

Increased
attendance by
+9.18%

Table 2.5

Outreach	2012/2011	2011/2010	2010/2009
Esk Library	489		
Kilcoy Library	228		
Lowood Library	13		
Toogoolawah Library	6		
Total	1191	837	35

Increased
attendance
+42.29%

SPORT AND RECREATION

ACTIVE & HEALTHY SOMERSET

Throughout the last year, Council has coordinated numerous events, activities and projects aimed at getting Somerset residents more physically active.

Vibrant Somerset

Operate indoor sports facilities

Belgravia Leisure operate the Fernvale Indoor Sports Centre and Kilcoy Sports Centre on behalf of Council. As part of this arrangement they coordinate a wide range of sports, programs and fitness classes to meet the needs of the local community.

Some of the sports/activities offered include basketball, indoor cricket, futsal, netball, Zumba, circuit classes, Spin (i.e. stationary bikes), and more.

Swimming pools maintained in operating condition

Somerset Regional Council's public swimming pools in Lowood, Toogoolawah and Kilcoy are also managed by Belgravia Leisure. Regular reporting mechanisms are in place whereby the pool managers provide information about patron numbers, program attendees, learn to swim participants, and other relevant data.

Increased awareness of sport, recreation and healthy lifestyle issues relevant in the region

While a stand-alone Active & Healthy Somerset newsletter was not produced in the financial year 2011-2012, numerous articles were featured in the Somerset Regional Council quarterly newsletter. In addition to this, details about upcoming events and activities are published on Council's website. Regular email contact was also maintained with an extensive list of sport and recreation stakeholders in the region.

Assessment of the needs of the community for the delivery of sport and recreation

In combination, Council's Senior Sport and Recreation Officer and Sport and Recreation Officer attended many meetings with sporting clubs and community groups during 2011-2012. Attending these meetings served many purposes including establishing valuable relationships with stakeholders working at a grassroots level, developing open lines of communication, and consulting directly with community leaders.

Community participation in physical activity

RAIL TRAIL FUN RUN 2011

A record 893 competitors turned out on a beautiful winter's day to enjoy the 9th annual Rail Trail Fun Run. On Sunday 10 July, runners and walkers of all ages and fitness levels made their way from Fernvale to Lowood at varying paces, but all with a smile on their face.

Glen Yarham was the overall winner with a time of 25 minutes and 10 seconds, while Clare Geraghty claimed the women's category with a 29 minutes and 36 seconds performance.

The perfect weather ensured that many people stayed on to enjoy the array of post-race entertainment in Fernvale, including the buffet breakfast. Also provided were face painters, the Somerset Regional Council Libraries art and craft activities, jumping castle and rock climbing wall.

Somerset Regional Council would like to acknowledge the many event sponsors, particularly Honeywood Fernvale and Lowood-Fernvale Community Bank, together with the many volunteers whose invaluable contribution helped create the best Rail Trail Fun Run yet.

ACTIVE & HEALTHY SCHOOL HOLIDAY PROGRAM

Over 300 children in the Somerset Region attended the Active & Healthy Somerset Multi-Sport School Holiday Program over three days in the September break, which is a record attendance in the 9 years the program has been running. The focus of this event is always on participation and skill development rather than competition.

Held for two days at the Fernvale Indoor Sports Centre and one day at the Kilcoy Sports Centre, the kids had the opportunity to try 18 different activities. Some of the sports/activities provided included fencing, hockey, AFL, Zumba, netball, boxercise, basketball, cheerleading, touch football, adventure activities, golf, gymnastics, rugby league, and hip hop dance.

ACTIVE AGEING PROGRAM

To help raise awareness about the importance of physical activity and a range of other health issues, Somerset Regional Council, in conjunction with Queensland Health and Ipswich 60 & Better, conducted the *Active Ageing* program at the Fernvale Indoor Sports Centre for eight weeks from March – May.

Maintaining an active and healthy lifestyle is important at all stages of life, but particularly in our later years. Beyond retirement age people are often less physically active than ever, which can lead to a host of health issues including osteoporosis, cardiovascular disease and Type II diabetes.

This program consisted of a 2 hour session each week with the first hour featuring a guest presenter speaking about a variety of topics including:

- Nutrition;
- Medication management;
- Strength, balance and fall prevention;
- Diabetes;
- Cardiac health; &
- Positive thinking.

The second half of each session saw the participants take part in a fun fitness session facilitated by sports centre staff. In addition to being highly informative and good for participants, these sessions were a lot of fun and a great social activity.

Somerset Regional Council will host similar programs in the future in various locations across the region.

SOMERSET YOUTH FEST

Held as part of National Youth Week 2012, Somerset Regional Council coordinated a series of youth events across the region in April. Taking place at the Kilcoy, Toogoolawah and Kilcoy skate parks, these events featured skateboard/scooter competitions, guest speakers, BBQ, music and more. These activities were very well received by young people in the area.

In follow up to this trio of events, a regional skateboard/scooter championship was held in Esk during May and proved to be equally as popular as the lead up events. Plans are in place to organise similar activities in 2013.

Develop appropriate management strategies

Council's sport and recreation staff have identified a number of impediments to local residents being physically active, including:

- access to facilities,
- access to equipment,
- affordability,
- lack of knowledge about health and wellbeing,
- lack of awareness about local opportunities for sport and recreation.

Council's range of sport and recreation events and initiatives are strategically aimed at reducing or eliminating as many of these barriers as possible.

More community participation in physical activity

The recommendations of Council's Parkland Strategies and Recreation Framework are being progressively implemented as resources become available. While this has become more challenging with recent cuts to State government funding, consistent efforts are being made to encourage local residents to make use of the many land-based and water-based recreation opportunities available within Somerset Region.

During the previous financial year Somerset Regional Council undertook the following projects drawn from the parkland strategy:

- Upgrade of Kilcoy skate park
- Esk skate park shelter
- Lowood swimming pool master plan project

Multiple use of recreation reserves

Due to the limited facilities available for sport and recreation and the dispersed nature of the major towns within Somerset Region, it is essential that multiple use be encouraged wherever possible. With the appointment of an additional Sport and Recreation Officer in the latter half of 2011, Council is now better able to support the numerous recreation reserve advisory committees across the region and help them manage their facilities in a way that maximises their use by multiple clubs and groups.

More information is made available to clubs to enable them to operate more effectively

The web-based club administration kit made available on Council's website a number of years has become somewhat out-dated. Once again though, the appointment of the new Sport and Recreation Officer has allowed for increased reach in terms of providing assistance to the clubs who need it most. The level of assistance varies from assisting new groups in becoming incorporated clubs through to helping established clubs improve their governance processes.

Grants approved

Council's Sport and Recreation department has not only successfully acquired grants for Council, it has also played a key role in making clubs aware of funding opportunities and then guided them through the application process. Seven clubs across the region were successful in seeking funding through the State government's *Active Inclusion Program* in early 2012. These clubs have progressively rolled out a variety of community events over the course of the year with the goal of raising awareness of their club and boosting their membership numbers.

Sports equipment library developed

ACTIVE & HEALTHY SOMERSET RESOURCE CENTRE

Since 2009 the Active & Healthy Resource Centre has been integrated with Council's library service making it more easily accessible for all Somerset residents. This initiative aims to improve the lifestyles of Somerset residents through increased physical activity, healthier eating and greater awareness of well-being issues. It consists of a significant assortment of sport, health and fitness resources and equipment available for loan. Items include boxing kits, skipping ropes, dumbbells, racquets, goal posts, bats, medicine balls, resistance bands, instructional DVDs, and traditional games and activities.

The past financial year saw 188 items from this collection borrowed by community members. This figure is down on past years and suggests a need for the acquisition of additional equipment and greater promotion of its availability.

TOURISM & PROMOTIONS

TOURISM INDUSTRY SUPPORT

Council continues membership with Brisbane Marketing, the Somerset Regional Tourist Association, Queensland Information Centre Association, Brisbane Valley Heritage Trails, and with Visitor Information Centre accreditation through Tourism Queensland.

The "Country Valleys" alliance continues with Lockyer Valley Regional Council.

Regular networking is maintained with Brisbane, Lockyer Valley, Ipswich, Scenic Rim, and Somerset in the form of bi-monthly meetings under the stewardship of Brisbane Marketing.

The promotions and tourism officer takes an active role networking with counterparts in neighbouring regions, providing advocacy and assisting the local tourism organisation and operators with market advice and applications for grant funding.

To assist small tourism operators practical support has been provided in development of a marketing package incorporating promotion through the regional visitor guide, information centres, on-line business directory, events calendar and web presence.

Council provides a team of five officers involved in promotion, events and visitor information centre services.

PROMOTION AND ADVERTISING

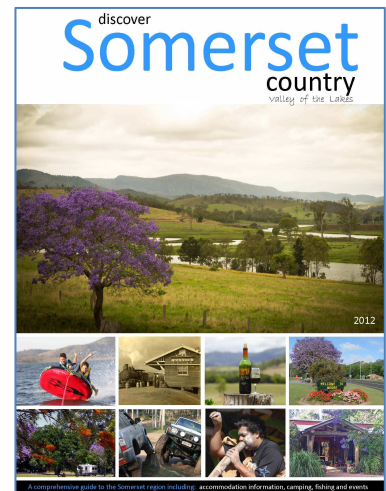
Emphasis has been placed on advertising directly to Brisbane as our primary target market and to caravan and camping markets. Advertising utilizes the Brisbane Visitor Guide, Touring Australia Magazine, Queensland Times, and local papers, and participation at trade exhibitions. Local radio was engaged to increase specific event patronage.

Council has been very successful in achieving free promotion surrounding major events, the photo competition and other promotions. This included radio interviews, editorial and full page print features estimated to be worth many thousands of dollars.

The Council designed and published a new contemporary style Regional Visitor Guide for 2012 printing fifty thousand copies for distribution through Queensland visitor information centres, trade shows, tourism expos, events, direct mailings and local tourism enterprises.

This year the guide has been published on-line to take advantage of the distribution and easy access provided via the internet. The 2012 visitors guide has been well received by consumers, tourism operators and information centres across the state.

Council is also preparing to promote the region jointly through a Lockyer/Somerset alliance at the upcoming Queensland Caravan and Camping Expo scheduled for July 2012. Officers will have the opportunity to field questions and distribute brochure packs promoting the region at this event.



This year Council collaborated with food and wine producers in the region to present a united presence at the Regional Foods Expo weekend in Brisbane. With the assistance of Council the regional operators presented a uniform branding message to over 50,000 visitors and distributed 2000 regional visitor guides.

Initiatives in 2012 saw the promotions and tourism function assisting growth of local product, developing networks, and building an effective and efficient marketing tool for regional operators. The initiative included the regional visitor guide, focus on target markets, focus on visitor interests, development of marketing channels, development of web content, building databases, rationalising print promotion and integration of all aspects into a cohesive marketing package.

Anticipating consumer information trends greater use is being made of the internet and electronic media for marketing and promotion to take advantage of the internet's popularity, distribution and cost benefits.

TOURISM STRATEGY

Council has initiated a study and community engagement process toward development of a regional tourism strategy and destination marketing plan. Once delivered, the strategic document will assist Council in numerous areas of planning and marketing for tourism economic benefit, and will assist the community with business and lifestyle planning.

EVENTS

A calendar of events is produced to assist organisations in the timing, preparation and promotion of regional events. This year the calendar was published on-line to take advantage of the distribution and access benefits afforded by the internet.

Council maintains several advertising banner locations for the promotion of local and regional. This Council opened access to LED signs at Fernvale and Kilcoy for promotion of events and community information.

Council provided planning, promotion and event management for the Rail Trail Fun Run, the Australia Day ceremonies and festivities, and the regional Photographic Competition and presentation night.

Assistance was provided in project management and direct participation in the Brisbane Valley Multicultural Festival, Seniors Week, and the Wood Wine and Art festival.

Events promotion has been extended to the major regional commercial events, Mud Bulls and Music, Equinox Boogie and the Australian Lure Expo.

Councillors frequently officiate at events while council employees participate in public and private capacities providing practical assistance, advice, promotion and connection to grant funding as appropriate.

ESK VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRE

The Visitor Information Centre operates with twenty volunteers seven days a week. It continues to provide excellent customer service to visitors and travellers passing through the Somerset Region.

The meeting rooms at the VIC receive income from room hire and are used by commercial and not-for-profit groups and Council. This year the Great Room at the centre has been promoted as an arts venue and now presents a program of exhibitions and displays that attract visitors and promote the region.

For the reporting period, the Visitor Information Centre catered for over 12,000 visitors with a noticeable increase over the previous flood year. The majority of visitors came from greater Brisbane with an additional 20% from other Queensland areas.

FERNVALE FUTURES COMPLEX

The Fernvale Futures Complex continues to have strong patronage with over 18,000 regional visitors using the facilities.

The meeting rooms are used by a variety of local organisations for workshops, meetings and exhibitions. These meeting rooms are also used by Council and a variety of state government departments for meetings and community consultation.

Thirty-two (32) volunteers provide regional promotion and information services to community and visitors 7 days a week.

The centre played a pivotal role in the community recovery process following the January 2011 flooding and continues to be valued by the residents as an essential community facility and information centre.

REGIONAL ARTS DEVELOPMENT FUND (RADF)

Arts Qld contributed \$8,400 and Council contributed \$3,600 for the financial year and with unexpended funds brought forward from the previous year, there was a total of \$44,303 grants available.

During the year there was a total of twelve funding applications received and all applications were approved for funding by the RADF Committee.

Three applications were relative to developing regional skills, four applications were relative to building community cultural capacity, four applications were relative to cultural tourism and one application was relative to regional partnerships.

Visual Arts, Dance, Music and Festivals were the artform categories that benefited from the funding. Children and young people, as well as older people were the community groups which specifically benefited from the projects.

A total of seventy-eight people were involved with the applications, a benefit of twenty-seven project activities, twenty people employed and a total of thirty-three volunteers assisted over the projects.

QGAP

Council has operated a Queensland Government Agency at its Lowood Office since 2000. The level of activity at this agency continues to grow, especially in the area of business for Queensland Transport.

	1/7/2008 - 30/6/09	1/7/09 - 30/6/10	1/7/10 - 30/6/11	1/7/11 - 30/6/12
Total No. of Transactions	7,605	8,044	8,384	8,711
Total collection value	\$1,319,645.35	\$1,601,710.30	\$1,575,093.87	\$1,450,655.72
Average time per transaction	5.33 minutes	5.53 minutes	4.81 minutes	4.85 minutes

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Council's Information Technology structure consists of a medium size computer network with multiple branch sites throughout the council region including Esk, Lowood & Kilcoy council offices, and numerous libraries, works depots, SES depots, visitor information centres and other remote offices.

The following is noted in accordance with Operational Plan requirements:

PROSPEROUS SOMERSET

Development application tracking system available to users on line

Council's eServices portal (eservices.somerset.qld.gov.au) continues to provide 24/7 information via our website, including development application details, property information including zoning and other planning overlays, mapping, cemetery register enquiries, library catalogue inquiries and online rate payments.

UNITED SOMERSET

Computer network performing effectively.

Ongoing maintenance and upgrading of hardware and software for Council's core computer network as well as numerous remote sites continues in line with Council's budgetary commitments.

RECORDS MANAGEMENT

Council's correspondence is processed by the InfoXpert records management system. Statistics for the past year are listed below:-

	2011 / 2012
Incoming documents	23,240
Internal documents	3,435
Outgoing documents	11,613

Completed Response Time 2011 / 2012	
0 – 7 days	70.00
8 – 14 days	10.85
15 – 21 days	5.75
22 – 28 days	3.40
29 – 60 days	6.04
61 – 90 days	1.94
91 – 180 days	1.81
180+ days	0.21
TOTAL	100.00%

During this period, Council received five applications seeking access to information in the Council's records under the Right to Information Act 2009.

	2011 / 2012
RTI Application	5

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Following are a list of outcomes for activities listed against the Community Development Coordinator role or Community Liaison role in the Council's 2011-2012 Operational Plan.

Vibrant Somerset: An integrated and welcoming place with something for everyone

Active advocacy for improved health services

Activity Required: Carry out appropriate advocacy activities to improve health services in the Region.

- *Somerset Region Mobile Hub:*
 - This initiative has been facilitated by the CDC, and involves a number of health and social agencies doing a regular “circuit” of visits to communities including Moore, Toogoolawah, Esk, Minden and Coominya – to raise residents’ awareness of/increase access to available services.
 - The CDC lead a representation to Federal Minister Simon Crean about the need for funding for a mobile hub service in the Somerset region. Residents have continued to be surveyed on their areas of greatest service need at mobile hub visits to communities. This information will be used to inform further advocacy around these needs.
- *Social Plan:* In order to gain a better understanding of health and other social service needs, the CDC role engaged a reference group and has provided advice and project support to assist in the development of the Somerset Social Plan – which identifies current and emerging health and social needs of the Region.
- The CDC has participated in the Esk Hospital rural reference group and provided feedback on health needs that have been identified by residents and service providers.
- Representations have been made to the Medicare Local Community Advisory Group on the role of transport in accessing health and social services in the Somerset Region. Medicare Locals have a legislated role in health service planning.
- A range of health service initiatives have been supported including the development of a medical and social transport service based in Lowood, the development of a cancer transport service, and Eskapees cancer support group in their development of a brochure on cancer treatment options.
- Advocacy was provided alongside the Somerset Human Social Sub-Group to Queensland Health on the need for services to respond to the mental health needs of residents recovering from the 2011 floods.
- Following the withdrawal of a mental health program in Kilcoy, the role advocated with the agency concerned, and facilitated their participation in the Kilcoy Interagency to help them mobilise more partnerships to deliver their programs with limited resources.
- The CDC has participated in the Kilcoy Wellbeing Group to better understand and respond to primary health needs and service provision in the Kilcoy area.
- The CDC has linked residents with shared concerns about health issues such as the long waiting periods for GPs in Esk – including individual residents and the Somerset Region Residents and Ratepayers Association.

Community has increased opportunities and capacity to participate in the development of effective community service responses

Activity Required: Support the community development initiatives of the Somerset Region Community Support Association

1. Residents have been assisted to identify and address community issues

Activities of the CDC have included continuously linking residents who are interested in working on similar issues with other residents or people who can assist. For example the CDC brought resident groups who have been particularly active since the 2011 together to identify areas of shared concerns/areas for joint action.

2. Volunteer groups have accessed relevant training and Council has gained a better understanding of their needs

A partnership was formed with Volunteering Queensland and over 70 individual volunteers and groups were surveyed to get a better understanding of their goals and challenges. Planning has commenced about ways to bring volunteers together to develop joint strategies to address these challenges.

The CDC role also coordinated a calendar of 6 training sessions for Somerset Region volunteers – the sessions were well attended with good feedback given on the quality and relevance of the training.

3. Effective relationships have formed to increase young people's access to community activities and participation in decisions that affect them

The CDC role worked with a team of Council staff and youth and community leaders to gain funding and coordinate "Somerset Youth Fest" - a series of events across the Region during National Youth Week attended by over 200 people.

Building on the success of this initiative, and new relationships formed, the CDC has been coordinating ongoing discussions between Council, youth and community leaders about establishing ongoing activities in the region's skate parks.

The CDC role coordinated the preparation of a case to Council for the introduction of a youth development role to provide more capacity for this youth engagement work to continue, and at Council's request the development of a Youth Engagement Strategy has commenced.

4. The capacity of seniors, Council, and service providers to collaborate on a local and Regional level has been sustained

The CDC role initiated Seniors Week activities four years ago, and has continued to support the development of the capacity of the Seniors Week committee – including Council staff, service providers, and seniors – to plan and deliver these activities. The outcomes of this capacity development are evident – the strong leadership being shown by Council staff and seniors groups in creating a range of highly participatory events and lead up activities for Seniors Week has allowed the CDC role to gradually step back from their lead role each year.

5. Strategies to increase access to services have been developed

The Somerset Region Mobile hub has been a significant activity in this area (see Output 19 above). The CDC role has continued to work with two interagency networks to maintain a range of initiatives to increase access to services, including coordination of services via network meetings, online service directories and newspaper columns. The CDC role has continued to provide support for the centres that play a crucial role in bringing services to communities – such as the Lowood Neighbourhood Family Hub, Our House and Fernvale Futures.

The CDC role has supported the Kilcoy community to promote community and social services in the area via a community notice board.

6. Greater community preparedness for disaster, and support for community recovery efforts

The CDC role was central in coordinating the social service response to the 2011 floods prior to October 2011 when the CDO (Flood Recovery) position commenced. The role also helped engage other Council staff and community groups to successfully form five disaster community support groups across the Region.

7. Residents, volunteer groups, and agencies are better resourced

The CDC role provided information and referrals to residents and service providers around a range of issues, as well as advice and support to community groups in developing their projects and gaining funding – including the Somerset Community Men's Shed, Youth Week and Seniors Week activities.

8. People have been brought together to address concerns about transport, and access has increased in some areas.

In addition to supporting the efforts of residents developing new transport services (Output 19 above), the CDC has updated the Somerset Transport Options fridge magnet and facilitated a group of residents and service providers coming together to address the difficulty that Toogoolawah young people have accessing transport to enable them to participate in education and recreational activities.

9. Residents have been assisted to identify and address community issues

The CDC role ensures that links are made between residents who wish to work collaboratively on similar issues. Existing residents groups have also benefited from the CDC assisting leaders to jointly address issues that go beyond the local level.

The CDC has encouraged Somerset residents to have input into the development of the Somerset Social Plan and continues to advocate around community needs and service gaps in the region.

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Dedicated professionals of the Planning and Development Department are actively engaged on a daily basis in a range of activities that maintain and enhance the well being of the communities of the Somerset Region. These activities centre on approving, coordinating, monitoring or regulating the built form, maintaining community health standards, ensuring there are no adverse effects on the local environment and the requirements of Council's local laws are met.

NATURAL SOMERSET

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH (PEST MANAGEMENT)

The Pest Management team is responsible for the control of declared pest plants and animals on Council controlled land in accordance with the Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management) Act 2002 and also ensuring that landholders comply with their obligations under the Act. Council's Pest Management Officers were active during the year in the areas of pest plant and animal management. A summary of activities is detailed below:

Pest Animals

Council saw a 68% increase in the uptake of baits for the wild dog baiting program last financial year, with a total of 4788 baits injected with 1080 being distributed to regional landholders. There was also a 106% increase in the number of wild dog scalps presented to pest management officers for collection of the \$25 bounty at a cost of \$3000 to Council.

Pest Management Officers have also been active in eradication of rabbits in the region during the year, destroying rabbit harbour on roads and reserves, and assisting landholders with rabbit control private land.

Pest Management Officers have also been assisting Seqwater in the eradication of a significant infestation of feral pigs located on an island in Wivenhoe Dam as part of an aerial survey conducted of the Wivenhoe Dam and parts of the Brisbane River.

Pest Plants

Pest Management Officers issued a total of 111 pest control notices and 8 enter and clear notices to landholders during the year. A total of 144,447 litres of herbicide was applied on Council roads and reserves as compared to 82,682 litres in the 2010/2011 financial year. This significant increase in weed control was assisted by the employment of 2 spray officers for a period of 6 months to coincide with the peak growing period during the spring and summer months.

Somerset Regional Council also received positive feedback from the Department of Transport and Main Roads in relation to the delivery of the RMPC Element 5 funding for the treatment of roadside pest plants. In excess of \$59,000 was expended during the year under this funding.

In May this year Council Pest Management staff worked collaboratively with officers from Seqwater in the aerial survey of the Wivenhoe Dam and parts of the Brisbane River with the aim of identifying and mapping declared pest plants and animals. The survey was a great success with the identification of three isolated dams that in times of large rain events would re-infest Wivenhoe Dam with *Salvinia*, *Hymenacne*, *Water Hyacinth* and *Water Lettuce*. The survey also indentified 200 other sightings of declared plants and animals, as well as chemical drums and other waste washed into the dam during the flood.



Class 1 declared plant Honey Locust which are yellow in color



An infestation of class 2 declared pest *Hymenacne* in a dam

Chemical Subsidy Program

Council has a subsidised herbicide program in place to provide support to landholders managing weed infestations on the condition that they have a property pest plan in place. The subsidy provides the landholder up to one third of the herbicide cost for the control of Mother of Millions, Giant Rats Tail Grass, Parthenium and Annual Ragweed. Council expended in excess of \$7,770 in chemical subsidies to a total of 13 landholder who took advantage of the program.

Public Education

Council continues to provide pest education and awareness programs in conjunction with Biosecurity Queensland, to increase the awareness and the education of all stakeholders.

A summary of these activities included:

- Officers attended 4 local shows and 2 field days providing displays, fact sheets and lectures on declared pests found in our region and guidance in managing these pests;
- Participation in weed buster week;
- Provision of advice and general information to landholders and the general public;
- Provision of 'pest facts' sheets at Council office buildings and through Council's website.

Local Government Area Pest Management Plan

Council has a requirement under the *Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management Act) 2002* to implement and maintain a Local Government Area Pest Management Plan for declared pest plants and animals. Council has commenced this process by the review of the previous Esk and Kilcoy Shire Council plans and the forming of a Pest Management Working Group consisting of key stakeholders. The draft Pest Management Plan has gone through a public consultation process and Council has now approved that the draft to be submitted to the State Government for Ministerial Endorsement.

NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Work with Council of Mayors and LGAQ to address forestry, land care, river care and related issues.

Ongoing support of natural resource management issues across region. Strong partnerships and collaboration with SEQ Catchments, SEQ Water, Healthy Waterways, local land care and allied groups and organizations. Examples of collaborations over the last 12 months include:

- Kilcoy Green Army Project
- Lowood Green Army Project
- Survey of Brisbane River Flood Debris
- Mid Brisbane River Reach Review Steering Committee
- Toogoolawah Green Army Project

Undertook a review of the former Esk Natural Resource Management Plan to update priorities and ensure the plan remains relevant to current pressures.

Encourage the planting of appropriate trees in urban and rural areas.

Advice has been provided to many landholders and community groups regarding the planting and retention of trees across the region. Significant achievements over the last 12 months include:

- Distribution of free trees to all schools
- Enhanced free tree scheme which will see greater numbers of trees for people that can plant them
- Successfully ran a competition to nominate the biggest tree in Somerset
- Planting over three thousand native trees, shrubs and sedges through coordination and sponsorship of green army projects
- Supported 70 participants in the region that are involved in the Land for Wildlife program through, organization of workshops, inspections, distribution of handbooks and information.

Provided advice to community and assisted in conservation practices associated with local wildlife, including:

- Integration of koala food trees in plantings where possible
- Reviewed communication scripting associated with all wildlife issues received by Council
- Supported local researchers studying koala within region
- Promotion of new requirements regarding koala listing as a vulnerable species.

Pursue funding to implement remediation works.

Secured an additional \$335,000 from Qld Reconstruction Authority through SEQ Catchments to enable environmental flood recovery in Lockyer Catchment. The money was utilized to undertake the following within Somerset :

Project	Cost	No of properties affected / km targeted	Amount of debris removed
Debris survey and removal along Lockyer Creek	113K	180 properties over approx 39km	>10,000kg
Debris removal and aerial debris removal along Brisbane River	74K	90 properties over approx 37km	>14,000kg
Debris removal along Ferny Gully	42K	12 properties over 7.6km	52m ³
Devolved Grants to local landholders	100K	20 properties	NA

The above includes funds that will be returned to the local community by way of 20 x \$5000 grants to Somerset landholders undertaking their own flood recovery initiatives along local waterways.

Also secured additional (Greenworks) Powerlink funding for NRM project in Mt Tarampa area.

VIBRANT SOMERSET

PLANNING AND BUILDING

Council's parkland and recreation strategies continue to be progressively implemented as part of the development assessment and delivery process.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

Inspection Programs

Council's Environmental Health Officers were active during the year delivering inspection programs for Food Premises, Dangerous Goods Storage Facilities, Environmentally Relevant Activities and Poultry Farms all of which are funded via a special charge levied on properties where the applicable businesses are operated. Details of those inspection programs are listed below.

Licensed Food Premises

The annual inspection and licensing programme of food businesses in the region was delivered during the year to check compliance with the *Food Act 2006* and the Food Safety Standards. A total of 107 fixed food businesses, 9 domestic water carriers, 8 mobile food businesses and 10 temporary food businesses were licensed during the year. Officers also attended local shows, festivals and events held throughout the region inspecting mobile, temporary and not for profit food businesses to monitor issues relating to food safety. Food businesses inspected were generally found to be in compliance with the Food Safety Standards.

Council was successful in securing funding from the Queensland Disaster Recovery Program to supply retail businesses in the Somerset Region with access to free or subsidised food safety supervisor training to meeting their requirements under the *Food Act 2006*. The training was delivered by a registered training organization in October and November last year and was very well received by businesses with over 50 participants taking part in the training Course.

I'm ALERT Food Safety Training

In June 2012 Council subscribed to the I'm ALERT food safety training package which offers food businesses, community groups, schools and the general public access to free online interactive food safety training. Just go to www.somerset.imalert.com.au or follow the links on Council's website.

The training assists food businesses in meeting the skills and knowledge requirements for staff under the Food Safety Standards. The program has been well utilised with over 100 registered users of the site since it went live.

Dangerous Goods Storages

Council is responsible for the administration and enforcement of Part 4 of the *Dangerous Goods Safety Management Regulation 2001* dealing with the storage and handling of flammable and combustible liquids.

As at 30 June 2011, there were 27 operators licensed to store and handle these types of dangerous goods throughout the region. Council officers conducted annual inspections of all licensed storages and most were found to be generally in compliance with AS1940-2004.

The *Dangerous Goods Safety Management Act 2001* was repealed on the 31st of December 2011 by the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* which transferred the responsibility for regulating dangerous goods and major hazardous facilities to Workplace Health and Safety Queensland.

Environmentally Relevant Activities

Council has been devolved responsibility for fifteen Environmentally Relevant Activities (ERAs) under the Environmental Protection Act 1994 and Environmental Protection Regulation 2008. Council conducts an annual inspection program to ensure ERAs are operated in accordance with environmental conditions and generally in compliance with the Environmental Protection Act 1994. The breakdown of environmentally relevant activities operated in the region is as follows:

ERA TYPE	NO. OF LICENCES
ERA 4 Poultry Farming	8
ERA 6 Asphalt Manufacture	0
ERA 8 Chemical Storage	12
ERA 12 Plastic Manufacture	0
ERA 17 Abrasive Blasting	1
ERA 18 Boilermaking/ Engineering	3
ERA 19 Metal Forming	2
ERA 20 Metal Recovery	3
ERA 21 Motor Vehicle Workshop	23
ERA 37 Printing	0
ERA 38 Surface Coating	0
ERA 43 Concrete Batching	3
ERA 61 Waste Incineration	0
TOTAL	55

Mosquito Management

Council Environmental Health Officers in conjunction with officers from Queensland Health conducted mosquito surveys throughout the Somerset Region in December 2011. The purpose of the survey was to:

- Determine the presence/absence of *Ae. aegypti* (and *Ae. albopictus*) in Somerset Regional Council area;
- Evaluate the risk of *Ae. aegypti* or *Ae. albopictus* establishing in the region, based on prevalence of containers available for mosquito breeding sites;
- Determine the presence of other mosquito species that act as vectors for diseases like Barmah forest virus (BFV) and Ross river virus (RRV);

- Train Somerset Regional Council staff on the methodology for conducting container breeding surveys and the use of portable data entry devices;
- Update the *Ae. aegypti* distribution map of Queensland.

A total of 172 residences were audited during the survey, and most importantly no *Aedes aegypti* were detected. A full report from the survey was compiled by Queensland Health and will be presented to Council in July 2012.



Pictured on the left are Cadet Environmental Health Officers Whitney Burgess and Peta Morton along with officers from Queensland Health

Local Government Toolbox

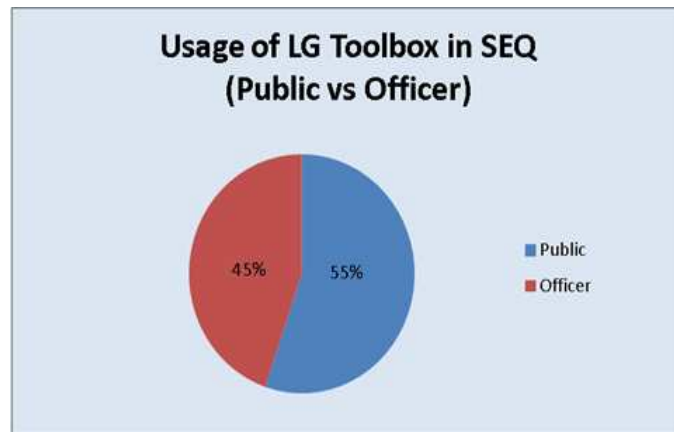
What is Local Government Toolbox?

Local Government Toolbox (LGToolbox) is a web-based knowledge management system that provides council environmental health professionals, customer service officers and the community with access to a range of technical and customer related information pertaining to environmental health issues managed by local government. The use of the Toolbox enables resource sharing and consistency in information and application of environmental health requirements across participating councils and consequently the delivery of quality community services.

LGToolbox provides Somerset business operators information on how to comply, how to apply, and also provides tools and resources such as fact sheets, guidelines, self assessment checklist, staff training resources, sample plans and links to relevant legislation. Council pays an annual contribution towards the maintenance and development of the LGToolbox and has a senior officer who sits on the LGToolbox Environmental Health Steering Committee.

Somerset Usage

Figures obtained for the last 12 months for the Somerset Regional Council's public vs officer view of the LGToolbox shows 1,016 public view hits and 643 officer view hits which is a higher than average public usage(please refer to the charts below). This is a positive indication that the general public and business operators are taking advantage of the benefits that the Local Government Toolbox has to offer.



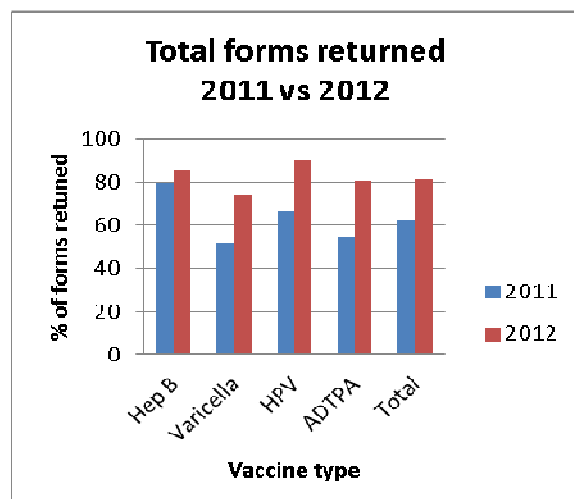
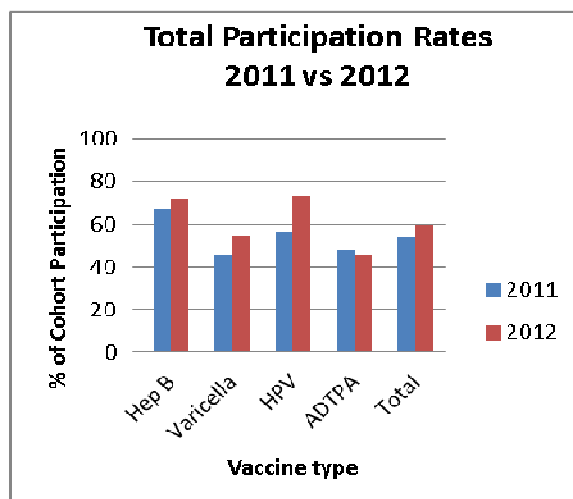
Immunisation

School Based Immunisation

In October 2011 Council signed a one year extension to the service agreement with the State of Queensland to deliver an Adolescent School Based Vaccination Program in the region. This program attracts conditional funding of more than \$14,000 per annum.

Council conducted six school-based vaccination clinics during the year at Lowood and Toogoolawah High Schools. Vaccines offered were for Hepatitis B (H-B-VAXII) and Chicken Pox (Varilrix) for year 8's; a combined Diphtheria, Tetanus and Whooping Cough (Pertussis) booster (boostrix) for year 10's; and Human Papilloma Virus (HPV-Gardasil) for year 8 girls.

Council has been working closely with schools and Queensland Health to increase participation rates and it is pleasing to note an increase in the percentage of student form return rates and also the percentage of total participation rates in the program (please refer to the tables below).



Staff Immunisation Program

Council again offered all employees a seasonal flu vaccination during the year with 95 employees taking advantage of the offer.

Water Quality Monitoring

Public Swimming Pools

Environmental Health Officers collected monthly samples from public swimming pools during the swimming season at Lowood, Esk, Toogoolawah and Kilcoy to monitor for compliance with Queensland Health guidelines.

Private Supplies

Environmental Health Officers provided residents with advice on drinking water quality in accordance with Queensland Health guidelines, and collected 19 samples for submission and analysis against the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines.

Healthy Waterways

Council Environmental Health Officers assisted SEQ Catchments during the year in monitoring local creeks and the Brisbane River for physical and chemical characteristics.. In total nine sites are regularly monitored including sites on Northbrook Creek, Sandy Creek, Reedy Creek, Cressbrook Creek, Ivory Creek, Maronghi Creek, Emu Creek, Apple Tree Creek and the Brisbane River.

SEQ Healthy Waterways in conjunction with Queensland Health, member Councils (Somerset Regional Council has signed up as a member) and other member organisations are currently working on a project dealing with public health risk associated with recreational waters.

This project aims to achieve the organizational requirements of investing partners and has a number of purposes, namely:

- assess and report to the public the safety of primary and secondary contact recreational use in waterways of SEQ;
- develop a readily accessible, consistent region wide reporting and advisory service for the public on waterway safety;
- develop forecasting tools that can identify risk and non risk conditions and locations in SEQ waters which will compliment the in-water sampling tasks;
- track issues associated with public health risks in SEQ waterways and work with various authorities to devise management solutions;
- regularly share information between organisations to ensure the region is better prepared to manage occasions of multi-jurisdictional high public health risks through proactive responses;
- initiate ongoing community awareness activities to build a more informed community on the risks to recreational use of waterways and the safe practices they can pursue.

NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Inform Council and the community about elements of regional, state and national plans and strategies which are relevant to the Somerset Region.

The listing of the koala as a vulnerable species in federal legislation has precipitated a comprehensive review of the preservation and management of this iconic species within Somerset Region.

REGULATORY SERVICES

The Regulatory Services team comprises three Regulatory Services Officers and one Local Laws Officer. The team is responsible for the administration of Council's Local Laws with a particular emphasis on Animal Management, Nuisance complaints, Overgrown allotments, Abandoned Vehicles and Litter/Illegal dumping. The responsibilities also include the daily management of the Small Animal Shelter and the Large Animal Compound.

The Officers work a 24/7 on call roster with one officer allocated to manage after hours/weekends and public holidays emergency service.

Education

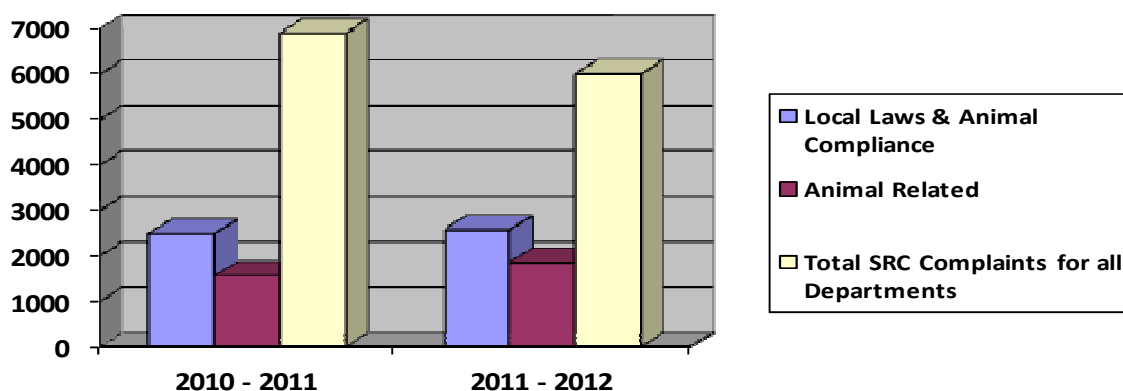
During the reporting period we once again hosted school and adult trainees with very positive feedback being received from trainees who completed the course.

As part of the ongoing public education process in responsible pet ownership a range of Fact Sheets are made available at all the Council offices throughout the Region and these were complimented by regular articles in the Somerset Council Resident Newsletter and local newspapers and Council's Animal Website. The educational material included;

- Facts Sheets on Barking Dogs
- Cats wandering
- Dangerous Dogs
- Benefits of Cat/dog desexing
- Fencing animals large and small
- Micro chipping
- Litter Laws
- The benefits of animal registration
- Choosing the right animal for your family.

Customer Service Requests

A total of 2576 complaints/requests were received for the period July 2011 to June 2012 a 3.5% increase on the prior reporting period. The team travelled over 197,000 Kilometres attending to these complaints/requests. The majority was dealt with within acceptable time frames and suitable outcomes were mostly achieved.



The table below shows the individual breakdown of complaints and duties

CATEGORY	2011-2012
Animal Attack - Animal	76
Animal Attack - Person	64
Animal Trap Hire	65
Barking Dogs	95
Dogs Wandering at Large	150
Nuisance	35
Visual Pollution	28
Litter/ Illegal Dumping	36
Livestock Wandering at Large	127
Miscellaneous Animal Issues	37
Miscellaneous Dog Issues	129
Overgrown Allotments	212
Request – Impound Animals	347
Request – Impound Vehicles	44
Illegal Camping	12
Infringement Notices Issued	89
Kennel Inspections	54
Local Laws - Searches	291
Local Law – Investigations - Misc	59
After Hours - Callout - Stock	105
After Hours – Callout - Dogs	27
Compliance - Inspections	494
TOTAL	2576

After Hours Service

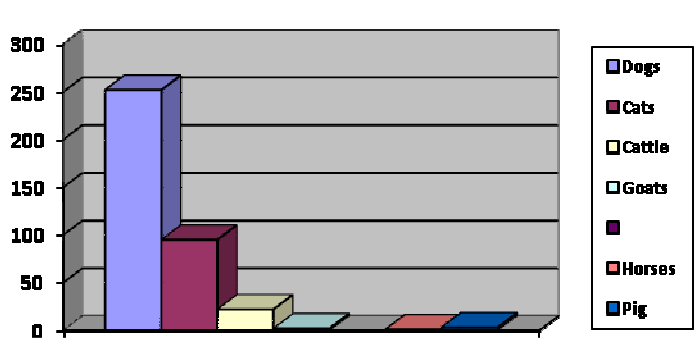
An after hour's service is provided by Council to the public in respect to animal control and is operational 365 days a year - 24 hours a day. Members of the public can access the after hour's service by contacting the Council Call Centre. Officers were called to assist in road accidents; dog attacks and dogs/stock wandering at large being the most prevalent call outs.

Animal Management Centre

The Animal Management Centre also referred to as the pound, houses unregistered animals, strays, and surrendered pets as part of Council's urban animal management program.



A total of 375 animals were impounded during the reporting period. The overall number of animal impoundments decreased by 130 compared to the prior reporting period. The majority of the dogs/cats impounded were not claimed by the owners and most of the large animals were sold off at Council auctions with the proceeds going some way to paying for feed, contractors and transports costs.

ANIMAL	2011-2012
	
Dogs	252
Cats	95
Cattle	22
Goats	2
Horses	1
Pigs	3

Dog / Cat Registration

The registration period for 2011/2012 shows a small decrease on dogs being registered and a slight increase on cat registration. Even though the figures show a slight decrease in dog registration the numbers don't reflect the true number of dogs due to people avoiding paying dog registration fees. Officers are continually entering properties to find unregistered animals and dealing with owners when compliance action is taken to recover any outstanding fees. With more emphasis being placed on educating people Council is confident this trend will reverse.

The table below shows the registration periods for 1 July 2011 – 30 June 2012:

REGISTRATION PERIOD	2011 -2012
Dogs Registered	4120
Extra Dog Permits	25
Cats Registered	680
TOTAL	4825

Below is a table of Dangerous dogs within the region:

DANGEROUS DOGS	2011-2012
Dogs Registered	4

In the reporting period a total of 140 attacks involving dogs were reported to Council. The majority of dog's involved in the serious attacks were found wandering onto private property and owners being bitten when trying to ward off dogs attacking their own animals. In the majority of cases investigated the animals identified in the attacks were euthanased after the legislative processes had been completed by Officers.

Kennel Inspection Program

Council's Local Laws Officer is responsible for ensuring that the region's approved kennel operators comply with their respective development approvals. The Officer inspected fifty two kennels over the reporting period and established that the majority were in compliance with their conditions of approval and obligations. A number of kennels are also going through an upgrade due to the age of the buildings.

PROSPEROUS SOMERSET

PLANNING & BUILDING

New Planning Scheme

Humphreys Reynolds Perkins town planning consultants were commissioned to prepare the first town planning scheme for the new Somerset Region in October 2010. While substantial progress has been made the draft scheme is not as advanced as initially envisaged. Considerable delays have been experienced due to State & Local Government elections and the associated caretaker protocols, particularly as they relate to finalization of the Queensland Planning provisions. It is now anticipated that the first draft of the new planning scheme will be available for Council's consideration in October 2012.

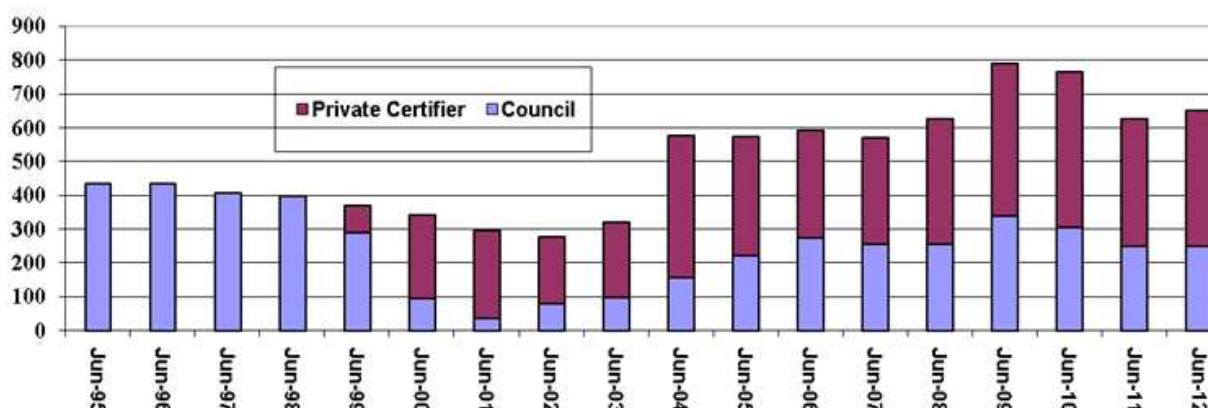
PLANNING SERVICES

The number of development applications was similar to the previous year reflecting the ongoing general downturn in the development industry. A breakdown of development applications received for material change of use, reconfiguring a lot and operational work during the financial year is listed below.

Financial Year 2011-2012	Applications		TOTAL
	Types	Received	
Development Applications			189
	Combined	7	
	Material Change of Use	46	
	Operational Works	24	
	Reconfiguring a Lot	28	
	Building Works Assessable Against a Planning Scheme	43	
	Siting Relaxations	41	
Property Searches			587
Planning Certificates			41
Survey Plan Endorsements			22

BUILDING SERVICES

The total number of building applications approved for the year was 650. This is a little up on last years total of 624. Council's share of the approved building applications remains similar to the previous year at 38%. The number of new house approvals for this year was up on last years 242 to 273 for 2011-12 financial year including 94 in Lowood, 71 in Fernvale, 17 in Esk, 10 in Toogoolawah and 7 in Kilcoy the balance of 74 being spread through the rural landscape.



NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Maintain Council land and assets.

Opportunities to enhance the appearance, function and maintenance of public lands has been embraced as part of all Green Army projects with significant townscape improvements delivered through the Kilcoy and Toogoolawah projects specifically.

UNITED SOMERSET

NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Participate in local and regional forums and strategies.

Attendance and participation in various discussions regarding NRM issues within the region including:

- Sunshine Coast Koala Summit
- SEQ Fire and Biodiversity Consortium
- Mid Brisbane River Review Steering Committee
- Lockyer Valley Flood Recovery Steering Committee

Apply for government funding for labour market programmes.

Funding from Queensland Reconstruction Authority was secured to enable delivery of green army projects which have allowed for delivery of services and activities that would not have been delivered in any other way.

OPERATIONS

The Operations Department is responsible for all service delivery associated with operational activity undertaken by Council. These include Roadwork, Drainage, Waste Management, Cemetery Service, Disaster Management and the State Emergency Service. The following is an account of activities undertaken.

WORKS

With the devastating floods of January 2011 leaving major scars in our road infrastructure, Council has remained focused on restoration of our essential assets. Council was successful in obtaining our first approval from the Queensland Reconstruction Authority (QRA) in June 2011 which enabled Council to get on with the delivery of restoring assets and strengthen our community. Council Officers have now progressively submitted a total of five submissions to the QRA with a Somerset final damage bill estimated at \$95M. Council has engaged the services of four (4) civil construction companies to deliver these restoration works. All four of these companies live within or nearby the region and are employing local talent and resources to deliver the restoration program, hence, injected economic benefit back into the community.

Due to limitations with the rules of the Natural Disaster Recovery & Relief Arrangement (NDRRA), Council Day Labour has only been able to deliver a small component of the flood recovery program. Accordingly, Council Day Labour has been actively constructing capital works projects and maintenance programs across the region. In addition to the capital and maintenance programs, Council's field workforce has delivered over \$4M of flood restoration works on behalf of Department of Transport and Main Roads including:- roadworks on Wivenhoe Somerset and Coominya Connection Road, slip stability works on Esk Kilcoy Road and replacement shelters at the Geoff Fisher bridge on Brisbane Valley Highway.



**Replacement Shade Shelters at
Geoff Fisher Bridge**



Coominya Connection Road

RESTORATION OF ESSENTIAL PUBLIC ASSETS (REPA)

QRA have recognised Council Flood Restoration Program as being 'Advanced' with its flood recovery progress leading the way in Queensland. One project that demonstrates this leadership is the delivery of Hubners Bridge on Sandy Creek Road that was opened to traffic in February 2012. Hubners Bridge was the first complete bridge to be constructed in Queensland that was destroyed in January 2011 floods. Council has successfully lodged and finalised its submission to the QRA with a total of \$95M worth of works now approved. Restoration works have been moving forward in earnest throughout the year with some areas of the region now completely restored. Providing weather conditions allow, Council flood restoration program is on target for completion by May 2013. To further enhance flood recovery projects, Council allowed additional funds this year to complement works in conjunction with flood recovery. This enabled Council to strategically 'value add' to some flood restoration works to provide an improved outcome for Council at minimum cost and providing excellent value for money.



Hubners Bridge

ROADS AND STREETS

As almost every gravel road and a good number of bitumen sealed roads were impacted by flood restoration works, Council has closely monitored and programmed its road and street maintenance works to ensure works are performed efficiently.



Atkinson Dam Road, Atkinsons Dam

Our higher volume roads which are also known as Local Roads of Regional Significance have seen a number of capital improvements across the region. These projects include road pavement strengthening, widening and bitumen surfacing and include Sandy Creek Road, Mary Smokes Creek Road, Gregors Creek Road, Mount Beppo Road, Lowood Minden Road and Atkinson Dam Road.

Several other road upgrades such as pavement improvements, widening and bitumen sealing have been completed on sections of Banks Creek Road in Fernvale, Church Street and Ruisdael Way in Moore, Gipps and Jubilee Streets in Somerset Dam, Smith Lane in Toogoolawah, Prenzlau Road in Prenzlau and Langtons Lane in Esk.



Church Street, Moore

BITUMEN SEALING AND RE-SEALING

During this year, Council reduced the size of its reseal program to enable Council to program its reseal program effectively with the flood restoration program. Many kilometres of Council sealed network was impacted by the flood and were with the QRA for assessment at the time when Council's reseal program would normally be delivered. Accordingly, to ensure Council funds are effectively delivered a majority of the reseal program was put 'on hold' pending the outcome of our flood submission from the QRA. As a result, Council will be delivering a very large reseal program in 2012/13 which will ensure we keep pace with the bitumen reseal program and prolong the life of the sealed road network, whilst ensuring efficient practices.

Council has continued with its bitumen infill programme within the regions towns to improve overall amenity. Streets that were bitumen infilled include Middle and Ipswich Streets in Esk, and Gunyah Street in Toogoolawah.

BRIDGES AND CULVERTS

As a direct result of the floods, Council lost five timber bridges. As mentioned earlier, Hubners Bridge was one of the bridges lost and the new bridge being re-opened in February 2012. Alf Williams Bridge on Gregors Creek Road is in the advanced stages of construction and will open in late 2012. The remainder three bridges are well advanced with design complete, tenders called and works commencing in early 2012.

Council's own Bridge and Concrete Crews have had a very active year and has constructed the replacement bridges of Richards Bridge on Sandy Creek Road and O'Conner's Bridge on Happy Creek Road. Both these bridges were existing timber bridges at the end of their life.

Council day labour crews have also constructed a major reinforced concrete box culvert on Mary Smokes Creek Road at Scrubby Creek which will greatly improve the flood immunity and safety of road users of this Local Road of Regional Significance. 50% of this project was funded by the State Government under Transport Infrastructure Delivery Scheme.

DRAINAGE WORKS

Council's capital works program had a strong focus on drainage improvement works with Fernvale & Moore townships receiving funds to improve stormwater drainage. Council also allocated a further \$500K within its maintenance program to enhance drainage improvements right across the region.

Kerb and channelling projects were completed in Eskdale Street, Toogoolawah and Walter Street in Lowood. Council will continue to have an ongoing focus on drainage with many projects funded in the 2012/13 budget.



Fernvale Drainage



Nardoo Lagoon, Fernvale



Fernvale Drainage

FOOTPATHS AND BIKEWAYS

Concrete footpaths/bikeways were constructed in Walters Street, Lowood and Ipswich Street, Esk. Damaged footpaths and bikeways adjacent to hydraulic structures were also restored as part of the flood recovery restoration program.

TOWN AND VILLAGE FACILITIES AND GRASS CONTROL

Council has continued to deliver its grass cutting programs in a timely manner that is in accordance with Council Policy. Parks and gardens across the region are well catered for with a dedicated team of staff to keep the amenities of the regions town functional and tidy.

Improvements have been carried out in several of Council's recreational facilities. The internal road network within the Kilcoy showground has been upgraded and bitumen sealed to improve better traffic flow and access. The Lowood sports ground received linemarking to the carparking and funds were provided to improve the club house facilities. Electronic community noticeboards have been installed in the townships of Fernvale and Kilcoy to keep the community informed of region wide events.

WASTE DISPOSAL

Council is responsible for the operation of the Esk landfill and the three transfer stations in Coominya, Harlin and Kilcoy. Waste from the Coominya, Harlin and Kilcoy transfer stations is transported to the Esk landfill. Council has a waste voucher programme for its residents with a wheelie bin service whereby they are given two vouchers, each valued at 0.5m3 annually. These vouchers allow residents to dispose of any bulk items, green waste or any other type of domestic waste to the value of these vouchers at any of Council's waste facilities free of charge.

CEMETERIES

Council owns and/or operates nine cemeteries throughout the Region. All the cemeteries are being mowed and cleaned regularly to provide the required level of service. Council has established new beam (lawn) sections in four (4) of its cemeteries within the Region. It now has beam (lawn) sections in the Esk, Fernvale, Lowood, Toogoolawah and Kilcoy cemeteries.



Beam section at the Esk Cemetery

CUSTOMER SERVICE SYSTEM

Somerset Regional Council has received a total of 6268 customer service requests for the period 01 July 2011 through to 30 June 2012.

Month	No. of CSR's Received	Corporate Services	Planning	Operations
July 2011	468	7	192	269
August 2011	449	21	181	247
September 2011	371	11	138	222
October 2011	379	19	153	207
November 2011	749	20	467	262
December 2011	418	26	163	229
January 2012	522	24	175	323
February 2012	679	3	255	421
March 2012	802	26	312	464
April 2012	427	10	154	263
May 2012	592	18	185	389
June 2012	412	17	159	236
TOTAL	6268	202	2534	3532

DISASTER MANAGEMENT

2011/12 was a busy year for Disaster Management in the Somerset region. As part of council's ongoing commitment towards Disaster Management, a Disaster Management Officer was employed by Council to ensure that systems are put in place ensuring that Council is well prepared should another disaster strike the region.

Throughout the year we saw a change in Councillors with the 2012 election seeing a number of new faces elected. As a result of this change Cr Kirsten Moriarty was announced as the new Deputy Chair to the Local Disaster Management Group (LDMG). Kirsten joins Graeme Lehmann (Chair), Tony Jacobs (Local Disaster Coordinator) and Adam Staunton (Disaster Management Officer) as a member of the disaster management team for Somerset.

WELL PLANNED SOMERSET

IN THE COMMUNITY

During the year Council conducted a number of preparedness workshops throughout the region to ensure residents were well prepared leading up to the storm season. The workshops were held in Fernvale, Esk, Moore and Kilcoy and made possible through the resourcing and technical support of Somerset Regional Council, funding provided under the community development and recovery package (a joint initiative of the Australian and Queensland governments under the natural disaster relief and recovery arrangements) and the support of Energex, the Queensland Fire Service, Emergency Management Queensland, Volunteering Queensland and the SES.

In October, Council produced a 12 page disaster preparation newsletter that was delivered to every household in the Somerset region. This newsletter provided many useful tips on being prepared for a disaster and provided contact information for residents to use in an emergency.

LOCAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT PLAN (LDMP)

Council's Local Disaster Management Plan (LDMP) was updated throughout the year to incorporate changes to the Disaster Management Act. This project was a comprehensive one, and one that was subsequently endorsed and recognised by the Ipswich Disaster District and Emergency Management Queensland. Being a "living" document the LDMP will be updated at least every 12 months to ensure that it is kept current.

The public version of the LDMP can be downloaded from council's website www.somerset.qld.gov.au.

LOCAL DISASTER COORDINATION CENTRES (LDCC)

It was highlighted during the 2011 floods that backup power and access to alternative coordination sites was a priority for Council. As a result funding was sought to fit out its three (3) coordination centres in Esk, Fernvale and Kilcoy. Council was successful in its application, and received \$145,000 from the State and Federal Governments.

This funding allowed council to install generators at each of these sites along with other equipment to be used at each LDCC - for example projectors, laptops and televisions. The equipment gives council the ability to set up an LDCC at short notice, with power and all the necessary equipment required to have a functioning coordination centre.



INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM (IMT)

Council have established an IMT, consisting of 20 key staff, that are being trained in Disaster Management and in particular the running the Somerset Local Disaster Coordination Centre during an event. These officers have been placed in the functional areas of Operations, Logistics, Planning and Administration.

During 2011/2012 IMT staff received training from Emergency Management Queensland (EMQ) in both *Queensland Disaster Management Arrangements (QDMA)* and *Disaster Coordination Centre* training.

GUARDIAN

Council has purchased and installed incident management software. Known as Guardian, and developed by QITPlus, the software is being used by many local authorities to assist in managing the LDCC and as a tool for members of the Incident Management Team (IMT).

The software will allow council to receive requests for assistance and delegate these requests to the appropriate agency. It will help streamline the process and make information readily available so that the IMT can make better decisions more quickly.

IMT Staff has been trained in its use and they will continue to use the software in training and exercise events throughout the normal course of their involvement as a member of the IMT.



FLOOD EARLY WARNING SYSTEM (FEWS)

Through the Natural Disaster Resilience Fund (NDRP) a grant was awarded to Council for the installation of a Flood Early Warning System in the region, focusing on areas downstream of Wivenhoe Dam.

The system comprises of existing river and rain monitoring gauges throughout the region that will send data to FEWS and as a result trigger alerts via SMS, Email and Sirens. It is expected that the final stage of the system will be installed by late December 2012.

SOCIAL MEDIA

The flood commission of inquiry made many recommendations, one of which was that local governments should look to utilise Social Media to assist in disseminating information before, during and after an event. As a result, Council established both Facebook and twitter accounts with the aim to assist in disaster management messaging, but long term it is expected Social Media will become a core component of Council's overall communications strategy.

EARLY WARNING NETWORK

In an effort to alert residents to any potential risks, Council has subscribed to the Early Warning Network (EWN). EWN allows residents to subscribe to the service and receive alerts based on their residential address. EWN attempts to target only those subscribers in the immediate path of a severe weather event. It also has the capability of allowing council to broadcast its own alerts and/or messages. EWN offers SMS, email and landline alerts and is currently in use in a number of our neighbouring councils.



COMMUNITY SUPPORT GROUPS

The establishment of Community Support Groups in the region continues to be a priority. Groups are in place for Fernvale, Lowood, Esk, Toogoolawah and Kilcoy. These groups have undertaken significant amounts of training throughout the year. Red Cross, in particular, have assisted Council in conducting a number of courses throughout the region.

Members of the groups were given the opportunity to be trained in Evacuation Centre Management and the National Registration and Inquiry System (NRIS). Reports received from these members spoke very highly of the training. Council, in conjunction with Red Cross, will continue to offer these courses in the coming year.



Esk / Somerset Dam Community Support Group

RED CROSS AND SOMERSET REGIONAL COUNCIL MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MoU)

Red Cross and Somerset Regional Council have signed a MoU that outlines each party's responsibilities during a disaster. Primarily, Red Cross have committed to assist in the establishment and resourcing of Evacuation Centres in the region.

Red Cross will also be providing training to relevant personnel and have committed to having advisory representation on the Somerset Local Disaster Management Group.

SOMERSET REGION STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE

Members of Council's SES Unit have made a substantial contribution to the local community during the July 2011 / June 2012 period with their voluntary service in training, administration and operational activities, and community support.

GENERAL

The SES unit's volunteer officers (Group Leaders and other executives) have maintained an effective core of committed SES personnel in the region during the past twelve months. The SES Unit is well supported by the Somerset Regional Council, maintaining an effective emergency service for this local government area.

The hours logged by SES volunteers this financial year represent in the order of \$300,00.00 of paid labour as the result of around 60 local volunteer SES Unit members committing their time to numerous training and operational activities.

TRAINING ACTIVITIES

Members and officers have continued to maintain and improve their skills in nationally recognised and accredited fields of leadership, instruction and training assessment as Team Leaders and Workplace Assessors & Instructors.

Basic training elements of Induction, Safety, CPR, and Working as Volunteers have been undertaken by all 4 groups as new recruits have been introduced to the Unit's training programme.

The majority of SES members hold formal qualification as Traffic Controllers and Senior First Aiders through their local SES training.

The Unit's four Group Leaders (Carol Conboy – Lowood, Francine Jones – Kilcoy, Kevin Ruthenberg – Esk, and Neville Finlay – Toogoolawah) and their respective executive officers (administration and training), have conducted regular training activities each Tuesday or Wednesday evening to maintain their members' range of skill levels.

The Unit's training programme is effectively managed by Deputy Controller Matthew Pinder and Group Leader Francine Jones.

The Local Emergency Services Cadet Group Co-ordinator (Rosi Trencher) and the Cadet Group's volunteer officers and leaders have maintained a valuable programme of weekly training evenings during the four school terms for around 20 Emergency Services Cadets – students from local high schools.

OPERATIONAL TASKS

The Somerset Region SES Unit participated in numerous operational activities including:

- Searches for missing persons in Vernor, Deongwar State Forest, Brookfield, Labrador and Spicer's Gap areas
- Flood operations in the Charleville area
- Storm & water damage operations in Clarendon, Minden, Coominya, Atkinson Dam, Mt Tarampa, Fernvale, Lowood, Toogoolawah, Gold Coast, Roma and Caboolture areas
- Traffic control and/or lighting at road crash and other traffic hazard sites in Paddy Gully, Moombra and Toogoolawah areas
- Assistance to wildlife rescuers providing rescue boat on Lake Wivenhoe.

PUBLIC AWARENESS & FUNDRAISING

The Unit's "Vollie Brollie" continues to sell as a fundraiser for the local SES Unit/Groups. Over 400 brollies have been dispatched to various parts of the State (and beyond) providing a practical and eye-catching opportunity to promote the Queensland SES.



Groups have also participated in displays at Under 8's days, and supported school fetes and other local events (as listed below) to "show the flag" for the local SES Unit.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Apart from their operational activities, SES members assisted many organisations (churches, schools and other community groups) with personnel and equipment for crowd / traffic supervision and other purposes at various events throughout the year.

Groups combined to assist with the staging of a number of sporting and community events including the Lifecycle Avanti Cycling Classic in the Lowood area, the annual "Mud, Bulls & Music" and Off Road Expo events in Jimna, the Lowood rodeo, the Brisbane Valley Multi-cultural Festival in Esk, the Wivenhoe Winter Sailing Classic on Lake Wivenhoe, the 2011 Brisbane Valley Rail Trail Fun Run and ANZAC Day services and parades.



The SES Unit continues to enhance community safety by installing and replacing property numbers throughout the rural community, on Council's behalf.

CONCLUSION

The SES groups in Esk, Kilcoy, Lowood & Toogoolawah (with appropriate involvement of the Lowood-based Emergency Services Cadet Group) are acknowledged by other emergency organisations and the community in general as a valuable local resource.

The volunteer members are committed to providing emergency all-weather assistance "around the clock" to residents, travellers, local emergency services and Council in the Somerset region (and beyond, when necessary).

HUMAN RESOURCES

(including reporting requirements outlined in the *Public Sector Ethics Act 1994*)

INTRODUCTION

This report has been prepared by the Human Resource Coordinator and details Somerset Regional Council human resource activities for the period 1 July 2011 – 30 June 2012.

STAFF

Status	Number of employees as at 30 June 2011	Number of employees as at 30 June 2012
Full-Time	155	158
Part-Time	13	12
Temporary	1	3
Casuals	21	16
Supported Wage	1	1
Apprentice	2	2
School-Based Trainee	8	7
TOTAL	201	199

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

New Somerset Regional Council Certified Agreements:

- Somerset Regional Council Officers' Certified Agreement - 2011; and
- Somerset Regional Council Field Staff Certified Agreement – 2011;

Negotiations for new agreements commenced in April 2011 with agreement being reached between employees, relevant Unions and Council in June 2011.

The new agreements were lodged with the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission and were certified on 16 September 2011.

The new agreements shall remain in force until 30 June 2014.

UNITED SOMERSET

The following is noted in accordance with Operational Plan requirements:

Councillors / Staff are familiar with staff members and roles.

New staff members have continued to be introduced to existing staff and Councillors via staff newsletter announcements, personal introduction and formal introduction at Ordinary Council Meetings throughout 2011/2012.

Communication with staff on relevant issues

The staff newsletter, The Inside Story, was produced and distributed with each fortnightly pay slip to all staff throughout the 2011/2012 financial year. This communication tool conveys relevant information to staff including but not limited to - Council Meeting briefs, commencement / termination of employees, advertising of vacant positions, safety updates etc.

Policies and procedures adopted

The continual review and development of standardised human resource policies and procedures has continued during 2011 / 2012 through policy review and/or implementation.

Recruitment of appropriate staff (casual and permanent) as approved by CEO.

Thirty-eight (38) positions were formally recruited during the 2011/2012 financial year (please note: this does not include recruitment of casual employees for short term relief periods).

The annual turnover rate for the 2011 / 2012 financial year was approximately 8% (please note: this figure is not inclusive of casual, school-based trainee and / or temporary personnel).

APPRENTICESHIPS, TRAINEESHIPS, CADETSHIPS AND STUDY ASSISTANCE***Traineeships, apprenticeships and labour market programmes.***

Throughout 2011/2012 Council continued its involvement in the placement of apprentices and trainees under the “First Start” program - Skilling Queenslanders for Work employment initiative.

The end of 2011 saw the completion of two (2) School Based Trainees in the Library and Workshop areas.

At the commencement of the 2012 calendar year Council offered two (2) school-based traineeships in the Administration and Workshop areas. Both positions offered were successfully filled with suitable candidates. As at 30 June 2012 Council employed a total of seven (7) school-based trainees in various work areas.

In addition to this, Council continued the employment of one (1) Apprentice Boilermaker at the Esk Workshop, one (1) Apprentice Mechanic at the Kilcoy Workshop and hosted one (1) full-time Apprentice Mechanic at the Esk Workshop.

Green Army Project – Skilling Queenslanders for Work Program

Council participated in an 18-week Green Army Project commencing in October 2011. This project was a joint initiative between Council and the State Government’s “Skilling Queenslanders for Work Program” and was funded by DEEDI (Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation).

The project aims to give unemployed persons an opportunity to gain skills and training to assist them for future job vacancies. The Somerset Green Army Project employed four (4) full-time participants from the local area in the Parks & Gardens section of Council during the course of the project. All participants gained valuable work experience, skills and formal qualifications in the horticultural area throughout the term of the project.

TRAINING

Performance of all staff members appraised annually / Improved knowledge and training courses completed

Performance appraisals for staff were conducted during 2011/2012 by relevant supervising personnel. From this process, training needs were identified with appropriate education and training courses sourced, promoted and delivered as required.

Staff inducted on commencement of employment

All new employees to Council were provided with formal human resource and safety inductions on commencement of employment during the 2011/ 2012 financial year. The induction process covers all relevant procedures and policies and either an Office Safety Induction or a White Card Construction Induction as required by legislation.

A system of induction processes on specific items of new small and large plant has continued with records of the information transfer added to employee files.

Improved efficiencies due to the ability of employees to rotate between various tasks

Training in the following areas was provided to maintain existing workforce capabilities, to encourage multi-skilling, relief job rotation and to provide Council with the skill base required to meet operational flexibilities skills and meet statutory requirements.

- ❑ In house Take 5 training on various specific workplace topics
- ❑ Apply First Aid Competencies
- ❑ First Aid CPR Updates
- ❑ Bitumen Surface Training
- ❑ Height Safety Training
- ❑ Traffic Management Levels 2, 3 & 4
- ❑ Renewal of Traffic Control Provider competency
- ❑ Traffic control competency and traffic control refresher training
- ❑ Timber Bridge Inspection Certificate
- ❑ Basic Chainsaw competencies
- ❑ Recertification and Refresher Chainsaw competencies
- ❑ Commercial Herbicide Spraying Licences
- ❑ Grader, Loader, Vehicle Loading Crane and Roller competencies
- ❑ Supervisor Training
- ❑ Authorised Persons Local Government Act
- ❑ Qld Ombudsman Complaints Management Training
- ❑ Incident / Disaster Management Training

All Somerset Regional Council personnel completed formal Code of Conduct / Workplace Behaviour training during June 2012 relevant to Policy HR/001 Code of Conduct. The training was delivered by PLS Performance Group in various locations throughout the region. HR/001 Code of Conduct is due for review from 30 June 2012.

Enhanced staff knowledge and career path with Council

Council has continued with the highly successful cadetship arrangements with eight (8) employees in the Promotions & Tourism, Building, Environmental Health, Planning and Engineering departments during 2011 / 2012. These employees continue to undertake formal studies in their relevant fields whilst working full-time at Council. All are at various stages of their cadetships with one (1) on course to complete their formal studies at the end of 2012, and three (3) due to complete during 2013.

Council's Study Assistance Policy has continued to be utilised by various staff members undertaking nationally recognised Certificate, Diploma and University level courses relevant to their current roles.

Personnel have also continued to apply for and attend approved conferences, seminars, workshops and training in a variety of areas relevant to their position and role within Council.

WORKPLACE HEALTH & SAFETY

Procedures established within the Quality Assessment system that are vetted for safety matters.

During 2011/2012 procedures have continued to be reviewed as required with safety issues taken into account.

Compliance with legislation and Local Government Workcare's SAFE PLAN.

With the introduction of new Workplace Health & Safety legislation in 2011, Council has continued addressing workplace health and safety issues using the Local Government WorkCare Safe Plan model as the basis of Council's safety management system through Workplace Health & Safety Committee processes.

A complete review of all current procedures and forms is currently underway to adopt and incorporate the requirements of the new Workplace Health and Safety Act 2011 into daily work and business practice.

The Workplace Health and Safety Policy was reviewed during 2011/2012 to display Council's commitment to the intent of the new legislation.

Council has commenced the upgrade to SAFEPLAN 3 as the model for a safety management system to best address all areas of compliance to the new legislation across the whole of the organisation.

SAFEPLAN3 has been developed as a guide to assist Local Government Workcare scheme members during the development, implementation and/or continual improvement of a Safety Management System.

Council is continually undertaking this process to meet the requirements identified in the new legislation.

INFORMATION DEVELOPMENT & TRANSFER

Specific workplace safety procedures are continually being reviewed and new specific procedures relating to small plant use adopted.

The work assessment form introduced to create safe work method statements required to perform high-risk construction work activities is continually under review and updated to meet changing legislative requirements. Work method statements are being utilised by Council crews as required by legislation. Specific control measures used are documented. A risk assessment has been completed for works using those specific control measures.

Local area driving records for heavy vehicle drivers are in use to meet Fatigue Management legislation.

Articles on Workplace Health and Safety issues are continuing to be placed in the newsletter each fortnight to encourage and inform all workers on change as it occurs and the methods Council will use to address it. Newsletter topics address specific workplace issues as they arise.

COMPLIANCE ISSUES

Checks were conducted on all lifting equipment to ensure safe operation and required repairs were completed. Servicing and maintenance of all fire equipment has been carried out. Specified Electrical equipment was tested as per the interval requirements of the Electrical Safety Act 2002.

TENDER DOCUMENTS / PREFERRED SUPPLIERS

Council conducted tendering processes for supply of materials and services using the Council purchasing policy and procedure that incorporates workplace health and safety criteria. This ensures Contractors employed by Council undertake a safe system of work and are insured and licenced.

STAFF WELLBEING INITIATIVES

The Somerset Regional Council staff wellbeing program, LIFE (Lifestyle Improvement for Employees) promotes a work environment that aims to enhance the quality of life of its employees and fosters a workplace culture where health and wellbeing are highly valued. Council personnel are encouraged to maximise their health and wellbeing through educational opportunities, wellness initiatives / activities and personal development.

The objectives of the program are to:

- Raise awareness within the workplace about issues that impact on health and wellbeing in a positive manner, including the health benefits of mental wellbeing, physical activity and healthy eating to improve or maintain the quality of the performance of employees' duties.

- To actively promote and encourage:
 - the utilisation of work related counselling services through Council's Employee Assistance Program;
 - active participation in a broad range of workplace health and wellbeing initiatives in various locations.
- To equip employees with the knowledge, resources and tools to enable them to make informed choices and take personal responsibility with regard to their own health and wellbeing.

Throughout 2011 / 2012, the LIFE program focused on improving the lifestyles of staff members by providing information about the benefits of a healthy diet and an active lifestyle and also delivering a variety of events and activities.

The LIFE program is structured in a way that allows staff members time to reorganise their lives without placing extra demands on personal time.

LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

COMMUNITY FINANCIAL REPORTS, FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY & FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

Section 111 & 112 of the Local Government (Finance, Plans and Reporting) Regulation 2010

Local Government (Finance, Plans and Reporting) Regulation 2010
Section 103 Preparation of community financial report

This report explains in language that is readily understood by the community, Council's financial position and Council's financial performance.

The report is a State government requirement for all councils in Queensland.

The financial statements and this report were prepared by Geoffrey Smith who is a Chartered Accountant employed by the council. The financial statements were independently audited by a government-appointed auditor, Mr Stewart Douglas of Bentleys Brisbane who is an agent for the Auditor-General of Queensland.

This community financial report has not been subject to audit.

This report is for the financial year ended 30 June 2012.

What was the cash position of the council at June 2012?

All figures are in millions of dollars			
	At 30 June 2012	At 30 June 2011	
Owned by Council or owing to Council			
Cash invested, in cheque accounts and other cash	\$ 68.5	\$ 60.8	million
People who owed rates to Council at 30 June	\$ 1.9	\$ 1.7	million
Other money owing to Council	\$ 3.0	\$ 5.0	million
	<u>\$ 73.4</u>	<u>\$ 67.5</u>	million
Owing by Council			
What Council owed to its suppliers and contractors at 30 June	\$ (4.6)	\$ (5.2)	million
Owing to the Australian Tax Office for GST	\$ (0.7)	\$ -	million
Annual leave, long service leave and other employee entitlements	\$ (3.0)	\$ (2.7)	million
	<u>\$ (8.3)</u>	<u>\$ (7.9)</u>	million
Overall position - net cash assets	<u>\$ 65.1</u>	<u>\$ 59.6</u>	million

What else did Council own in June 2012?

Council owns roads and other assets that are not cash and cannot be sold for cash.

Council also owns land and equipment that is potentially saleable but which may be needed to provide Council services.

Council records these assets and works out a value for them so that it can work out how much money it will need to maintain or replace the assets, it can work out when to maintain and replace the assets, it can determine what to charge for services, for insurance, stocktaking and other purposes, it can comply with legislation and to assess any offers to purchase saleable assets identified as surplus.

Council works out the value of roads and bridges using an estimate of the replacement cost and adjusts this to reflect the age and condition of the assets.

To comply with legislation, the replacement cost has been worked out as the cost of replacing what Council already has with something similar - for example, it assumes that when a timber bridge collapses, it will be replaced with another timber bridge.

Council however, usually builds new bridges using concrete because it is believed that concrete-deck bridges last 45 to 70 years longer than all-timber bridges. They also cost more than timber bridges.

Replacement costs are a guide as to what Council may be required to reinvest in vital community assets in future years.

The replacement costs of the assets and the replacement costs less an allowance for the age and condition of the assets were:

	At 30 June 2012	
Land held for services - estimated replacement cost	\$ 8.8	million
Buildings and other structures - estimated replacement cost	\$ 46.4	million
Plant and equipment - estimated replacement cost	\$ 9.5	million
Bridges - estimated replacement cost	\$ 30.5	million
Underground drainage - estimated replacement cost	\$ 4.9	million
Roads - estimated replacement cost	<u>\$ 232.2</u>	million
	<u>\$ 332.3</u>	million
Land held for services - value left in assets	\$ 8.8	million
Buildings and other structures - value left in assets	\$ 29.4	million
Plant and equipment - value left in assets	\$ 6.4	million
Bridges - value left in assets	\$ 19.5	million
Underground drainage - value left in assets	\$ 4.7	million
Roads - value left in assets	<u>\$ 116.7</u>	million
	<u>\$ 185.5</u>	million
Infrastructure deficit		
Or value in assets that has been "used up"	\$ 146.8	million
Land held for sale	\$ 0.2	million
Amounts spent on incomplete capital works projects	\$ 7.7	million
Value of Council's 0.826% shares in Queensland Urban Utilities	\$ 22.0	million
Loan owing to Council by Queensland Urban Utilities	\$ 13.8	million
Diesel fuel, gravel and other materials not used as at 30 June	\$ 0.8	million
Less: amount required to rehabilitate Council gravel pits	<u>\$ (0.1)</u>	million
Subtotal - other assets not readily convertible to cash	<u>\$ 44.2</u>	million
Total assets not readily convertible to cash	\$ 229.7	million
Net cash assets	<u>\$ 65.1</u>	million
Net worth of the Council	<u>\$ 294.8</u>	million
Infrastructure deficit less net cash assets	\$ 81.7	million

Where will the Council get the money to replace its assets as they wear out?

The State government requires that all Queensland councils consider how they will get the money to replace their assets in order to demonstrate their financial sustainability and requires that councils prepare long term asset management plans and long term financial plans to demonstrate that future residents of the area will not be left with an unfair infrastructure replacement burden.

The deficit between the replacement costs of infrastructure and the value left in the infrastructure was \$146.8 million.

This assumes that existing assets will ultimately be replaced with something similar to what is currently in place. It is not always appropriate to replace existing assets with similar standard. assets to what were built many decades ago.

For example, Council usually does not replace old single lane timber bridges with new single lane timber bridges.

The overall cash position at June 2012 was \$81.7 million less than the \$146.8 million 'like-for-like' asset replacement shortfall.

Council engineers believe that many of the most expensive Council assets will not require replacement for another 20 to 30 years.

Several large timber bridges and other assets may need replacing over the next few years.

Therefore while Council might have a long term asset funding shortfall, there is sufficient time available to allow Council to set strategies in place so that the shortfall can be met over time.

Council has taken steps to ensure that expenditure on replacing assets can be delayed as long as possible. For example, Council has substantially increased road maintenance expenditure.

Cash held in reserve for asset replacement and other purposes was invested at an average of 4.52% during the year.

The net interest returns to the community on this were equivalent to 23.63% of net rate revenue. This represented a significant source of operating revenue for Council.

How did Council perform during the 2011/2012 financial year?

State legislation requires that councils must report their operating surplus ratio each year as one indicator of ongoing financial sustainability.

Somerset's operating surplus ratio for 2011/2012 was calculated as follows:

Revenue (capital and operating)	<u>\$ 70.2</u>	million
Operating revenue - general	\$ 36.8	million
Operating revenue - share of QUU profit	\$ 1.1	million
Operating expenditure including interest	\$ (38.0)	million
Operating surplus/ (deficit)	\$ (0.1)	million
Operating surplus/ (deficit) as a % of operating revenue	0%	Operating surplus ratio

The Department of Local Government in its "financial management (sustainability) return 2012" advised that the target for this ratio was "0% to 10%" so Council's financial performance during the year was consistent with State Government expectations.

What is Council's financial management strategy?

Council is required to report measures of financial sustainability under sections 103 and 112 of the Local Government (Finance, Plans and Reporting) Regulation 2010 and to outline its financial management strategy.

Council's financial management strategy comprises its Budget, 10 year estimates and 10 year financial forecast, investment policy, debt policy, procurement policy, revenue policy, revenue statement and its long-term asset management plan.

In broad terms, the financial management strategy encompasses all the various actions that will result in the forecast measures of financial sustainability detailed below that were adopted by Council at its July 2012 budget meeting.

The Council has adopted a long term community plan following a substantial community engagement process. Council's financial management strategy conforms to the long term community plan.

Council's 10 year financial plan demonstrates its financial sustainability over that time.

Relevant measures of financial sustainability required by legislation

ASSET CONSUMPTION RATIO - written down value of infrastructure assets divided by gross current replacement cost of infrastructure assets (Indicated target previously advised by Queensland Government - between 40% and 80%)

Actual for the financial year ended 30 June 2012	55%
Budget for the financial year ending 30 June 2013	54%
Forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2014	55%
Forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2015	55%
Forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2016	55%
Forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2017	55%
Forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2018	56%
Forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2019	56%
Forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2020	57%

Forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2021	57%
Forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2022	58%
Forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2023	58%

ASSET SUSTAINABILITY RATIO - capital expenditure on the replacement of assets (renewals) divided by depreciation expense (Indicated target previously advised by Queensland Government - greater than 90%)

Actual for the financial year ended 30 June 2012	148%
Budget for the financial year ending 30 June 2013	116%
Forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2014	127%
Forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2015	109%
Forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2016	54%
Forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2017	108%
Forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2018	136%
Forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2019	116%
Forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2020	109%
Forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2021	111%
Forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2022	126%
Forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2023	98%

Comment - significant renewals expenditure for 2012 related to flood restorative works.

INTEREST COVERAGE RATIO - net interest expense on debt service divided by total operating revenue (Indicated target previously advised by Queensland Government - between 0% and 5%)

Actual for the financial year ended 30 June 2012	1%
Budget for the financial year ending 30 June 2013	0%
Forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2014	0%
Forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2015	0%
Forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2016	0%
Forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2017	0%
Forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2018	0%
Forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2019	0%
Forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2020	0%
Forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2021	0%
Forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2022	0%
Forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2023	0%

NET FINANCIAL LIABILITIES RATIO - total liabilities less current assets divided by total operating revenue (Indicated target previously advised by Queensland Government - less than or equal to 60%)

(Shown as "NA" where ratio is less than zero)

Actual for the financial year ended 30 June 2012	NA
Budget for the financial year ending 30 June 2013	NA
Forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2014	NA
Forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2015	NA
Forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2016	NA
Forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2017	NA
Forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2018	NA
Forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2019	NA
Forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2020	NA
Forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2021	NA
Forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2022	NA
Forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2023	NA

**OPERATING SURPLUS RATIO - net operating surplus divided by total operating revenue
(Indicated target previously advised by Queensland Government - between 0% and 10%)**

Actual for the financial year ended 30 June 2012	0%	
Budget for the financial year ending 30 June 2013	-6%	(deficit)
Forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2014	0%	
Forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2015	0%	
Forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2016	0%	
Forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2017	0%	
Forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2018	0%	
Forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2019	0%	
Forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2020	-1%	(deficit)
Forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2021	0%	
Forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2022	0%	
Forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2023	0%	

Comment - short term operating deficits result from flood recovery matters.

WORKING CAPITAL RATIO - current assets divided by current liabilities (Indicated target previously advised by Queensland Government - between 1.00 and 4.00)

Actual for the financial year ended 30 June 2012	11.47
Budget for the financial year ending 30 June 2013	19.56
Forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2014	19.50
Forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2015	19.51
Forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2016	19.52
Forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2017	19.48
Forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2018	19.13
Forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2019	19.14
Forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2020	19.16
Forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2021	19.10
Forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2022	18.98
Forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2023	19.00

Comment - Council accounts for fixed interest term deposits with a maturity date before 30 November as working capital. Council's investment revenues form a significant part of its operating revenue.

FINANCE RELATING TO DISTRIBUTOR – RETAILERS

Section 111A of the Local Government (Finance, Plans and Reporting) Regulation 2010

- 111A (a) the profits of the distributor-retailer distributed to the local government were \$478,298.00
- 111A (b) the tax equivalents paid by the distributor-retailer to the local government under the South-East Queensland Water (Distribution and Retail Restructuring) Act 2009, section 100 were \$348,697.00.
- 111A (c) all other payments made by the distributor-retailer to the local government, or obligations or liabilities owed by the distributor-retailer to the local government, under a financial arrangement entered into between the distributor-retailer and local government totalled \$923,089.56.
- 111A (d) all payments made by the local government to the distributor-retailer, including the purposes of the payments totalled \$1,103,009.93. These payments were for water and sewerage infrastructure contributions and water supply, sewerage services and plumbing services.
- 111A (e) all obligations or liabilities owed by the local government to the distributor-retailer, including the reasons for the obligations or liabilities totalled \$nil.

COUNCILLOR REMUNERATION SCHEDULE – RESOLUTIONS

Section 113(a) of the Local Government (Finance, Plans and Reporting) Regulation 2010

ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING 17 DECEMBER 2010

Decision:

Moved - Cr Hall

Seconded - Cr Pearce

“That Council adopts the remuneration schedule and authorises the payment of remuneration to elected members on and after 1 January 2011 in accordance with the remuneration schedule of the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal and confirms:

- (i) the purpose for which the remuneration is to be paid is to remunerate elected members for their time and effort representing the Somerset community
- (ii) the persons who are entitled to the remuneration are the elected members of Council
- (iii) the amount of remuneration that is to be paid is – for the Mayor, 70% of the reference rate, for the Deputy Mayor, 42.5% of the reference rate and for Councillors, 35% of the reference rate as per the report and the amalgamation loading be applicable on the declining scale as indicated in the remuneration schedule.
- (iv) the amount of remuneration to be paid to Councillors, other than the Mayor and Deputy Mayor does not vary between these Councillors.”

Carried

ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING 16 DECEMBER 2011

Decision:

Moved - Cr Hall

Seconded - Cr Kammholz

“THAT Council adopts the remuneration schedule and authorises the payment of remuneration to elected members on and after 1 January, 2012 in accordance with the remuneration schedule of the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal and confirms:

- (i) the purpose for which the remuneration is to be paid is to remunerate elected members for their time and effort representing the Somerset community
- (ii) the persons who are entitled to the remuneration are the elected members of Council
- (iii) the amount of remuneration that is to be paid is – for the Mayor 80% of the reference rate, for the Deputy Mayor 50% of the reference rate and for Councillors 42.5% of the reference rate as per the report and the amalgamation loading be applicable on the declining scale as indicated in the remuneration schedule
- (iv) the amount of remuneration to be paid to Councillors, other than the Mayor and Deputy Mayor, does not vary between these Councillors.”

Carried

EXPENSES REIMBURSEMENT POLICY AND RESOLUTIONS

Section 113(a) and s114(1)(d) of the Local Government (Finance, Plans and Reporting) Regulation 2010

ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING 23 MARCH 2011

Decision:	Moved - Cr Caddy Seconded - Cr Bechly "THAT Council adopt the amended EX001 Councillors' Reimbursement Policy with effect from 26 March 2011 with amendment to Clause 8.3 (f) to the sum of \$2,400.
 Somerset REGIONAL COUNCIL	
Policy Subject/Title:	COUNCILLORS' REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES POLICY
Policy Number:	EX001
Responsible Officer:	Manager Corporate & Community Services
Legislative or Regulatory Reference:	Local Government (Operations) Regulation 2010, Sections 44 – 47
Related Policies / Procedures:	N/A
Application:	Somerset Regional Council
Authorised by:	Somerset Regional Council
Considered at:	Ordinary Council Meeting 11 March 2009
Authorised on:	Ordinary Council Meeting 11 March 2009
Implemented from:	14 March 2009
Last Reviewed:	N/A
Review History:	N/A
To be Reviewed on:	October 2012

1. OBJECTIVE

The objective of this policy is to authorise the:

- Payment of reasonable expenses incurred, or to be incurred, by Councillors, and
- Provision of facilities to assist Councillors in discharging their duties and responsibilities.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of the policy is to ensure that Councillors, including the Mayor, can receive reimbursement of reasonable expenses and be provided with necessary facilities in performance of their role.

3. SCOPE

This policy applies to the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors. This policy deals with reimbursement of expenses or provision of a facility to Councillors, but does not apply to the conduct of civic functions or the remuneration of Councillors.

It is the responsibility of Council to use its discretion and decide what is required by Councillors in carrying out their civic responsibilities taking into account the role of the Councillor, Council's annual budget and community expectations.

Council must be mindful of the Local Government principles and the legislative requirements of the Act when determining legitimate types of expenses and facilities for Councillors.

4. PRINCIPLES

This policy has been written to be compliant with the Local Government principles set out in the Act. These principles are:

- Transparent and effective processes, and decision-making in the public interest,
- Sustainable development and management of assets and infrastructure, and delivery of effective services,
- Democratic representation, social inclusion and meaningful community engagement,
- Good governance of, and by, local government, and
- Ethical and legal behavior of Councillors and local government employees.

5. BACKGROUND

5.1 Legislation

Division 2 Chapter 5 of the Local Government (Operations) Regulation 2010 requires Council to have an expense reimbursement policy. Such policy is to provide for the following:

- Payment of reasonable expenses incurred, or to be incurred, by Councillors, for discharging their duties and responsibilities as Councillors
- Provision of facilities to the Councillors for that purpose.

Section 45 of the Regulation requires Council to adopt such a policy, by resolution. The policy must be consistent with the local government principles and the financial sustainability criteria under Section 102 of the Act.

Section 46 of the Regulation requires Council to give public notice of the adoption of such a policy. The public notice must be published in a newspaper circulating generally in the local government area and on the local government website.

Section 47 provides that a meeting at which a proposed expense reimbursement policy is discussed cannot be closed to the public.

5.2 Related Policies

See also: Procurement Policy

6. DEFINITIONS

Chief Executive of the Department: The Director-General of the Department of Local Government Sport and Recreation.

Council Business: Activities conducted on behalf of Council where a Councillor is required to undertake certain tasks to satisfy legislative requirements, perform ceremonial activities, or achieve business objectives of the Council. Council business should result in a benefit being achieved either for the local government and/or the local community. This includes:

- Preparing for, attending and participating in Council meetings, committee meetings, workshops, deputations and inspections;
- Attending conferences of local government industry associations or professional bodies (ie LGAQ, UDIA AIOP, etc);
- Attending civic ceremonies and community events such as representing Council at Anzac Day ceremonies or opening a school fete, where they have been formally invited in their capacity as Councillor to undertake the official duty;
- Attending public meetings, annual meetings or presentation dinners where invited as a Councillor;
- Attending meetings of community groups (Scout Associations, Progress Associations, etc) where invited to speak about Council Programs or initiatives.

Attending or participating in a community event, community group, private meetings or inspection with constituents, or being a representative on a board as a community member is not regarded as 'Official Council Business.'

Councillors: Includes the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and other Councillors, unless specifically identified.

Expenses: Expenses are payments reasonably incurred, or to be incurred, in connection with Councillors discharging their duties. The expenses may be either reimbursed to Councillors or paid direct by Council for something that is deemed a necessary cost or charge. Expenses are not included as remuneration.

Facility: Facilities provided to Councillors that are the "tools of trade" and required to enable them to perform their duties with relative ease and at a standard appropriate to fulfill the community expectation for their role.

Reasonable: Councils must make sound judgments and consider what is prudent, responsible and acceptable to the community when determining appropriate levels of facilities and expenditure.

7. PAYMENT OF EXPENSES

Expenses will be paid to a Councillor through administrative processes approved by Council's Chief Executive Officer subject to:

- the limits outlined in this policy;
- Council endorsement by resolution, where required;
- in the case of reimbursement of expenses production of receipts and tax invoices or evidence that such expenses have been paid is required prior to reimbursement; and
- expense reimbursement must be claimed within two (2) months of such expense having been paid by the Councillor and claims for reimbursements outside of this period will not be accepted.

7.2 Expense Categories

(a) Professional Development /Conferences /Workshops /Training

Council will reimburse expenses incurred for:

- attendance at Regional, State or National Local Government associated conferences, subject to attendance approved by Council;
- attendance at Regional meetings and workshops associated with a Councillor's responsibilities;
- mandatory professional development as approved by Council; and
- discretionary professional development deemed essential by Council for the Councillor's role and subject to a limit of \$5000 for each Councillor during their current term of office.

(b) Travel as required to represent Council

Council may reimburse local and, in some cases, interstate and overseas travel expenses (eg flights, car, accommodation, meals and associated registration fees) deemed necessary to achieve the business of Council where:

- a Councillor is an official representative of Council; and
- the activity/event and travel have been endorsed by resolution of Council.

Councillors are to travel via the most direct route, using the most economical and efficient mode of transport.

Council will pay for reasonable expenses incurred for overnight accommodation when a Councillor is required to stay outside the local government's region.

All fines incurred while travelling in either Council or privately owned vehicles when attending to Council business, will be the responsibility of the Councillor incurring the fine. This does not include toll fees.

(c) Travel Bookings

All Councillor travel approved by Council will be booked and paid for by Council.

Economy class is to be used where possible although Council may approve business class in certain circumstances. Airline tickets are not transferable and can only be procured for the Councillor's travel on Council business. They cannot be used to offset other unapproved expenses (eg cost of partner or spouse accompanying the Councillor).

(d) Travel/Transfer Costs

Any travel/transfer expenses associated with Councillors travelling for Council approved business will be reimbursed.

Example: Trains, taxis, buses and ferry fees, toll fees.

Cab charge vouchers may also be used if approved by Council where Councillors are undertaking duties relating to the business of Council. Council will provide reimbursement for parking costs paid by Councillors while attending to official Council business.

(e) Private Vehicle Usage

Councillors' private vehicle usage may be reimbursed at the rate provided in the *Minister for State Development Employment and Industrial Relations Directive No. 6/07* as amended from time to time.

Councillors' private vehicle usage may be reimbursed by Council if the

- travel is for attendance at Council meetings or has been endorsed by resolution of Council;
- claim for reimbursement is substantiated with logbook details; and
- travel claim does not exceed the cost of the same travel using economy flights plus the cost of taxi transfers.

(f) Accommodation

All Councillor accommodation for Council business will be booked and paid for by Council. Council will pay for the most economical deal available. Where possible, the minimum standards for Councillors' accommodation should be three or four star rating.

Where particular accommodation is recommended by conference organisers, Council will take advantage of the package deal that is the most economical and convenient to the event.

Where accommodation is provided outside of the region, Council may pay an additional Incidental Daily Allowance of \$20.00 per day to cover additional incidental costs (phone calls, newspapers, laundry/dry cleaning etc) incurred while Councillors are travelling and staying away from home overnight.

(g) Meals

Councillors are entitled to be reimbursed for the cost of a meal when:

- the Councillor incurs the cost personally; and
- the meal was not provided within the registration costs of the approved activity/event or during an approved flight.

Any meal reimbursements shall not be more than \$40 per meal or more than \$100 per day.

No alcohol will be reimbursed by Council.

(h) Hospitality Expenses

Council may reimburse the Mayor up to \$1000 per annum for hospitality expenses deemed necessary in the conduct of Council business.

8. FACILITIES

8.1 Provision of Facilities

All facilities provided to Councillors remain the property of Council and must be returned to Council when a Councillor's term expires.

8.2 Private use of Council-owned facilities

Based on the principle that *no private benefit is to be gained* the facilities provided to Councillors by local governments are to be used only for council business unless prior approval has been granted by resolution of Council.

The Council resolution authorising private use of Council owned facilities will set out the terms under which the Councillor will reimburse Council for the percentage of private use. This would apply when Councillors have private use of Council owned motor vehicles and/or mobile telecommunication devices.

8.3 Facilities Categories

(a) Administrative tools

Administrative tools should be provided to Councillors as required to assist Councillors in their role. Administrative tools include:

- office space and meeting rooms
- computers
- stationery
- access to photocopiers
- printers
- facsimile machines
- publications
- use of Council landline telephones and internet access in Council offices

Secretarial support may also be provided for Mayors and Councillors.

Council may provide a Councillor with home office equipment including computer, internet access if necessary.

(b) Maintenance costs of Council owned equipment

Council will be responsible for the ongoing maintenance and reasonable wear and tear costs of Council owned equipment that is supplied to Councillors for official business use. This includes the replacement of any facilities which fall under Council's asset replacement program.

(c) Name Badge Safety equipment for Councillors

A local government may provide Councillors with:

- a name badge
- the necessary safety equipment for use on official business, eg safety helmet/boots

(d) Use of Council Vehicles on Council Business

Council will provide the Mayor with a sedan vehicle for use during official Council business including travel to and from home to Council place of business. Councillors may access a Council vehicle for use on official business.

(e) Private Use of Vehicles

Private use of Council owned vehicles is permitted if prior approval has been granted by resolution of Council. Council will, in its resolution authorising private use, set out the terms for the Councillor to reimburse Council for such private use.

The Mayor is authorised to use the Council owned vehicle for private use, subject to the contribution of ten percent (10%) of the variable annualised costs for the vehicle to offset private use (if any).

(f) Telecommunications Needs

Council will pay an annual Communications Allowance in the sum of \$2,400.00 per annum, payable in fortnightly instalments to Councillors to help defray administrative expenses (eg telephone calls, mobile telephone calls, home internet connection, other network connection costs) paid by Councillors personally in association with their role as a Councillor and to generally address the needs of the local community. Council will provide Councillors with laptop computers to assist them in undertaking their role and to ensure timely communication with Councillors.

The amount prescribed in this section shall apply for the financial year, but shall increase by the CPI (based on the all indexes rate, Brisbane for the March quarter) annually thereafter, rounded to the nearest multiple of \$10.

(g) Insurance Cover

A local government will indemnify or insure Councillors in the event of injury sustained while discharging their civic duties. The local government will pay the excess for injury claims made by a Councillor resulting from conducting official Council business.

(h) Fuel Costs

Fuel for a Council owned vehicle used for official Council business, will be provided or paid for by Council.

9. CLAIMS FOR REIMBURSEMENT

All claims for reimbursement of expenses will be made on the approved form and submitted with original receipts to the Chief Executive Officer for approval.

Failure to comply with this policy, falsifying claims or logbooks or the mis-use of facilities may breach the Councillors' Code of Conduct and/or represent an offence under the Criminal Code and may be referred to the Crime and Misconduct Commission.

10. EFFECTIVE FROM

This policy will take effect from the commencement of the fortnight immediately following its adoption by Council. The previous Expenses Reimbursement Policy will cease to have effect at this stage.

11. REPORTING

A report summarising all expenditure in relation to this policy shall be included in Council's Annual Report.

12. REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed within three (3) months of the Council's next quadrennial election.

13. DATE OF RESOLUTION

This policy was approved by the Chief Executive Officer and adopted by Somerset Regional Council at the Ordinary Meeting of 23 March 2011.

Signed:

Date:

“

Carried

ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING 13 JUNE 2012

Decision:	Moved - Cr Zabel	Seconded - Cr Ogg
	“THAT Council adopt the amended EX001 Councillors Reimbursement of Expenses Policy with effect from 2 June, 2012.”	



Somerset
REGIONAL COUNCIL

Policy Subject/Title: **COUNCILLORS' REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES POLICY**

Policy Number: **EX001**

Responsible Officer:	Manager Corporate & Community Services
Legislative or Regulatory Reference:	Local Government (Operations) Regulation 2010, Sections 44 – 47
Related Policies / Procedures:	N/A
Application:	Somerset Regional Council
Authorised by:	Somerset Regional Council
Considered at:	Ordinary Council Meeting 11 March 2009
Authorised on:	Ordinary Council Meeting 11 March 2009
Implemented from:	14 March 2009
Last Reviewed:	N/A
Review History:	N/A
To be Reviewed on:	October 2012

1. OBJECTIVE

The objective of this policy is to authorise the:

- Payment of reasonable expenses incurred, or to be incurred, by Councillors, and
- Provision of facilities to assist Councillors in discharging their duties and responsibilities.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of the policy is to ensure that Councillors, including the Mayor, can receive reimbursement of reasonable expenses and be provided with necessary facilities in performance of their role.

3. SCOPE

This policy applies to the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors. This policy deals with reimbursement of expenses or provision of a facility to Councillors, but does not apply to the conduct of civic functions or the remuneration of Councillors.

It is the responsibility of Council to use its discretion and decide what is required by Councillors in carrying out their civic responsibilities taking into account the role of the Councillor, Council's annual budget and community expectations.

Council must be mindful of the Local Government principles and the legislative requirements of the Act when determining legitimate types of expenses and facilities for Councillors.

4. PRINCIPLES

This policy has been written to be compliant with the Local Government principles set out in the Act. These principles are:

- Transparent and effective processes, and decision-making in the public interest,
- Sustainable development and management of assets and infrastructure, and delivery of effective services,
- Democratic representation, social inclusion and meaningful community engagement,
- Good governance of, and by, local government, and
- Ethical and legal behavior of Councillors and local government employees.

5. BACKGROUND

5.1 Legislation

Division 2 Chapter 5 of the Local Government (Operations) Regulation 2010 requires Council to have an expense reimbursement policy. Such policy is to provide for the following:

- Payment of reasonable expenses incurred, or to be incurred, by Councillors, for discharging their duties and responsibilities as Councillors
- Provision of facilities to the Councillors for that purpose.

Section 45 of the Regulation requires Council to adopt such a policy, by resolution. The policy must be consistent with the local government principles and the financial sustainability criteria under Section 102 of the Act.

Section 46 of the Regulation requires Council to give public notice of the adoption of such a policy. The public notice must be published in a newspaper circulating generally in the local government area and on the local government website.

Section 47 provides that a meeting at which a proposed expense reimbursement policy is discussed cannot be closed to the public.

5.2 Related Policies

See also: Procurement Policy

6. DEFINITIONS

Council Business: Activities conducted on behalf of Council where a Councillor is required to undertake certain tasks to satisfy legislative requirements, perform ceremonial activities, or achieve business objectives of the Council. Council business should result in a benefit being achieved either for the local government and/or the local community. This includes:

- Preparing for, attending and participating in Council meetings, committee meetings, workshops, deputations and inspections;
- Attending conferences of local government industry associations or professional bodies (ie LGAQ, UDIA AIOP, etc);
- Attending civic ceremonies and community events such as representing Council at Anzac Day ceremonies or opening a school fete, where they have been formally invited in their capacity as Councillor to undertake the official duty;
- Attending public meetings, annual meetings or presentation dinners where invited as a Councillor;
- Attending meetings of community groups (Scout Associations, Progress Associations, etc) where invited to speak about Council Programs or initiatives
- Attending meetings concerning development applications where arranged through official Council channels
- Attending meetings / inspections with constituents (residents, ratepayers, community groups, etc where details of the issue are included in Council's Customer Request System.

Attending or participating in a community event, community group or being a representative on a board, as a community member, is not regarded as 'Official Council Business.'

Councillors: Includes the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and other Councillors, unless specifically identified.

Expenses: Expenses are payments reasonably incurred, or to be incurred, in connection with Councillors discharging their duties. The expenses may be either reimbursed to Councillors or paid direct by Council for something that is deemed a necessary cost or charge. Expenses are not included as remuneration.

Facility: Facilities provided to Councillors that are the "tools of trade" and required to enable them to perform their duties with relative ease and at a standard appropriate to fulfill the community expectation for their role.

Reasonable: Councils must make sound judgments and consider what is prudent, responsible and acceptable to the community when determining appropriate levels of facilities and expenditure.

7. PAYMENT OF EXPENSES

Expenses will be paid to a Councillor through administrative processes approved by Council's Chief Executive Officer subject to:

- the limits outlined in this policy;
- the limits outlined in the budget;
- Council endorsement by resolution, where required;
- in the case of reimbursement of expenses production of receipts and tax invoices or evidence that such expenses have been paid is required prior to reimbursement; and
- expense reimbursement must be claimed within two (2) months of such expense having been paid by the Councillor and claims for reimbursements outside of this period will not be accepted.

7.1 Expense Categories

(a) Professional Development /Conferences /Workshops /Training Council will reimburse expenses incurred for:

- attendance at Regional, State or National Local Government associated conferences, subject to attendance approved by Council;
- attendance at Regional meetings and workshops associated with a Councillor's responsibilities;
- mandatory professional development as approved by Council; and
- discretionary professional development deemed essential by Council for the Councillor's role and subject to a limit of \$5000 for each Councillor during their current term of office.

(b) Travel as required to represent Council

Council may reimburse local and, in some cases, interstate and overseas travel expenses (eg flights, car, accommodation, meals and associated registration fees) deemed necessary to achieve the business of Council where:

- a Councillor is an official representative of Council; and
- the activity/event and travel have been endorsed by resolution of Council.

Councillors are to travel via the most direct route, using the most economical and efficient mode of transport.

Council will pay for reasonable expenses incurred for overnight accommodation when a Councillor is required to stay outside the local government's region.

All fines incurred while travelling in either Council or privately owned vehicles when attending to Council business, will be the responsibility of the Councillor incurring the fine. This does not include toll fees.

(c) Travel Bookings

All Councillor travel approved by Council will be booked and paid for by Council.

Economy class is to be used where possible although Council may approve business class in certain circumstances. Airline tickets are not transferable and can only be procured for the Councillor's travel on Council business. They cannot be used to offset other unapproved expenses (eg cost of partner or spouse accompanying the Councillor).

(d) Travel/Transfer Costs

Any travel/transfer expenses associated with Councillors travelling for Council approved business will be reimbursed.

Example: Trains, taxis, buses and ferry fees, toll fees.

Cab charge vouchers may also be used if approved by Council where Councillors are undertaking duties relating to the business of Council. Council will provide reimbursement for parking costs paid by Councillors while attending to official Council business.

(e) Private Vehicle Usage

Councillors' private vehicle usage may be reimbursed by Council if the travel is for the purpose of undertaking Council business. To help defray the administrative costs of processing individual mileage claims, Council will pay the following Private Vehicle Allowances, by fortnightly instalments:

Deputy Mayor	\$13,000 per annum
Councillor	\$10,000 per annum.

The amount prescribed in this section shall apply for the financial year, but shall increase by the CPI (based on the all indexes rate, Brisbane for the March quarter) annually thereafter, rounded to the nearest multiple of \$10.

This increase shall apply, initially, for the first fortnight commencing on or after 1 July, 2013.

(f) Accommodation

All Councillor accommodation for Council business will be booked and paid for by Council. Council will pay for the most economical deal available. Where possible, the minimum standards for Councillors' accommodation should be three or four star rating.

Where particular accommodation is recommended by conference organisers, Council will take advantage of the package deal that is the most economical and convenient to the event.

Where accommodation is provided outside of the region, Council may pay an additional Incidental Daily Allowance of \$25.00 per day to cover additional incidental costs (phone calls, newspapers, laundry/dry cleaning etc) incurred while Councillors are travelling and staying away from home overnight.

(g) Meals

Councillors are entitled to be reimbursed for the cost of a meal when:

- the Councillor incurs the cost personally; and
- the meal was not provided within the registration costs of the approved activity/event or during an approved flight.

Any meal reimbursements shall not be more than \$50 per meal or more than \$130 per day.

(h) Hospitality Expenses

Council may reimburse the Mayor up to \$1000 per annum for hospitality expenses deemed necessary in the conduct of Council business.

8. FACILITIES

8.1 Provision of Facilities

All facilities provided to Councillors remain the property of Council and must be returned to Council when a Councillor's term expires.

8.2 Private use of Council-owned facilities

Based on the principle that *no private benefit is to be gained* the facilities provided to Councillors by local governments are to be used only for council business unless prior approval has been granted by resolution of Council.

The Council resolution authorising private use of Council owned facilities will set out the terms under which the Councillor will reimburse Council for the percentage of private use. This would apply when Councillors have private use of Council owned motor vehicles.

8.3 Facilities Categories

(a) Administrative tools

Administrative tools are available, within Council offices, to assist Councillors, as required, in their role. Administrative tools include:

- office space and meeting rooms
- computers
- stationery
- access to photocopiers
- printers
- facsimile machines
- publications
- use of Council landline telephones and internet access

Secretarial support may also be provided for Mayors and Councillors.

(b) Maintenance costs of Council owned equipment

Council will be responsible for the ongoing maintenance and reasonable wear and tear costs of Council owned equipment that is supplied to Councillors for official business use. This includes the replacement of any facilities which fall under Council's asset replacement program.

(c) Name Badge Safety equipment for Councillors

A local government may provide Councillors with:

- a name badge
- the necessary safety equipment for use on official business, eg safety helmet/boots

- (d) Use of Council Vehicles on Council Business**
Council will provide the Mayor with a sedan vehicle for use during official Council business including travel to and from home to Council place of business. Councillors may access a Council vehicle for use on official business.
- (e) Private Use of Vehicles**
Private use of Council owned vehicles is permitted if prior approval has been granted by resolution of Council. Council will, in its resolution authorising private use, set out the terms for the Councillor to reimburse Council for such private use.
- The Mayor is authorised to use the Council owned vehicle for private use, subject to the contribution of ten percent (10%) of the variable annualised costs for the vehicle to offset private use (if any).
- (f) Telecommunications Needs**
Council will pay an annual Communications Allowance in the sum of \$2,500.00 per annum, payable in fortnightly instalments to Councillors to help defray administrative expenses (eg telephone calls, mobile telephone calls, home internet connection, other network connection costs) paid by Councillors personally in association with their role as a Councillor and to generally address the needs of the local community.
- Councillors will provide their own lap top computer, or equivalent device, to assist them in undertaking their role and ensure timely communication with Council. To assist Councillors to comply with this requirement Council will provide a lump sum payment of \$1,000 at the commencement of each of Year 1 and Year 3 of the Councillors term.
- The amount prescribed in this section shall apply for the financial year, but shall increase by the CPI (based on the all indexes rate, Brisbane for the March quarter) annually thereafter, rounded to the nearest multiple of \$10. This increase shall apply initially, for the first fortnight commencing on or after 1 July 2013.
- (g) Insurance Cover**
A local government will indemnify or insure Councillors in the event of injury sustained while discharging their civic duties. The local government will pay the excess for injury claims made by a Councillor resulting from conducting official Council business.
- (h) Fuel Costs**
Fuel for a Council owned vehicle used for official Council business, will be provided or paid for by Council.
- 9. CLAIMS FOR REIMBURSEMENT**
All claims for reimbursement of expenses will be made on the approved form and submitted with original receipts to the Chief Executive Officer for approval.
- Failure to comply with this policy, falsifying claims or logbooks or the mis-use of facilities may breach the Local Government Act and/or represent an offence under the Criminal Code and may be referred to the Crime and Misconduct Commission.
- 10. EFFECTIVE FROM**
This policy will take effect from the commencement of the fortnight immediately following its adoption by Council. The previous Expenses Reimbursement Policy will cease to have effect at this stage.

11. REPORTING

A report summarising all expenditure in relation to this policy shall be included in Council's Annual Report.

12. REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed within three (3) months of the Council's next quadrennial election.

13. DATE OF RESOLUTION

This policy was approved by the Chief Executive Officer and adopted by Somerset Regional Council at the Ordinary Meeting of 13 June 2012.

Signed: ...

Date:"

Carried

NON-CURRENT ASSETS

Section 113(b) of the Local Government (Finance, Plans and Reporting) Regulation 2010

There were no resolutions made during the year under section 154(2) of Local Government (Finance, Plans and Reporting) Regulation 2010. Details of non-current asset capitalisation thresholds are disclosed in note 1.17 of the audited financial statements.

TOTAL REMUNERATION PAID TO EACH COUNCILLOR

Section 114(1)(a) of the Local Government (Finance, Plans and Reporting) Regulation 2010

Total remuneration paid by Council to each of its councillors for the 2011/2012 financial year.

COUNCILLOR	ALLOWANCE/FEES
Councillor Lehmann	\$102,523.83
Councillor Zabel	\$62,152.79
Councillor Pearce	\$46,990.43
Councillor Caddy	\$46,990.43
Councillor Kammholz	\$46,990.43
Councillor Hall	\$53,922.75
Councillor Bechly	\$46,990.43
Councillor Brieschke	\$5,892.62
Councillor Madden	\$5,892.62
Councillor Moriarty	\$5,892.62
Councillor Ogg	\$5,892.62
<i>Total Remuneration</i>	<i>\$430,131.57</i>

TOTAL SUPERANNUATION CONTRIBUTION PAID FOR EACH COUNCILLOR

Section 114(1)(b) of the Local Government (Finance, Plans and Reporting) Regulation 2010

Total superannuation contributions paid by Council for each of its councillors for the 2011/2012 financial year -

COUNCILLOR	SUPERANNUATION
Councillor Lehmann	\$12,302.84
Councillor Zabel	\$7,458.32
Councillor Pearce	\$5,638.81
Councillor Caddy	\$5,638.81
Councillor Kammholz	\$5,638.81
Councillor Hall	\$6,470.68
Councillor Bechly	\$5,638.81
Councillor Brieschke	\$707.12
Councillor Madden	\$707.12
Councillor Moriarty	\$535.12
Councillor Ogg	\$707.12
<i>Total Superannuation</i>	<i>\$51,443.56</i>

EXPENSES INCURRED BY AND FACILITIES PROVIDED TO EACH COUNCILLOR UNDER THE EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT POLICY

Section 114(1)(c) of the Local Government (Finance, Plans and Reporting) Regulation 2010

Expenses reimbursed and facilities provided during 2011/2012 were –

COUNCILLOR	EXPENSES
Councillor Lehmann	\$27,643.49
Councillor Zabel	\$11,329.18
Councillor Pearce	\$12,958.49
Councillor Caddy	\$9,505.80
Councillor Kammholz	\$5,393.37
Councillor Hall	\$15,729.09
Councillor Bechly	\$6,455.31
Councillor Brieschke	\$2,280.82
Councillor Madden	\$1,662.65
Councillor Moriarty	\$2,516.14
Councillor Ogg	\$1,662.65
<i>Total</i>	<i>\$97,136.99</i>

In addition to these amounts, Councillors received access to certain defined Council property (eg laptop computers) as set out in Council's expenses reimbursement policy. No non-cash property was transferred to Councillors.

COUNCILLOR MEETING ATTENDANCE

Section 114(1)(e) of the Local Government (Finance, Plans and Reporting) Regulation 2010

From 1 July 2011 - 28 April 2012:

COUNCILLOR	ORDINARY MEETING
Cr G D Lehmann	20
Cr R O Caddy	19
Cr N T Kammholz	20
Cr R B Pearce	20
Cr N L Zabel	19
Cr A A Bechly	18
Cr D N Hall	20

Local Government Elections were held on 28 April 2012. The Post Election Council Meeting appointing the newly elected Council was held on 14 May 2012.

From 14 May 2012 – 30 June 2012:

COUNCILLOR	ORDINARY MEETING
Cr G D Lehmann	4
Cr D Hall	4
Cr K Moriarty	4
Cr M Ogg	4
Cr J Madden	4
Cr H Brieschke	4
Cr N Zabel	4

COUNCILLOR MISCONDUCT

Section 114(f), (g) and (h) of the Local Government (Finance, Plans and Reporting) Regulation 2010

s114(f)(i)	There were no orders or recommendations made under section 180(2) or (4) of the <i>Local Government Act 2009</i>
s114(f)(ii)	There were no orders made under section 181 of the <i>Local Government Act 2009</i> .
s114(g)(i)	There were no Councillors named and no orders or recommendations made under section 180 or 181 of the <i>Local Government Act 2009</i> .
s114(g)(ii)	There was no misconduct or inappropriate conduct engaged in by the Councillors.
s114(g)(iii)	There were no orders or recommendations made for a Councillor.
s114(h)(i)	There were no complaints about the conduct or performance of Councillors assessed as frivolous or vexatious under section 177(4) of the <i>Local Government Act 2009</i> .
s114(h)(ii)	There were no complaints referred to the department's chief executive under section 177(5)(a) of the <i>Local Government Act 2009</i> .
s114(h)(iii)	There were no complaints referred to the Mayor under section 177(5)(b) of the <i>Local Government Act 2009</i> .
s114(h)(iv)	There were no complaints referred to the department's chief executive under section 177(6) of the <i>Local Government Act 2009</i> .
s114(h)(v)	There were no complaints assessed by the chief executive officer as being about official misconduct.
s114(h)(vi)	There were no complaints heard by a conduct review panel.
s114(h)(vii)	There were no complaints heard by the tribunal.
s114(h)(viii)	There were no complaints dealt with by the Chief Executive Officer under section 177(8) of the <i>Local Government Act 2009</i> .

OVERSEAS TRAVEL

Section 116 of the Local Government (Finance, Plans and Reporting) Regulation 2010

There was no overseas travel undertaken by a councillor or local government employee in an official capacity during the financial year.

GRANTS TO COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS

Section 117 of the Local Government (Finance, Plans and Reporting) Regulation 2010

The local government's expenditure for the financial year on grants to community organisations was \$126,443.03. In addition \$44,962.12 was provided in Regional Arts Development Fund grants.

CONDUCTING A JOINT GOVERNMENT ACTIVITY

Section 119(1)(c) of the Local Government (Finance, Plans and Reporting) Regulation 2010

There was no action taken for or expenditure on a service, facility or activity that was supplied by another local government under an agreement for conducting a joint government activity for which the local government levied special rates or charges for the financial year.

SUMMARY OF CONCESSIONS FOR RATES AND CHARGES

Section 119(1)(f) of the Local Government (Finance, Plans and Reporting) Regulation 2010

Rebates and concessions on rates were as follows:

1. *Pensioner part-remission of certain general rates in the former Kilcoy Shire as set out in the 2011/2012 Revenue Statement as follows:*

R30. Pensioner rebate of Kilcoy differential general rates

Qualifying Pensions

Rebate of part of certain rates and charges as determined by Council from time to time may be granted to owners who are holders of a current valid Queensland pensioner concession card and who are eligible to receive a State Government Pensioner Rate Subsidy under the rules of the State Government Pensioner Rate Subsidy Scheme.

The rebate may be granted under Section 54 of the Local Government (Finance, Plans and Reporting) Regulation 2010.

Council has decided to phase out the granting of an automatic concession of this kind to pensioners, but wishes to protect those pensioners currently receiving the concession from any hardship resulting from the change. Those pensioners in receipt of the pensioner rate subsidy as at 30 June 2008 will continue to receive the subsidy provided they retain other eligibility criteria. However, no new automatic concession will be granted to those pensioners not already in receipt of the concession as at 30 June 2008.

Application

A pensioner rebate as above shall apply to differential general rates within the former Kilcoy Shire.

Calculation

The rebate of differential general rates within the former Kilcoy Shire shall be equal to:

- \$20 per annum multiplied by;
- The percentage to which the landowners are entitled to receive a State Government Pensioner Rate Subsidy under the rules of that subsidy scheme as issued by State authorities from time to time.

For example, if a full State Government Pensioner Rate Subsidy applies to a rate assessment where differential general rates of \$1,000 would otherwise apply, the landowner shall be entitled to a rebate of \$20 of the rates. If 33% of the full State Government Pensioner Rate Subsidy applies, the landowner shall be entitled to a remission of 33% of \$20 the rates.

Justification

Council has decided to offer the concession on differential general rates within the former Kilcoy Shire to recognise the financial impact on people of fixed incomes within the former Kilcoy Shire who enjoyed the same level of remission in previous years.

Administration

An application for a State Government Pensioner Rate Subsidy shall be taken to also be an application for Council pensioner remission. The rules governing eligibility to the State Government Pensioner Rate Subsidy Scheme as issued by State authorities from time to time shall apply in determining eligibility to the Council remission.

2. *The following concession as resolved by Council on 26 July 2011*

“THAT Council provide written authorisation to Queensland Urban Utilities (QUU) to credit historical water charges of \$2,472.42 billed by QUU on Council’s behalf for lot 578 RP818393 as outlined in the email to Council from QUU dated 15 July 2011, that it be confirmed that the application by the owner to QUU meets Council’s requirements in respect of section 56(3) of the Local Government (Finance, Plans and Reporting) Regulation 2010 and that this decision is made for hardship reasons.”

3. *The following concession as resolved by Council on 28 September 2011*

“THAT a rebate of rates and charges be given to the owner of Lot 1 RP28857 assessment 06015-00000-000 for the period 1 July 2011 to 31 December 2011 equal to the difference between the net general rates actually charged for the property on the rate notice issued 22 August 2011 and the net amount that would have been payable if the property had been categorised in rating category 302 plus the amount of extractive industry inspection levy charged because the payment of the rates or charges would cause hardship to the land owner.

THAT a rebate of rates and charges be given to the owner of Lot 1 RP28857 assessment 06015-00000-000 for the period 1 January 2012 to 30 June 2012 of the same amount as the 2011 rebate because the payment of the rates or charges would cause hardship to the land owner.”

4. *The following concession as resolved by Council on 12 October 2011*

“THAT the letter from Mount Kilcoy Sandy Creek Rural Fire Brigade dated 28 September 2011 be treated as an application for rebate of rates and charges for 80805-00001-000 PTA SP200479 in L 5 SP168029 and that a rebate of all rates and charges levied on that property during 2011/2012 be granted because the land is owned by an entity whose objects do not include making a profit and because of changes to the way rural fire brigades are funded.”

5. *The following concession as resolved by Council on 22 February 2012*

“THAT a rating concession be granted to Moore Hack and Pony Club Inc (assessment 01639-00000-000) under section 56 (1) (b) of the Local Government (Finance, Plans and Reporting) Regulation 2010 because the Club is a member of a class of ratepayers being not for profit sporting clubs with crown leases in Moore and that all outstanding rates and charges be rebated in full.

6. *The following concession as resolved by Council on 28 March 2012*

“THAT a rating concession be granted to Jimna Community Development Association Inc (assessment 80037-90000-000) under section 56 (1) (b) of the Local Government (Finance, Plans and Reporting) Regulation 2010 because the Club is a member of a class of ratepayers being not for profit community groups occupying crown land in Jimna that owe rates and charges for water before the transfer of water assets from Council and that all outstanding charges be rebated in full.”

REPORT ON THE INTERNAL AUDIT

Section 119(1)(g) of the Local Government (Finance, Plans and Reporting) Regulation 2010



Inter Office Memo

To: Lesley Tocknell and Geoffrey Smith
From: Robert Bain, Chief Executive Officer
Date: 19 March 2012
Subject: Internal audit progress report

I acknowledge your comments required for the internal audit progress report as follows:

- c) *the observations of the persons carrying out the internal audit functions, including, for example, whether it is considered that the control measures have been successful in managing the risks to which they relate are as follows:*

"To this end, we have observed that the internal audit functions have been successful in managing the risks to which they relate as evidenced by the lack of substantive adverse comment by external audit about financial management issues"

- d) *any recommendations of the persons who conducted the audit about—*
(i) any action that may be taken to improve the success of the control measures; or
(ii) alternative control measures that the local government may adopt for managing the risks that the local government's operations are exposed to and the action that may be taken to give effect to the alternative control measures; and

"In this regard, no recommendations are made."

I have considered these comments and as required in section 156 (2) (e) of the Local Government (Finance, Plans and Reporting) Regulation 2010 provide my response to the internal audit report including—

- (i) the action the local government intends to take in response to the recommendations mentioned in paragraph (d); and
(ii) when the action is intended to be taken

I confirm my response is that no action appears to be required as a result of your advice and no action will be recommended to the local government pending the next report.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "R. Bain", written over a horizontal line.

Robert Bain
Chief Executive Officer

RESERVES AND CONTROLLED ROADS

Section 118 of the Local Government (Finance, Plans and Reporting) Regulation 2010

The local government controls—

- (a) 194.5285 ha of parks (including 11.5252 ha which is leased in respect of sporting clubs and service organisations) on land that is a reserve under the Land Act; and
- (b) 3,230.77 km of roads the council does not own (including 794.47 km of sealed roads, 592.52 km of gravel road, 110.61 km of formed only roads, 406.27 km of unformed roads and 1,326.78 km of unused road reserves).

INVITATIONS TO CHANGE TENDERS

Section 119(1)(d) & s177 of the Local Government (Finance, Plans and Reporting) Regulation 2010

There were no invitations to change tenders during the year.

REGISTERS KEPT BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Section 119(1)(e) of the Local Government (Finance, Plans and Reporting) Regulation 2010

- Register of Beneficial Enterprises
- Register of Significant Businesses
- Register of Cost-Recovery Fees
- Register of Council Policies
- Delegations by Council
- Delegations by Chief Executive Officer
- Register of Councillors' interests
- Register of Local and Subordinate Local Laws
- Non-Conforming Use Register
- Rezoning Register
- Consent Register
- Subdivision Register
- Development Application Register
- Cemetery Register
- Advertising Sign Register
- Food Premise Register
- Road Register

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Section 119(1)(h) of the Local Government (Finance, Plans and Reporting) Regulation 2010

Council's objective is to ensure a workplace free of discrimination and to promote Equal Employment Opportunity in the workplace. To facilitate this objective the Somerset Regional Council Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan is under development.

The EEO Management Plan will demonstrate Council's commitment to the principle that all potential and existing employees have the right to equality of employment. This is applied through all recruitment and staff management practices. The EEO Management Plan will be implemented through consultation with all relevant unions and employees.

The Council is committed to EEO and will continue to review this process upon implementation.

SHAREHOLDER DELEGATES FOR CORPORATE ENTITIES

Section 119(1)(i) of the Local Government (Finance, Plans and Reporting) Regulation

Nil

INVESTIGATION NOTICES FOR COMPETITIVE NEUTRALITY COMPLAINTS

Section 119(1)(j) and (k) of the Local Government (Finance, Plans and Reporting) Regulation

Nil

GENERAL COMPLAINTS

Council is committed to dealing fairly with administrative action complaints. Council's approach to dealing with complaints is outlined in its Administrative Action Complaints Policy, which was effective from 1 July, 2011. The scope of the policy is as follows:

The complaints process has been established for resolving complaints by affected persons about administrative action of the Council. However, the complaints process does not apply to a complaint-

- *that could be made under the Local Government (Beneficial Enterprises and Business Activities) Regulation 2010 about competitive neutrality issues;*
- *about official misconduct that should be directed to the Crime and Misconduct Commission;*
- *made under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 2010; or*
- *about the conduct and performance of Councillors under Division 6, Part 2, Chapter 6 of the Local Government Act 2009.*

This policy excludes requests for service, enquiries, suggestions, actions and decisions taken under legislation which provide for separate avenues of appeal, such as decisions made under the Sustainable Planning Act 2009, prosecutions made under Local Laws that are appealable to a Magistrates Court and decisions under the Building Act, unless the complaint relates to administrative actions associated with the action or decision.

During 2011/12 Council received three (3) applications under this policy, of which two (2) remained unresolved at 30 June 2012.

IDENTIFY SIGNIFICANT BUSINESS ACTIVITIES

Section 43(4) and s45 of the Local Government Act 2009, and s9 of the Local Government (Beneficial Enterprises and Business Activities) Regulation 2010

Nil

ANNUAL OPERATIONS REPORT FOR EACH COMMERCIAL BUSINESS UNIT

Section 32(1) of the Local Government (Beneficial Enterprises and Business Activities) Regulation 2010

There were no commercial business units to report for the 2011-2012 financial year.

SUMMARY OF COMPETITIVE NEUTRALITY COMPLAINTS & DECISIONS BY LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

Section 176 of the Local Government (Beneficial Enterprises and Business Activities) Regulation 2010

There were no competitive neutrality complaints or decisions made in the 2011-2012 financial year.