

Annual Report

Working together for
the betterment of the
Somerset region.



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HISTORY AND PROFILE

Somerset Regional Council was formed on 15 March 2008 following an amalgamation of Esk Shire and Kilcoy Shire Councils.

SRC has a Mayor and six Councillors, each is elected by their constituents, and serve a four-year term.

This regional local government is an hour west of Brisbane and is the fastest growing local government area in south east 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 5382 sq km and includes five major townships, Esk, Fernvale, Kilcoy, Lowood and Toogoolawah. The region is home to about 23,000 people and figures released in a report by the Australian Bureau of Statistics in April 2014 show the region had a growth of 3.2% during the 2012/13 year. Somerset's growth rate was well in excess of the Queensland total growth rate of 1.9%.

Somerset's neighbouring local governments are Lockyer Valley, Ipswich City, Brisbane City, Moreton Bay, Sunshine Coast, Gympie, South Burnett and Toowoomba.

Somerset Regional Council's logo represents the region's two major 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 Esk and Kilcoy Shire Councils had adopted floral and faunal emblems. The continued use of these emblems is symbolic, given that none of these emblems are reflected in the logo. On 19 December 2008 Council adopted the following emblems:

Floral: Weeping bottlebrush (*Callistemon viminalis*)

Native frangipani (*Hymenosporum flavum*)

Faunal: Red deer (*Cervus elaphus*)

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 several exist in the region.

Somerset Regional Council covers the largest land area of all south east 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 Somerset Regional Council's Annual Report for the period 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014.

The past twelve months has been productive with many ongoing and new projects completed and the foundations for many more projects established.

The start of the financial year saw the continuation of flood repair works from the 2013 January floods. The second flood, in two years, impacted ongoing repair works from the first flood event and pushed back repair works required following the 2013 event. Council's dedicated team and contractors are, at the end of the 2013/14 financial year, well advanced with repair works estimated to cost about \$36 million.

Fortunately, Council's ongoing success with applying for funding from state and federal governments has enabled the restoration of some assets with improved flood resilience. Council was very successful with its betterment submissions, with thirty projects totalling \$14,213,352 approved. Of these thirty projects, seven existing timber bridges will be replaced and two bridges constructed to replace existing causeways. Delivery of works is well under way with work being performed by a combination of Council day labour and contractors. All civil contractors engaged within the flood restoration program live within or near the region and are using local resources, where possible, to deliver the restoration program, hence providing further economic benefit to the community.

In addition to repairing damaged infrastructure, Council has purchased more community awareness material to better ensure residents and visitors are made aware of impending weather conditions. Council has now installed 10 cameras throughout the region, eight display images to the public via Council's website. Images can be viewed in real-time or displayed on the website at 15 minute intervals. The images available provide Council's Incident Management Team with valuable intelligence during extreme weather events.

Council has also made significant head-way with putting Somerset on the map through tourism partnerships and successful marketing campaigns. Council formed a Tourism Advisory Committee to directly inform Council on matters of tourism. The committee consists of representatives from Council, the Somerset Business Alliance, Kilcoy Chamber of Commerce and Community, Somerset Regional Tourism Association, Brisbane Marketing, Seqwater, and is supported by Council's corporate services manager and tourism and promotions officer. Council also invested funds into securing professionals to develop the Somerset Destination Management Plan – a guide that will lead the region to success on the tourism and promotion front. The plan will also assist to position Somerset with a defined tourism identity and provide the strategic framework for marketing over the next five years.

Extensive research and preparation on developing the new planning scheme for Somerset took place throughout the financial year and we are hopeful to have the draft planning scheme on public exhibition in the first quarter of 2015.

Council will continue to deliver for the betterment and progress of the region throughout the 2013/14 year.

Cr Graeme Lehmann
Mayor
Somerset Regional Council

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

Section 190(1)(a) & (b) of the Local Government Regulation 2012

The financial year ended 30 June 2014 was a year of rebuilding and increasing the resilience of community assets.

Council continued its successful run of grant applications and approvals resulting in a million dollar improvement to the Kilcoy Showgrounds being undertaken. Funding was obtained for the Toogoolawah Condensery Project and the Kilcoy Visitor Information Centre. Council continued development of its new planning scheme which will guide development in the Somerset Regional Council area for the next decade. While development has slowed due to worldwide economic affects, substantial new dwellings were completed.

This combined with record capital expenditure on Council owned funded roadworks and capital construction ensured continued economic activity in the Somerset Regional Council area and provided strong employment and business for local suppliers. Council completed all flood damage infrastructure from the January 2011 event. A particularly pleasing result was the high percentage of Betterment Funding that was achieved and applied to the restoration of assets, resulting in increased resilience. Council's healthy financial position enabled Somerset Regional Council to apply its own funds which then attracted State and Federal Betterment funding.

My thanks go to all Council staff who have contributed to a fruitful and positive year and I look forward to ongoing efforts from all staff in the new financial year.

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.

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



MAYOR

DEPUTY MAYOR



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FINANCE HIGHLIGHTS

- The Queensland Audit Office reported the best possible financial sustainability risk assessment for Somerset Regional Council during the year.
- Somerset Regional Council achieved its fourteenth successive favourable audit certificate from the Queensland Audit Office during the year.
- Council attracted around \$40 million in government grants and \$3 million in contract works income into Somerset during the year, mainly in relation to natural disaster relief and recovery matters.
- Council authorised the commencement of 75 sale of land for overdue rate actions during FY2014 and held one rate recovery auction. Year end total rate debtors as at 30 June 2014 were at their lowest level since June 2010. In achieving this result, Council did not engage any contract debt collection agents and had no unrecovered legal costs for debt collection.
- Council successfully implemented the State Government Emergency Management Levy in rural areas as required by State legislation from 1 January 2014. Council officers assessed land attributes in respect of around 9,000 parcels of land and consulted with all affected landowners over the assessments. Council successfully lobbied for changes in how the State levy would be applied to the farming sector. Accounting firm Bentleys were engaged to independently review all aspects of the implementation process to ensure that all relevant requirements were met.
- Prudent investment practices returned interest revenue on cash investments to the community during the year. Despite an environment of declining interest rates, interest earnings represented the equivalent of 12.5% of total net rate revenue. Council had no interest bearing debt during the year.
- Payments made by Council to suppliers of goods and services based within the Somerset Regional Council area during FY2014 represented more than 75% of Council's total net general rate revenue for the year. Council's wages, salaries and other labour costs were in addition to these local supplier payments.
- Council introduced four new differential general rating categories during FY2014 in order to help equitably fund extensive new capital and operating expenditure while meeting appropriate financial sustainability criteria. A further six new differential rating categories were introduced at the budget meeting of 4 June 2014.
- More than 41% of Council's FY2014 general rate revenue was derived from property owners based outside of the Somerset Regional Council area.
- Council's corporate plan and operational plan objectives for the year for the finance department were met in full.
- Council takes its statutory financial disclosure obligations seriously and readers should refer to Council's audited financial statements for further information.

CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

SOMERSET LIBRARIES

This report has been prepared by the regional librarian and details the activities of Somerset Libraries for the 2013/14 financial year.

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

As places to connect, explore and learn, Somerset Libraries provide programs, collections and spaces that connect people to resources and each other.

Somerset Council's four library branches, Esk, Kilcoy, Lowood and Toogoolawah, recorded more than 170,000 visits in the 13/14 financial year. Services include access to a large collection of materials for reading and leisure and a variety of free programs provide education, information and enrichment to residents.

Customers have access to an online library catalogue, Wi-Fi and library catalogue app and a support network of library professionals to ensure an outstanding level of service, events and activities, and a wide range of quality resources.

As patrons take advantage of affordable entertainment, internet access, job search assistance and educational resources, there have been strong increases in visits to libraries and the attendance of IT classes.

This year Somerset Libraries introduced additional services including free Wi-Fi, a diversification of IT training and classes and digital materials including websites and eBooks. These services all resulted in higher overall usage of the library.

While patrons still value access to printed books, Somerset Libraries' shift to offering a variety of digital, educational and social tools appears to be permanent. This is reflected through a 22.5% rise in visitor figures from 139,703 to 171,477 in 2013-14.

Attendance at special events, outreach and additional library programs such as Chatterbooks and Somerset Conversations increased by 11.36% from 3256 in 2012/13 to 3626 in 2013/14.

Strategic and operational planning within Somerset Libraries ensures all actions are in accordance with the following council initiatives and policies:

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

Vibrant Somerset

Healthy:

The goal of Somerset Libraries is to develop library outreach programs for non-users, the underserved, and residents with special needs.

Communities are living things; they are constantly growing and changing. To meet the diverse needs of any community, libraries must keep in touch with these changes and tailor services to meet changing needs.

Outreach programs at libraries provide a unique opportunity to improve public perception and offer excellent collaboration opportunities with community leaders, groups and organisations that will enhance overall library service.

Somerset Library staff attended outreach events throughout 2013/2014 with an increased attendance of 58.6% (Table 2.5).

Throughout 2013-14 library staff attended a variety outreach opportunities including Over 50's meetings, Under 8's Days and youth forums.

Cultural:

Somerset Libraries regularly provide services which meet the recreational, information and cultural needs of the regions residents, and demonstrate the relevance of library services and networks to Somerset residents.

Events included a writing and photography workshop at Esk Library in June facilitated by Ben Tupas, a producer with ABC Open. Residents were taught how to make a photo story about an object and have it published on the ABC Open website which hopes to create a virtual museum of everyday objects.

Somerset Library staff attended NAIDOC celebrations at Clock Park, Lowood in June. Staff read stories and conducted craft sessions along with traditional dance and music, bush tucker, damper making and boomerang and didgeridoo craft throughout the day.

Somerset Libraries visitor figures have improved significantly with an increase of 22.56% (Table 1.1). This may be explained, in part, by the rise in attendance at family and early literacy events (11.4%) and the increased use of public access computers (28.9%) (Table 2.1).

Loan figures have declined slightly with a decrease of 4.5% (Table 1.6) although it is important to note that programing, outreach and IT training attendance have continued to improve. Onsite information enquiries answered by staff increased by 16.8% (Table 1.5). Customers come to Somerset Libraries when they cannot independently find information or when the information they need is unique to library collections.

Prosperous Somerset

Growing:

Usage of the Council's free Wi-Fi service has increased steadily throughout the year from 83 individual users in July 2013 to 371 in June 2014. 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 life-long learning and access free events and activities. They are a place to connect and create.

The addition of Wi-Fi has enabled the library service to increase the variety and diversity of digital literacy classes. It has also:

- Raised the profile of Somerset Libraries and attracted more people into the branches
- Encouraged new users to the library service
- Enhanced service delivery
- In rural locations, libraries are able to make the internet available to more of the community, more of the time
- It has enhanced library space and added to the vibrancy and atmosphere
- It has acted as a support mechanism for travellers, helping to anchor them both materially and socially (Graph 1.0).

Skilled:

All Somerset Library staff attended Armed Robbery Awareness Training and Dealing with Difficult Clients Awareness in March. Staff were introduced to the theoretical and practical skills of risk assessment, tactical communication principles, key communication and problem solving skills and handling specific client profiles and incidents. Throughout the year staff also attended storytelling training, an open day at Cannon Hill Library and were shown around the new Brisbane City Library at Carindale.

Educated:

The range of talks offered through Somerset Conversations and the subsequent diversity of the audience it attracts, illustrates the role that libraries play in helping to build local communities. This includes:

- Developing the library as a community meeting place
- Building links between community and government
- Helping residents to overcome the digital divide
- Offering information and resources which address local issues
- Importance of informal learning and social inclusion. Libraries are used by a broad cross section of people including those from disadvantaged social groups.

Topics included weaving, local history, learning the basics of eBay, photo preservation, the healing power of crystals and learning to crochet.

Well planned Somerset

Connected:

More than 650 children from eight primary schools turned out to the StoryArts festival in Esk on Tuesday, 10 September. Organised by the Ipswich District Teacher Librarians Network and supported by Somerset Regional Council the program of talented children's authors and illustrators included Frances Watts, Andy Griffiths, Dave Hackett and Leonie Norrington.

Andy Griffiths is a colourful Australian author, speaker and comedy writer, most notable for his Just! series which was converted into an animated television series called What's with Andy?.

The festival aims to increase a 'connectedness' of the value of the arts in relation to writing and illustration and to help build and maintain increased audiences for children's literature.

Progressive:

Chatterbooks sessions are run in all four Somerset Libraries and are designed to give children confidence in speaking, writing and reading in a group, choosing books for themselves and talking about what they like to read.

Studies have shown that reading for pleasure is more important to children's successes than education or social class. Chatterbooks reading groups help build lifelong reading habits.

During the sessions children take part in a variety of activities including drawing, writing, rapping, reading, performing and having fun.

They also allow children, with their parents and carers, to learn more about Somerset Libraries have to offer.

The photo below is from a poetry Chatterbooks session at Lowood. It was started by Chatterbooks participants and has been added to by other Lowood Library users.



United Somerset

Proactive:

Somerset Libraries, with the support of the State Library of Queensland, provides a variety of free databases for residents. Databases have several advantages over general internet searching including:

- In-depth research on several subjects
- Organised by topics
- Authoritative and reliable content
- Information evaluated by experts
- Interfaces that are user friendly

Somerset Libraries added two new databases to its collection - *Spineout* and *Good Reading*.

Spineout website is a place for Young Adults to express their ideas and thoughts and to share their creativity in words, art, film or music. Young adults are encouraged to be a part of this new fun online resource by submitting reviews of newly published YA books that the site provides, book trailers, poems, short stories, music lyrics, videos and art work.

Good Reading is an additional literary online resource courtesy of the State Library of Queensland and accessible to Somerset residents online. *Good Reading* aims to be 'Everything about Books' by providing not only a central place for book lovers to find useful information such as first chapters, reading group notes or book events, but also a place for readers to exchange thoughts and ideas

Forward Thinking:

Increasingly digitisation means 24x7 remote access anytime, anywhere. In an effort to offer its users equitable access to eBook technologies, Somerset Libraries provided Kindle e-readers for loan at libraries in Esk, Lowood, Kilcoy and Toogoolawah in September 2013.

This service offers users an opportunity to try out this popular new electronic medium prior to purchasing an eBook reader.

Currently, Somerset Library's e-readers come pre-loaded with eBooks and each is genre-based with new releases and older classic titles in the mix. All eBook readers have a simple touch-screen interface and navigation buttons and for those lenders who need assistance, the library service also offers training courses on the basics of how to use a variety of e-readers.

Engaged:

Somerset Libraries fosters community cohesion and involvement through its ongoing engagement and coordination of the Somerset and Lockyer Valley Readers Cup.

The Cup challenges children to read widely, work as a team and continue to develop a love of reading. Over 200 school students from across the Somerset and Lockyer regions met at Lowood on Wednesday, 25 June for the annual Readers Cup challenge.

About 20 schools from across the two regions battled it out with Faith Lutheran College taking out first place (by half a point), in the years eight and nine category and Tarampa State School placing first in the years six and seven category.

Summary of Statistics - July 2013 to June 2014

Appendix A

Table 1.1

Visitors	2014/2013	2013/2012	2012/2011
Esk Library	36147	36637	30168
Kilcoy Library	78250	48410	48086
Lowood Library	50880	49274	44143
Toogoolawah Library	5903	5352	5161
Total	171180	139673	97390

Visitor figures
increased by
22.557%

Table 1.2

Opening Hours	2014/2013	2013/2012	2012/2011
Esk Library	40	40	40
Kilcoy Library	40	40	40
Lowood Library	40	40	40
Toogoolawah Library	22.30	22.30	22:30
Total	142.30	142.3	142.3

Table 1.3

Total Members	2014/2013	2013/2012	2012/2011
Esk Library	2191	2253	1866
Kilcoy Library	3470	3224	2955
Lowood Library	5693	5181	4608
Toogoolawah Library	1090	1031	969
Total	12444	11689	10 398

Membership
increased by
6.45%

Table 1.4

New Members	2014/2013	2013/2012	2012/2011
Esk Library	174	256	227
Kilcoy Library	299	272	366
Lowood Library	555	622	531
Toogoolawah Library	81	64	108
Total	1109	1214	1232

New members decreased by -8.64%

Table 1.5

Onsite information inquiries	2014/2013	2013/2012	2012/2011
Esk Library	10295	7388	5041
Kilcoy Library	10227	8735	5802
Lowood Library	4010	4968	4370
Toogoolawah Library	3108	2572	2354
Total	27640	23663	17567

Enquiries answered increased by 16.8%

Table 1.6

Loans	2014/2013	2013/2012	2012/2011
Esk Library	20069	17513	16587
Kilcoy Library	25512	28913	28651
Lowood Library	24306	28185	27316
Toogoolawah Library	9777	10078	10658
E-Loans	1238		
Total	80902	84689	83212

Loans decreased by -4.47%

Table 1.7

Reservations	2014/2013	2013/2012	2012/2011
Esk Library	4599	4565	4831
Kilcoy Library	4114	4899	4076
Lowood Library	1122	1126	965
Toogoolawah Library	2043	2078	1526
Total	11878	12668	11398

Reservations
decreased by
-6.23%

Table 1.8

Interlibrary Loans	2014/2013	2013/2012	2012/2011
Esk Library	267	320	160
Kilcoy Library	361	297	476
Lowood Library	401	534	473
Toogoolawah Library	175	262	269
Total	1204	1413	1378

Interlibrary
loans
decreased
-14.7912%

Table 1.9

Stock	2014/2013	2013/2012	2012/2011
Esk Library	6892	6003	6400
Kilcoy Library	9985	10998	8679
Lowood Library	11884	11093	10845
Toogoolawah Library	5605	5294	5410
Total	34366	33388	31334

Stock
increased by
2.92%

Table 2.0

Public internet terminals	2014/2013	2013/2012	2012/2011
Esk Library	4	4	4
Kilcoy Library	6	5	5
Lowood Library	5	5	5
Toogoolawah Library	1	1	1

Table 2.1

Computer usage	2014/2013	2013/2012	2012/2011
Esk Library	2729	1687	956
Kilcoy Library	3976	2121	1199
Lowood Library	4400	4599	1777
Toogoolawah Library	694	746	376
Total	11799	9153	4308
Broadband classes	2014/2013	2013/2012	2012/2011
Esk Library	201	1334	1110
Kilcoy Library	57	458	630
Lowood Library	122	737	397
Toogoolawah Library	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total	380	2529	2139

Computer
use

Increased by
28.9%

Please note:
the 2014/13
figure only
include
classes and
not usage as
previous
years

Table 2.2

Digital Literacy Programs	2014/2013	2013/2012	2012/2011
Esk Library	57	56	294
Kilcoy Library	0	28	306
Lowood Library	21	48	172
Toogoolawah Library	N/A	19	0
Total	78	151	772

Table 2.3

E Devices (loans)	2014/2013	2013/2012	2012/2011
Somerset Libraries	706	48	N/A
Total	706	48	

Table 2.4

Family & Early Literacy	2014/2013	2013/2012	2012/2011
Esk Library	862	539	578
Kilcoy Library	1127	979	651
Lowood Library	989	1196	912
Toogoolawah Library	648	542	440
Total	3626	3256	2581

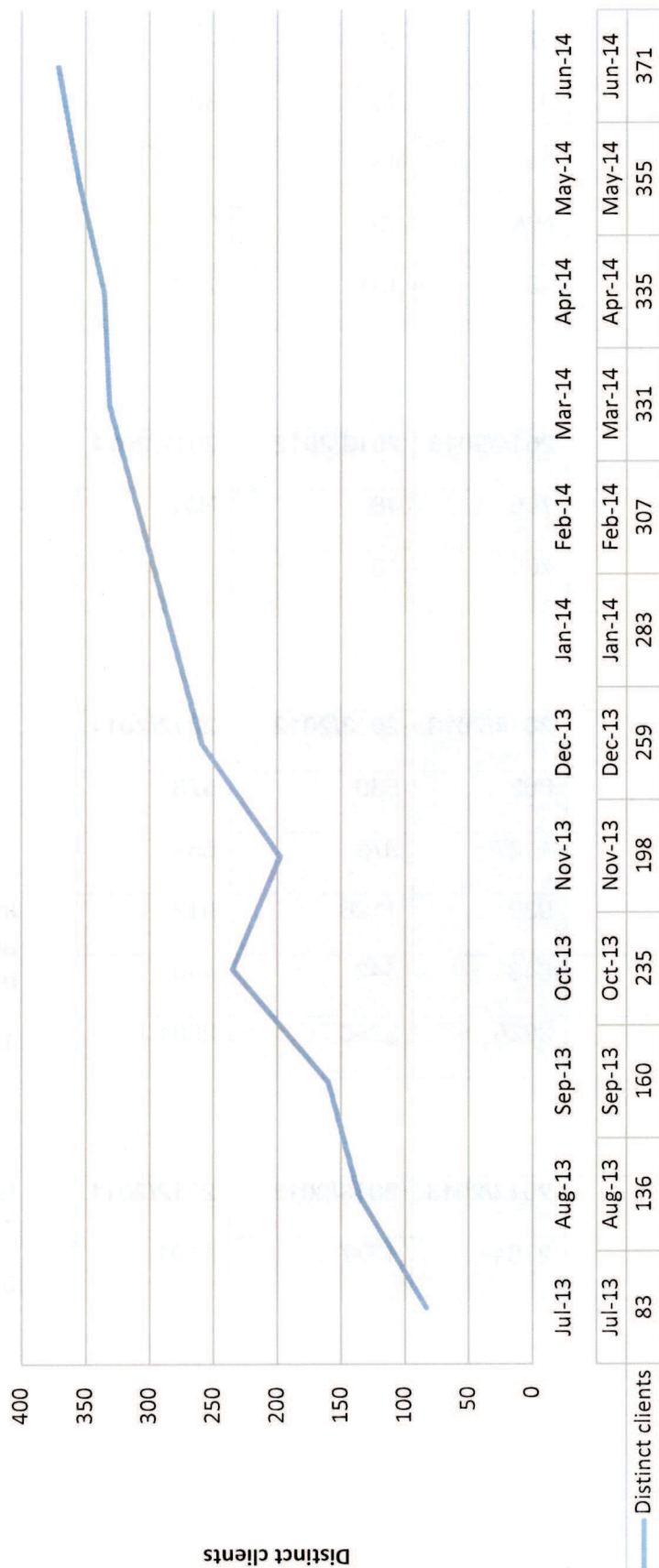
Increased
attendance
by
11.363%

Table 2.5

Outreach	2014/2013	2013/2012	2012/2011
	2184	1377	1191

Outreach
increased by
58.605%

Somerset Regional Libraries Wi-Fi usage



REGIONAL ARTS DEVELOPMENT FUND (RADF)

Somerset Regional Council has recently adopted a new Arts and Culture Policy in response to the desire to create better connectivity with artists and more innovative ways of securing opportunities in art and cultural development in Somerset.

These opportunities are required as an integral part of achieving outcomes which have been the focus of councils Corporate Plan in recent years and aligns itself with the principles and priorities of the *Arts for All Queenslanders 2014-18*.

New members have recently joined the RADF committee from across the region. This has added to the committee's connection to the community in promoting the program to a broader range of artists and provides a clear connection to local arts and cultural priorities and plans.

Arts Queensland contributed \$14,000 and council contributed \$6,000 for the financial year and with unexpended funds brought forward from the previous year, there was a total of \$24,449.46 grants available.

During the year there were a total of six funding applications received with five projects successfully acquitted.

Applications were made under the categories of Building Cultural Capacity and Developing Regional Skills. Projects included an expressionistic art workshop in celebration of Harmony Day, tuition fees for attendance of jewellery making workshop and working with local contemporary artists.

SPORT AND RECREATION

Active and Healthy Somerset

Somerset Regional Council coordinated several events, activities and projects aimed at getting Somerset residents physically active.

Vibrant Somerset

Operate indoor sports facilities

The Fernvale Indoor Sports Centre, the Kilcoy Sports Centre and Gym and the Toogoolawah Community Gym are operated by Belgravia Leisure. Toogoolawah Community Gym has seen increased patronage since its opening in September 2013 and, at the request of the community, has increased the number of classes on offer over the course of the year. The Fernvale Indoor Sports Centre and the Kilcoy Sports Centre and Gym have both seen solid growth in memberships throughout the 2013-2014 financial year and have continued to provide numerous fitness classes and sporting activities for the community.

Toogoolawah Community Gym has benefited from a sign on the front of the building and all facilities received 'No Smoking' signage which was sourced from Queensland Health. Belgravia Leisure have used Facebook posts and other advertising methods to promote the

use of all three sporting and gym facilities they manage and information about the facilities is also included on Council's Active and Healthy page.

Swimming pools maintained in operating condition

Toogoolawah Swimming Pool and Kilcoy Aquatic Centre are also managed by Belgravia Leisure. Lowood Swimming Pool and Esk Swimming Pool, the latter is located inside the Esk State School grounds, are both managed by Somerset Sport and Aquatics.

This year Lowood Swimming Pool received significant heating upgrades (including four electric heat pumps, works to upgrade the mains power supply to the complex, pool blankets and rollers) and new starting blocks through funding applications.

Esk Swimming Pool benefited from the installation of a shade cloth along the fence at Mary Street which minimises visibility from outside of the pool complex and therefore provides greater privacy to patrons.

Both Lowood Swimming Pool and Esk Swimming Pool have benefited from new signage at their premises and all pools received 'No Smoking' signage which was sourced from Queensland Health.

Pool managers have used several advertising methods to promote usage and information about the pools is now also included on Council's Active and Healthy webpage.

The trial extension of the swimming season at Lowood Swimming Pool and Kilcoy Aquatic Centre demonstrated that low attendances and a cost of \$13,572.90 is not supportive of continuing the extended season into the future. Kilcoy Aquatic Centre reported minor attendance and Lowood Swimming Pool more significant numbers, however this number represented only 25% of the average attendance rate.

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

Many Active and Healthy articles were published in the Somerset Regional Council quarterly newsletter in addition to regular press releases. Active and Healthy events and activities were also published on Council's website and promotional material was distributed to relevant stakeholders for particular events and activities.

The *Get Active and Healthy Somerset 2014* directory was published for the second time and is available to the community via Council's website. The directory features health and wellbeing information as well as a comprehensive listing of the extensive range of sport, recreation and fitness activities available across Somerset.

Sport and recreation promotion has continued with stalls at community events and information sessions which provide information about Council's programs, events and activities, as well as general health information sourced from such organisations as the Queensland Government and Beyond Blue.

In collaboration with other officers, health and wellbeing has also been promoted via the LIFE program within Council; this Workplaces for Wellness program sets a positive example for other businesses in the region to follow. The LIFE program offers Council staff the

opportunity to participate in social, physically active and preventative health activities and information sessions.

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

Sport and recreation officers attended a multitude of meetings with sporting clubs and community groups throughout the 2013-2014 financial year. Attendance at these meetings enabled officers to establish valuable relationships with stakeholders working at a grassroots level, to develop open lines of communication and to consult directly with community leaders. Of particular note, sport and recreation officers attended Somerset Social Plan meetings, Brisbane Valley Interagency meetings, the Community Social Planning meeting in Esk and met with facility managers across the region, as well as responding to individual needs raised by the community.

Community participation in physical activity

Somerset Rail Trail Fun Run 2013

The 11th annual Somerset Rail Trail Fun Run was held on Sunday, 14 July 2013 between Lowood and Fernvale. Despite the poor weather there were 989 registered participants which, though slightly behind the record set in 2012, demonstrates a support and turnout among the best in the events history. The family-friendly festival held at the finish line was well attended and had a variety of post-race activities including face painting, rock climbing, music, jumping castles and various stalls for people to enjoy.

A post-race survey was distributed in the days following the event and, of the 163 responses received, 98.8% stated they would return to the fun run in the following year.

The fun run raised more than \$2000 for Diabetes Australia Queensland with event sponsors Honeywood Fernvale donating an additional \$1000 towards the cause.

Jackson Elliott was the overall winner with a time of 25 minutes and 12 seconds and Tamara Carvolth again claimed the women's title with a time of 31 minutes and 33 seconds.

Somerset Regional Council would like to acknowledge and thank the many event sponsors, particularly Honeywood Fernvale and Fernvale Discount Drug Store, together with the volunteers whose contribution led to yet another successful Rail Trail Fun Run.

Active and Healthy School Holiday Program

The 11th annual Multi-Sport School Holiday Program was held over three days in September and, for the first time, was held in three different locations: Esk, Kilcoy and Fernvale. This was done to provide maximum accessibility to children across the region. This initiative proved a success as, with bus transport also provided, the program attracted over 200 children from all over the region.

Around 80 children attended each of the programmed days and enjoyed sports and activities including tennis, scouts, hip hop dance, golf, martial arts, gymnastics, softball, badminton, touch football, AFL, basketball, netball, fencing and futsal. The focus of the program was on skill development, fun and participation without the pressure of competition.

Active Ageing Program

The Active Ageing Program aims to promote physical activity and healthy lifestyles to those aged 50 years of age or older in the Somerset region. Active Ageing was held twice during the 2013-2014 financial year and featured both educational and physical activity components.

The Esk Active Ageing program was held from 29 October to 17 December in the Somerset Civic Centre and had 48 residents register for the eight week program. The program featured numerous local health professionals, library staff and exercise providers to deliver content and activities.

The Kilcoy Active Ageing program was held from 28 March to 30 May at Kilcoy Country Companions. Over 40 people attended this program which featured local health professionals, library staff and exercise providers.

Both programs received positive feedback from the participants with a number of participants indicating a wish for the program to continue or to be offered more consistently. Although Active Ageing has traditionally been held in two major towns throughout the course of the year on a rotational basis, investigations are being undertaken to determine if the program can be offered on a more permanent or regular basis. This will be determined by both opportunities and funding available for the Somerset region.

Joint Projects

- **Australia Day Events**
The sport and recreation department assisted with the preparations of these events.
- **Youth Week**
The senior sport and recreation officer (SSRO) worked with the youth development officer (YDO) in the planning of these events and the sport and recreation officer—clubs (SROC) supported the YDO during the events in Fernvale, Kilcoy and Esk.
- **Kilcoy Come and Try Badminton Event**
The SSRO liaised with Queensland Badminton in relation to a 'come and try' event held at Kilcoy State School and assisted in the promotion of the event.
- **Community Health Challenge**
The sport and recreation team assisted Belgravia Leisure with the health and fitness challenges that were run from their facilities.
- **Active and Healthy Peer Mentors Program**
The sport and recreation team assisted in the successful grant application for the Active and Healthy Peer Mentors Program which will allow 60 students from the three Somerset high schools to participate in a program centred on: making active and healthy lifestyle choices; youth leadership and active citizenship activities; and training and assistance to help students run active and healthy activities in their own schools or communities. The sport and recreation officer (SRO) is assisting the YDO in planning and development.

- **Connect to Your Creek**
The SSRO worked with the natural resource management officer (NRMO) and the principal of the Stanley River Environmental Education Centre in relation to this initiative. The SROC assisted the NRMO at the two Canoe Come and Try Days in May.
- **Club Participation**
The SROC promoted the *Get Started* program (\$150 vouchers for families to use on club membership fees or other expenses for their child's participation in a club) to Somerset clubs; many are now registered for the program. The SROC also assisted clubs by promoting *Get Started* at club 'come and try' days and by helping parents to apply for the vouchers.

Develop appropriate management strategies

The sport and recreation department identified several impediments to local access to recreation facilities including access to facilities, access to equipment, affordability, lack of knowledge about health and wellbeing and a 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.

Particular impediments to access to recreation facilities included: a request from a Toogoolawah Community Gym member to increase the number of classes at the gym following the end of aqua aerobics with the pool season, a complaint about smokers at sporting facilities, a complaint about privacy at the Esk Swimming Pool and a request for bike racks at the Fernvale Indoor Sports Centre. The class schedule at Toogoolawah Community Gym was subsequently added to, "No Smoking" signage was sourced for the sporting facilities in the region, a shade cloth was purchased for the fence on Mary Street at the Esk Swimming Pool to increase privacy and quotes for bike racks are being sourced.

The sport and recreation team also met with facility managers and other stakeholders regarding the use of facilities within the Somerset region. The particulars of these discussions are found below.

- The SSRO met with the General Manager of Belgravia Leisure and the Regional Manager for Queensland in relation to the management contracts for Fernvale Indoor Sports Centre, Toogoolawah Community Gym, Toogoolawah Swimming Pool, Kilcoy Sports Centre and Gym and Kilcoy Aquatic Centre. No issues of major concern were raised.
- The SSRO liaised regularly with facility managers across the region and addressed any issues that arose.
- The SSRO attended a meeting about the Lowood skatepark which addressed the issues around current usage and explored ways to boost participation.
- The SSRO liaised between Council and pool managers regarding extending the swimming season; as noted earlier in this report, the extension was trialled with poor results.

More community participation in physical activity

The recommendations of Council's Parkland Strategies and Recreation Framework are being progressively implemented as resources become available. Consistent efforts are

being made to encourage residents to make use of the many recreation opportunities available in the Somerset region.

Recommendation 3.6 – communication – was consistently addressed during the 2013-2014 financial year by including information of sport and recreation facilities and activities in Council newsletters, school newsletters, Council's website and by advertising the information on noticeboards in public spaces. This has included, but was not limited to, the promotion of the Toogoolawah Community Gym and the Seqwater Summer Safety Day.

Recommendation 3.2.1 – upgrading of parks – was addressed by the SROC. The SROC worked with a club to support them in applying for grants to upgrade the Coominya Recreation Reserve, however currently no grants have been applied for.

Multiple use of recreation reserves

The SSRO and the SROC have worked in combination to support the recreation reserve coordination committees across the region and to help them manage their facilities in a way that maximises their use by multiple clubs and groups.

As outlined above, the SROC worked with one club to apply for grants to upgrade the Coominya Recreation Reserve, however currently no grants have been applied for.

The Lowood Recreation Complex Association (LRCA) manages the Lowood Recreation Complex on Council's behalf and therefore Council has vested interest in supporting the Association. The SROC attended several of the LRCA meetings during the 2013-2014 financial year. The LRCA was unable to hold their annual rodeo fundraiser in 2013 due to bad weather and the SROC offered assistance in promoting the facility to attract new events and activities and to assist in running other events and projects as required to bolster funds.

The SROC assisted in promotion of the facility by suggesting they develop a website, a Facebook page and to contact groups who currently use Coominya Oval about possibly moving to the Lowood venue. The SROC also provided assistance in reviewing and updating the LRCA's constitution and creating a better understanding and strengthening of their governance procedures.

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

The sport and recreation department worked hard during the 2013-2014 financial year to increase the level of assistance provided to clubs.

The 'Supporting Somerset Volunteers' events, designed to acknowledge and build Somerset sporting clubs and volunteer organisations, were very successful and well attended by clubs. Workshops in the 2013-2014 financial year included grant writing; good committees; marketing, media and communication; club governance; club health checks; and club laws. This program of events was coordinated and promoted by the SROC and other council officers; the SROC sourced funding for two of the workshops from the Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing (NPRSR).

The SROC worked closely with several tier one support clubs during the 2013-2014 financial year, as well as a multitude of second and third tier support clubs. Six clubs received the intensive tier one support under the three tier Club Support Program, within the NPRSR funded cluster, which the SROC developed and put in place in mid 2013. The SROC provided support to these clubs with grant applications, developing club manuals, developing club plans, updating club constitutions, updating policies and procedures, promoting club development opportunities and completing club health checks. The SROC also attended committee meetings for those clubs requiring more intensive assistance and promoted ideas, grants and professional development opportunities to all clubs via the Somerset Clubs Tips and Tricks email newsletter. Tier two clubs were able to book meetings with the SROC at the Esk Administration Office, rather than be visited by the SROC at their club as offered to the tier one support clubs.

The sport and recreation team also assisted clubs by:

- promoting the *Get Active and Healthy Somerset 2014* directory to clubs through emails, flyers and at community events;
- updating and promoting the *Active & Healthy Somerset Club Toolkit Resource* on Council's website;
- supporting the launch of sport and recreation funding by attending events and promoting the launch;
- assisting with successful grant applications and promoting the *Get Started* program to clubs to attract more junior members; and
- meeting with the Sport and Recreation Services advisor from NPRSR to ensure support continues into the future.

Grants approved

The sport and recreation team was successful in acquiring grants for Council (such as acquiring funding for club workshops) and in guiding clubs through the funding application process. A multitude of clubs were successful in their Council-assisted grant applications with funding sources including the Gambling Community Benefit Fund, *Caring for Our Community* grant, Council Community Assistance Grant and NPRSR *Get in the Game* grants.

Clubs have responded very positively to the assistance received from Council in writing grant applications.

Sports equipment library developed

Active and Healthy Somerset Resource Centre

The Active and Healthy Somerset Resource Centre has been integrated with Council's library service since 2009. During this financial year a promotional flyer/poster was developed in an effort to increase borrowing rates. The promotional material highlights the types of items available and the process involved in borrowing. The flyer/poster was distributed to all libraries in the region for display and to all schools for display and inclusion in school newsletters. Library staff were also briefed about raising community awareness of the collection, encouraging greater borrowing frequency and obtaining feedback from the community about what items they would like to see added to the collection.

The 2013-2014 financial saw an increase in the number of items borrowed from the Resource Centre with the figure increasing from 201 to 273. This indicates that the promotion of the resource centre was a success and that there are grounds to acquire additional equipment.

Advice is provided on an as needs basis

As outlined earlier in this report, the recommendations of Council's Parkland Strategies and Recreation Framework are being implemented progressively as resources become available. The sport and recreation department consistently made efforts during the 2013-2014 financial year to encourage the community to make use of recreation facilities through advertisements, publications and events and also attempted to assist a club in gaining a grant to upgrade the Coominya Recreation Reserve.

Implementation plans for sites along Mid Brisbane River for managed recreational use

Due to a lack of funding, this project was not completed during the 2013-2014 financial year. The sport and recreation department will work with other departments to progress this project upon receipt of Federal Government Funding.

Participation in local and regional forums

The sport and recreation team consistently engaged in local and regional forums and strategies during the 2013-2014 financial year. As outlined above, the sport and recreation team attended the Somerset Social Plan meetings, Brisbane Valley Interagency meetings and the Community Social Planning meeting in Esk. The SROC also attended the "Women and girls forum" in Toowoomba; at this forum, information was provided regarding the Ministerial Advisory Committee on Women and Girls in Sport and Recreation report "Start Playing, Stay Playing". In response to this report, the Queensland Government launched the *Get Out, Get Active* initiative, which provides local governments with funding to support sport and recreation activities for women. This funding will be applied for in the next financial year when it is available.

Input provided at meetings as required

As demonstrated earlier in this report, the sport and recreation team attended various meetings during the 2013-2014 financial year. These were with business, community and government organisations and involved opportunities to discuss key issues and to receive updates about various local, regional and state topics. Where relevant, information sourced from these meetings was provided to interagency groups and forums. This included information received at the Somerset Social Plan meetings; Brisbane Valley Interagency meetings; meetings with local clubs; meetings with the Sport and Recreation Services advisor from NPRSR; and discussions with various other stakeholders.

TOURISM AND PROMOTIONS

TOURISM INDUSTRY SUPPORT

Council provides a team of three full-time officers and one student based trainee to attend to a diverse range of daily administration and promotional projects. A pool of 40 volunteers

assist the team by attending two visitor information centres providing local knowledge to visitors to encourage them to stay longer and explore the region.

In 2013 the Council formed a Tourism Advisory Committee to directly inform Council on matters of tourism. The committee comprises representatives from Council, the Somerset Business Alliance, Kilcoy Chamber of Commerce and Community, Somerset Regional Tourism Association, Brisbane Marketing, Seqwater, Council's corporate services manager and Council's tourism and promotions officer.

The promotions and tourism officer takes an active role networking with Brisbane Marketing and counterparts in neighbouring regions to keep informed on upcoming opportunities and threats that may benefit or hinder local tourism.

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

Officers assist the local tourism organisation and operators with market advice, applications for grant funding and updates on promotional opportunities.

ADVOCACY

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

Council has signed a formal memorandum of understanding with Brisbane Marketing that has lead to an improved working relationship and direct funding benefits to boost the region's marketing. The tourism promotions officer communicates with Brisbane Marketing almost daily to leverage opportunities and facilitate initiatives on behalf of Council and the region's tourism operators.

An additional memorandum of understanding has given Council direct access to update content to the national on-line bank of tourism asset information, the Australian Tourism Data Warehouse (ATDW). The ATDW enables direct distribution of local information to dozens of partner websites and channels to promote local, interstate and international inbound tourism. Council is now able to directly control the quality and accuracy of information about Somerset's free of charge attractions and facilities.

Council attempted to negotiate a memorandum of understanding for cooperative tourism marketing with Lockyer Valley Regional Council and Ipswich City Council. While this MOU was not formally endorsed all parties have agreed in principle to maintain a cooperative relationship. The tourism promotions officer maintains close links with counterparts in Lockyer and Ipswich to help sustain this relationship.

PROMOTION AND ADVERTISING

Emphasis has been placed on advertising directly to caravan and camping markets and to Brisbane as our primary target market.

Advertising in 2013/14 utilised the Brisbane Visitor Guide, Wot's On in Queensland, The Queensland Times and smaller rural publications, and participation at trade exhibitions. Ipswich and local radio stations were engaged to increase specific event patronage for Australia Day and the Somerset Rail Trail Fun Run.

Council designed and published a regional visitor guide in 2012 that was well received with a distribution of approximately 2000 copies per month. Guides were distributed through Queensland visitor information centres, trade shows, tourism expos, events, direct mailings and local tourism enterprises.

Council promoted the region directly at the Ipswich Home and Lifestyle Expo in September 2013 and the Queensland Caravan, Camping and Touring Holiday Show in June 2014. The Caravan and Camping Show saw officers fielding thousands of public questions and distributing 3000 brochure packs. Local tourism operators attended the promotion on Council invitation to use the sponsored opportunity to promote their individual businesses directly to an audience of 70,000 patrons.

Council tourism promotions assist growth of local product by developing networks and providing an effective and efficient low cost marketing tool for regional operators. Initiatives include close working relationships with Brisbane Marketing, the regional visitor guide, focus on target markets, focus on visitor interests, development of marketing channels, developing web content, building databases, rationalising print promotion and integration of all aspects into a cohesive marketing package.

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.

Council has successfully obtained accreditation for Kilcoy as an RV Friendly Town through the Campervan and Motorhome Club of Australia's destination promotion program. Accreditation sees Kilcoy benefiting from direct marketing by the CMCA to 60,000 of its members.

This successful accreditation was supported by upgrades to the ANZAC Park rest area, ablution facilities and installation of a waste dump point at the Kilcoy Showground. Council will assess the benefits over time with a view to obtaining accreditation for other towns.

TOURISM STRATEGY

In March 2014 Council completed a consultation and community engagement process toward development of a destination management plan (tourism strategy). The project delivered a strategic document to assist Council in numerous areas of planning and marketing and to assist the community with business and lifestyle planning.

The strategy indicated a need for a strong regional tourism brand and provided a practical brand proposition that was taken up by Council and incorporated into tourism marketing in 2014.

Through the tourism promotions officer Council worked closely with Brisbane Marketing to develop the over arching tourism brand for the Greater Brisbane region with the slogan "Give me Brisbane Any Day". Similarly the tourism and promotions officer is assisting Brisbane Marketing to develop the over arching destination plan (tourism strategy) for the Greater Brisbane region.

The Somerset Destination Management Plan and regional tourism brand in conjunction with the Greater Brisbane Destination Tourism Plan will assist to position Somerset with a defined tourism identity and provide the strategic framework for marketing over the next five years.

HERITAGE

As heritage is a strong tourism driver, Council maintains an archive of heritage information and images in electronic format and physical storage. Elements are available to the public through the Council website and printed excerpts at the visitor information centres.

The visitor guide features four pages devoted to history and the Heritage Trail and a virtual historic drive route that highlights the regions churches, memorials and cemeteries. The guide extends distribution of this information with the electronic and on-line versions.

Council supported the establishment of the Toogoolawah and District History Museum by providing the Toogoolawah Railway Station building as a venue and through sharing of heritage information and in-kind support. This facility is manned by a volunteer force to provide a public access point for local heritage and genealogy.

Council continues to support the efforts of the Brisbane Valley Heritage Trails group with the tourism promotions officer attending group meetings where possible and networking with group members.

THE ARTS

The arts are another strong tourism driver and a growing industry in Somerset. Council has supported the arts with;

- A memorandum of understanding with the Somerset Art Society
- Funding renovation of the Esk Visitor Information Centre Great Room to create an art space
- Extending use of the facility for exhibitions to a full month free of charge
- Facilitating the establishment of the Old Courthouse Gallery in Kilcoy
- Collaboratively funding and project managing the Condensery project in Toogoolawah to develop a regional art gallery
- Managing the RADF grant processes

The visitor guide features a double page spread promoting regional art and defining a virtual art gallery trail by listing the community, public and private art spaces in the region.

Council also promotes local performing arts by actively seeking local performers to provide music and dance at Council sponsored events.

EVENTS

Events are increasingly important to the community and tourism in the region. Council supports this tourism component through its tourism team by providing advisory services on establishment, running, marketing and grant applications.

A monthly calendar of events is published online to assist organisations in the timing, preparation and promotion of regional events, and to market direct to the public. The listing includes tourism, community, sporting and cultural events.

To promote local and regional events Council maintains banner poles at Kilcoy, Toogoolawah, Esk and Lowood. Council continues to facilitate promotion of events and community information on the LED signs at Fernvale and Kilcoy.

In the 2013/2014 Council provided planning, promotion and event management for the Healthy Waterways Report Card Launch, workshops for the Volunteer Training Calendar project, 2013 Australia Day ceremony and festivities, the Somerset Rail Trail Fun Run, Seniors Week, International Volunteers Day, Regional Relations Dinners, Youth Week activities and other community events.

Promotional assistance was extended to major regional commercial events, 2013 Mud Bulls and Music and the 2013 Australian Lure Expo, with the promotions team and parks and gardens participating to provide on-ground assistance, advice, promotions and connection to grant funding as appropriate. An officer was assigned to assist the Wood Wine and Art Festival with promotion and project management.

TOURISM ATTRACTIONS REGISTER

Council maintains a public online listing of tourism attractions through the business and community directory. This free service encourages operators to register their businesses and update their listings to provide a readily accessible public database of local business contact details.

In addition the tourism team maintains a listing of tourism operators who actively participate with Council initiatives for regional marketing and promotion.

ESK VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRE

The Visitor Information Centre provides customer service to visitors and travellers passing through the Somerset region and caters for hire of the Great Room by community groups and Council departments.

During this period the Great Room was promoted as a dual purpose meeting room and arts space. The now Glenn Rock Gallery presented monthly rotating exhibitions of local artists that attracted visitors to the centre and assisted regional promotion.

For the reporting period, the Esk Visitor Information Centre catered for over 6011 visitors with 29% from Brisbane, 20% from South East Queensland, 18% from interstate and 11% local.

Fourteen volunteers provide regional promotion and travel information to visitors and the community seven days a week.

FERNVALE FUTURES COMPLEX

The Visitor Information Centre area of the Fernvale Futures Complex provides services to visitors and travellers passing through the Somerset region. The centre sees strong community use for hire of rooms. Council and service agencies also frequently utilise the rooms.

The centre manager also manages the Fernvale Showgrounds and Fernvale Community Hall with similar strong community use. A range of groups utilise the facility on a very regular basis offering an array of community activities include Fernvale Pony Club, Fernvale Community Church, Kachi Dojos Martial Arts, Fernvale Playgroup, Fernvale Girl Guides and the Fernvale Artists.

For the reporting period, the Fernvale Futures Complex catered for over 8174 visitors with 50% local, 21% from Brisbane and 21% from the rest of South East Queensland.

Fourteen volunteers provide regional promotion and travel information to visitors and the community seven days a week.

KILCOY INFORMATION CENTRE

The Kilcoy Information Centre was under construction in the 2013/14 year and will open to the public in the first half of the 2014/15 financial year.

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 and Kilcoy Council offices, and numerous libraries, works depots, SES depots, visitor information centres and other remote offices. There is also a growing requirement for end-user mobility.

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, online rate payments and access to flood camera images. Content and functionality for all web services is constantly reviewed and improved based on both internal and external customer feedback.

Participation in regional ICT forums and groups such as the SEQ CIO group at both local and state government level provides the ability to continually review strategies to ensure that they are in line with best practice and regional collaboration requirements.

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:-

Documents Registered	2013 - 2014	2012 - 2013	2011 - 2012
Total No. of Documents Registered	51,255	53,148	54,526
Incoming	14,796	13,927	14,048
Internal Documents	2,524	2,877	3,435
Outgoing Documents	13,153	11,503	11,613
Actioned Documents	9,123	9,207	9,192
Customer Requests	4,490	4,459	4,069
Councillor Requests	190	308	

Completed Response Time 2013 / 2014	
0 – 7 days	70.54
8 – 14 days	11.13
15 – 21 days	6.05
22 – 28 days	3.57
29 – 60 days	5.25
61 – 90 days	1.89
91 – 180 days	1.33
180+ days	0.24
TOTAL	100.00%

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

Right to Information Applications for Financial Year	2013 - 2014	2012 - 2013	2011 - 2012
	4	6	5

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Following are a list of outcomes for activities listed against the community development coordinator role or community liaison role in Council's 2013/14 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 continued to be facilitated by the CDC, and involves several health and social agencies doing a regular circuit of visits to Somerset communities – to raise residents' awareness of/increase access to available services.
- *Social Plan:* In order to gain a better understanding of health and other social service needs, the CDC role continued to assist in the development of the Somerset Social Plan – which identifies current and emerging health and social needs of the Region. A summary report is being distributed to the community.
- *Kilcoy Wellbeing Information Service:* The CDC continued to oversee the Kilcoy Wellbeing Information Service – a volunteer run information service on health and wellbeing services.
- *Community Connection Points:* The CDC is working with Council and the community to establish services in Esk and Toogoolawah which will host visiting services, including health services.

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.

The CDC is now delivering community development initiatives through the Somerset Region Neighbourhood Centre, rather than 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. Issues and events have included access to buildings and services for users of wheelchairs, Harmony Day in Kilcoy and NAIDOC in Lowood.

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

The CDC coordinated a team of Council and NGO partners to deliver a series of training workshops, a volunteer showcase and International Volunteers Day.

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

The CDC assisted Council in the implementation of the youth engagement strategy and

supported the newly engaged Youth Development Officer to deliver activities including National Youth Week.

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

The CDC continued to support the leadership of Council staff and seniors delivering the seniors day, and working with them to ensure seniors celebrations are effectively evaluated.

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 Hub, Our House and Stepping Stones – in addition to commencing development of new community centres in Esk and Toogoolawah.

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

The CDC has helped Council staff to successfully maintain five disaster community support groups across the Region, and has maintained the Esk/Somerset Dam group through facilitation and continuous engagement of new members.

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.

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

The CDC and the child and family officer have liaised with a local transport service provider and provided information and community feedback to assist in the development of a new transport service from Lowood.

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.

PLANNING SERVICES

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

NEW PLANNING SCHEME

Progressing the preparation of the new planning scheme for Somerset continues to be challenging due to a range of factors namely, changing state government requirements and consultant interaction. The draft planning scheme is now anticipated to be placed on public exhibition in the first quarter of 2015.

PLANNING SERVICES

The number of development applications received is an improvement on the previous year. This is an encouraging sign that the development industry may be improving. A breakdown of Development Applications received for Material Change of Use, Reconfiguring a Lot and Operational Work during the financial year are listed below.

FINANCIAL YEAR 2013-2014	APPLICATIONS	TOTAL
Development Applications	Combined	4
	Material Change of Use	35
	Operational Works	17
	Reconfiguring a Lot	26
	Building Works assessable against the Planning Scheme	37
	Siting Relaxations	29
	TOTAL	148
Planning Certificates		24
Plan Endorsements		19

Appeals carried over from previous years:
DA11832 – Appeal No BD920 of 2013 - Ebborn Pty Ltd vs Somerset Regional Council
DA13849 – Appeal No 504 of 2014 – Tipglance Pty Ltd vs Somerset Regional Council
DA12330 – Appeal No 936 of 2014 – Kanes Business Corporation vs Somerset Regional Council
DA14049 – Appeal No BD 1448 of 2014 – MBPI (Kilcoy) Pty Ltd vs Somerset Regional Council
DA9079 – Appeal No. 1774 of 2014 – Tipglance Pty Ltd vs Somerset Regional Council

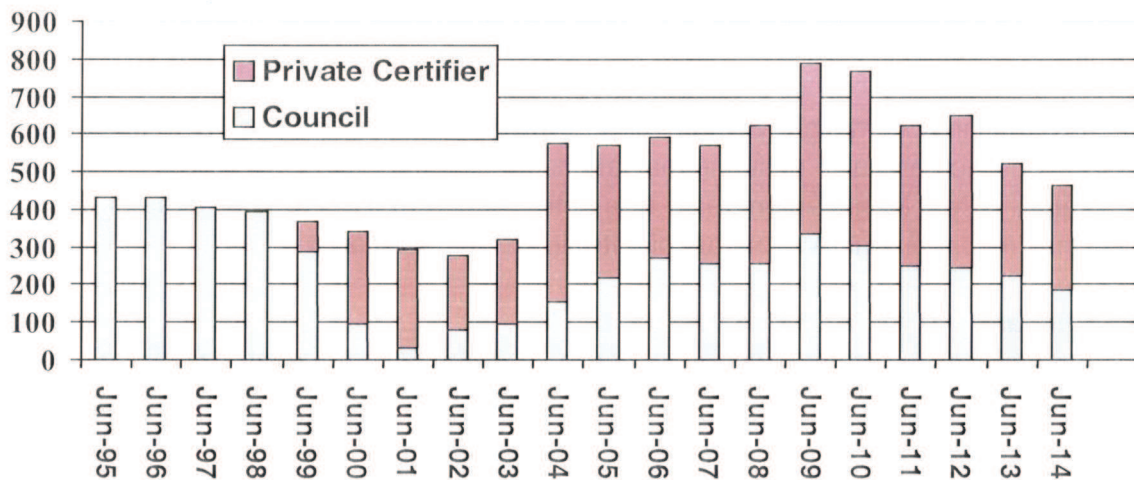
BUILDING SERVICES

Information sheets are available on a variety of topics on Council's website and hard copies are also available from Council's administration offices at Kilcoy, Esk and Lowood.

The information supplied is regularly maintained as the regulations and codes are changed. If you need assistance in navigating the website or finding answers, the customer service staff and building surveyors will assist.

Staff training has been maintained to ensure customer service is delivered in a timely and professional manner. The building staff levels have been reduced by natural attrition to reflect the current activity in the building sector. Geoff Brumpton (Level two Building Surveyor), Matt Simpson (Level three Building Surveyor) and Craig Stevens (Cadet Building Surveyor) continued to provide the building certification functions required for our community.

The Council's Building Surveying team continue to be registered with the Queensland Building and Construction Commission (formerly BSA). Council continues to provide an in-house approval and inspection service for building works in our region. Council also continues to provide a pool safety inspector service for those requiring a Pool Safety Certificate for the sale or lease of their properties.



The total number of building applications approved for the year was 463. Overall this is 11.5% down on last year's total of 523. Council's share of the total approved building applications has been maintained similar to the previous year at 40%. The number of new house approvals for this year was down on last year's 212 to 148 and included 27 in Lowood, 47 in Fernvale, 11 in Esk, 2 in Toogoolawah and 4 in Kilcoy the balance of 30 being spread through the rural landscape.

The associated graph indicates the trends in building approval activity in the region over the last twenty years. While there is currently a declining trend in building approval activity, the average level in the past decade substantially exceeds the prior decade and the share of approvals by Council has been steady. Council building staff is still associated with the correct processing and recording of privately certified building approvals.

PLUMBING SERVICES

Council's plumbing inspectors Pete Hoar and Troy Bayliss are responsible for the assessment and inspection of all compliance assessable plumbing and drainage works. They also maintain a register of servicing of the on-site sewerage disposal systems in the region. Their duties include response and investigation of complaints of non-compliant discharges and odour from overloaded or poorly maintained facilities.

The regulatory functions pertaining to Local Government enforcement of building and plumbing regulations have been performed when non-compliance is discovered. This is generally a thankless and revenue-negative function for Council's resources, however provides reassurance to our community that good governance of the buildings in the region is an ongoing objective of the Somerset Regional Council's Corporate and Operational Plans.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

PEST MANAGEMENT

Council 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* (the Act) and also ensuring that landholders comply with their obligations under the Act. Council's Pest Management team was active during the year in the areas of pest plant and animal management. A summary of activities is detailed below:

Pest Animals

Pest management officers have been active in the control of pest animals on Council controlled land throughout the 2013/14 year. Examples of these activities on Council controlled land are:

- Baiting of wild dogs, rabbits, pigs and foxes.
- Trapping of wild dogs, rabbits, pigs, foxes and cats.
- Destroying rabbit harbor on roads and reserves.



Destruction of a roadside rabbit harbor in Somerset.

Council operates a number of programs to assist private landholders in meeting their responsibilities under the act in relation to pest animal control including; baiting, provision of advice on the control techniques, assistance with trapping particularly where baiting options may not be suitable due to size or location and a wild dog bounty program.

Council operates a pest animal baiting program in conjunction with the Department of Agriculture Fisheries and Forestry. A total of 3932 wild dog baits were injected with 1080 and issued to participating landholders in the region which was an increase of 6% on the previous year. A total of 94kg of pig baits were mixed with 1080 and issued to landholders which as a decrease of 22% on the previous year.

Council offers a wild dog bounty applicable to landholders in the region. During the year a total of 185 wild dog bounties were claimed at a cost of \$4525 which is an increase of 42% on the previous year.

Pest Plants

Council's pest management team was active in controlling declared pest plants on Council controlled land. A total of 132,655 litres of herbicide was applied on Council controlled land compared to 107,899 litres in the previous financial year, which is an increase of 23%. Council successfully delivered declared pest plant control on Department of Transport and Main Roads land under a Road Maintenance Performance Contract to the value of \$65,000.

Council operates several programs to assist landholders meet their responsibilities under the Act relating to pest plant control, including:

- Chemical Subsidy Program - Council operates a subsidised herbicide program to provide support to landholders managing weed infestations. The chemical subsidy payment is conditional on the landholder having an approved property pest management plan. Eligible landholders can claim the subsidy for the control of Mother of Millions, Giant Rats Tail Grass, Parthenium and Annual Ragweed. During the financial year, \$5923 in chemical subsidies were paid to six landholders who took advantage of the program.
- Equipment Hire Program – Council operates an equipment hire program for the control of declared pest plants by landholders in Somerset. Council has two spray units and two wick wiper units for hire.
- Pest management officers also provide an onsite service to landholders providing advice on the most suitable pest control techniques relevant to their location and infestation.

In ensuring landholders meet their obligations under the act, pest management officers issued 126 pest control notices and 12 enter and clear notices to during the year.

Public Education

Throughout the year the pest management team placed a high priority on public education and awareness of pest related issues. The following pest education and awareness activities were conducted:

- The production of Pest Management Information Packs with details on Council's pest management programs.
- Officers attended five local shows and two field days providing displays, DAFF 'pest fact' sheets, Pest Management Information Packs and lectures on declared pests found in Somerset and guidance in managing these pests;
- Provision of advice and general information to landholders and the general public;
- Provision of DAFF 'pest facts' sheets and pest management Information packs at Council offices;
- Provision of pest management information on Council's website.

Research Projects

Peri-urban wild dog project

Council is a third party project partner in the project titled 'Limiting the Source – Peri-Urban Wild Dog Control'. The three year project is being run by the Invasive Animals Cooperative Research Centre in partnership with the Queensland Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, the NSW Department of Primary Industries, Meat and Livestock Australia and other participating local governments.

Council officers have been working with the project team and have commenced collection of data and samples. A summary of the project activities and outcomes is listed below:

- In conjunction with the project a disease study is being conducted by a PhD student through the School of Veterinary Science, The University of Queensland (Gatton Campus). The disease study will provide valuable information about the risks posed by wild dogs to human and animal health.
- The DNA study where tissue samples are collected from wild dogs that are euthanized as part of routine control programs will provide important data on the heritage/ancestry of wild dogs, and relatedness of populations. This can help to show source/sink populations, and encourage involvement by others in control and management of dog populations.
- Part of the project involves testing of new control techniques particularly where traditional techniques such as baiting is not available around smaller peri-urban land. The ejector study will demonstrate the issues surrounding ejector use, and get them into the public arena, which can be used to improve how we deploy them in future. This will be relevant to all peri-urban areas where ejectors are likely to be used. Testing lure types for ejectors will also help ensure we have useful lures to use.
- The diet work (e.g. scat collection) will also help understand food sources, and potential impacts of wild dogs
- Data collection of the impacts and management of wild dogs will help to provide a picture of the scale of the problem and will aim to demonstrate the situation (for example; are things improving or getting worse, and what things may be working).

Rabbit Research

Pest management officers have been assisting Biosecurity Queensland in the collecting samples from rabbits in the region during the year as part of a project to understand disease prevalence in rabbit populations and DNA studies of rabbit populations.

INSPECTION PROGRAMS

Council's environmental health officers are responsible for delivering an annual inspection and licensing program designed to achieve outputs listed in Council's Operational Plan. Inspection programs for food premises, environmentally relevant activities and poultry farms all of which are funded via a special charge levied on properties where the applicable businesses are operated. In addition officers regulate activities requiring approvals under Council's Local Laws such as Regulated Activities on Local Government Controlled Areas and Roads, Commercial Use of Roads and Temporary Entertainments Events and Stock Route Agistment Permits issued under the *Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management) Act 2002*. Details inspection and licensing information is detailed below.

Licensed Food Premises

A total of 158 food businesses were licensed during the year consisting of eight home based, 17 water carriers, 17 mobile, 14 temporary and 108 fixed food business.

All food businesses were inspected during the year for compliance with the *Food Act 2006* and the Food Safety Standards. Officers 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.

I'm ALERT Food Safety Training

Council subscribes 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. Visit www.somerset.imalert.com.au or follow the links on Council's website. The table below is a summary of usage of the training package.

VISITORS - SOMERSET REGIONAL COUNCIL

Current Month	Previous Month	Last Twelve Months	Last Financial Year	Since Subscribing
August 2014	July 2014	August 2013 to July 2014	2013 - 2014	From June 24, 2012
10	0	86	92	410

Environmentally Relevant Activities

Three environmentally relevant activities (ERA's) were inspected during the year. Changes made by the state government through the *Environmental Protection (Green Tape Reduction) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2012* have resulted in a significant reduction in the amount of ERA's administered by Council. These changes took effect from 31 March 2013, however Council retains the regulatory burden of residential and commercial environment nuisance under the *Environmental Protection Act 1994*.

Mosquito Management

Council's Environmental Health officers conducted mosquito surveys between January to March 2014, trialling a new type of adult mosquito trap. During the survey 63 traps were set within six towns in Somerset and 39 traps containing adult mosquitoes were collected. The primary purpose of the surveys was to monitor for the presence of dengue fever vectors *Aedes aegypti* and *Aedes albopictus* in line with the Queensland Government Dengue Management Plan 2010-2015. Importantly no *Aedes aegypti* and *Aedes albopictus* were detected during the surveys.

Council raises public awareness about mosquito management through Council's website, publications and officer contact.

SCHOOL BASED VACCINATION PROGRAM

Council delivers an adolescent school based vaccination program through a service agreement with the state. This agreement attracts conditional funding of more than \$15,000 per year and is set to expire at the end of 2015. In March 2014, Queensland Health endorsed a new Health Management Protocol which will expire in 2016.

As the agreement is based on a calendar year, with three clinics at each school throughout the year, please find below information pertaining to the 2013 calendar year.

Council conducted six school-based vaccination clinics during the year, three each at Lowood and Toogoolawah High Schools. Vaccines offered were:

Year 8: Hepatitis B (H-B-VAXII), Chicken Pox (Varilrix) and Human Papillomavirus (HPV-Gardasil). The 2013 calendar year was the final year for the Hepatitis B (H-B-VAXII) vaccine was included in the School Based Vaccination Program due to changes to the early childhood program.

Year 10: a combined Diphtheria, Tetanus and Whooping Cough (Pertussis) booster (dTpa-boostrix) and Human Papillomavirus (HPV-Gardasil) for year 10 boys.

Council has been working closely with schools and Queensland Health to increase participation rates and increased form return rates for the program. The overall participation rate for the year was 83.71% which was an increase of 0.95% on the previous year. Total form return rates were 80.82% which is a 1.06% decrease on the previous year. Please refer to the table below for a comparison of the 2012 and 2013 calendar years for form return rates and vaccination rates.

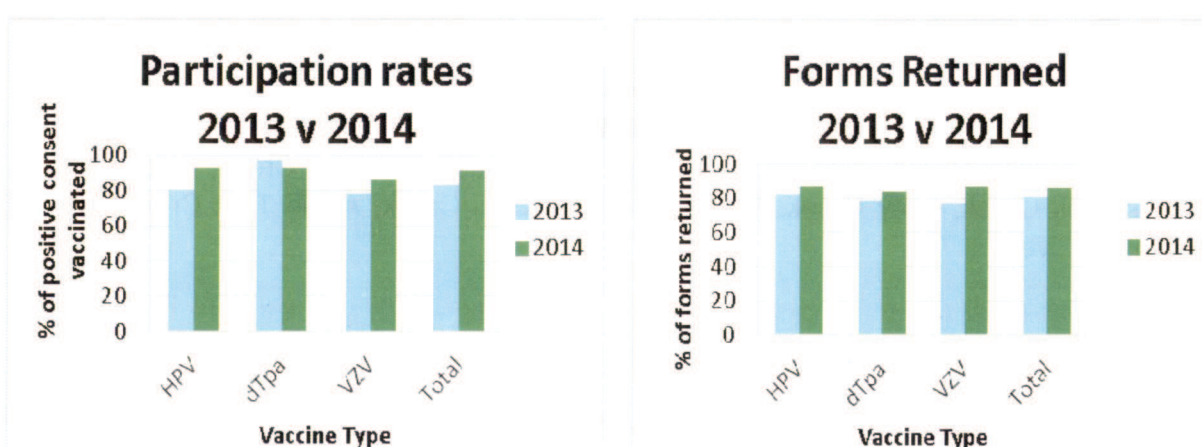


There have been some changes to the vaccination program for 2014 onwards, due to the removal of the Hepatitis B vaccine from grade 8 and the addition of dTpa to grade 8. By 2016, all school vaccinations will occur in grade 8, reducing the number of interruptions to students schooling.

So far, the figures for 2014 are demonstrating increases in overall participation rates and form returns. As part of the funding agreement with Queensland Health, Council is eligible for additional incentive payments for meeting targets for improving coverage across the program.

There are four possible incentive payments which can be achieved for form return and participation rates within the dTpa and HPV vaccines. Based on current figures as at clinic 2 for 2014, Council is on track to meet all four targets. The fourth target can only be assessed once clinic three has been completed in October, 2014.

Please note below the current comparisons between 2013 and 2014 data. This information does not include clinic three however current indications are that improvements have been achieved.



WATER QUALITY MONITORING

Public Swimming Pools

Council conducts monthly monitoring of public swimming pools during the swimming season at Lowood, Toogoolawah and Kilcoy to monitor for compliance with Queensland Health guidelines.

Private Supplies

Environmental health officers provide residents with a drinking water quality advice service in accordance with Queensland Health guidelines. Council also offers a private drinking water supply monitoring service. During the year environmental health officers collected 64 samples for submission and analysis against criteria listed in the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines.

Healthy Waterways

Council continues to be a member of the *HealthyWaterplay* project which is coordinated by SEQ Healthy Waterways. This project aims to achieve the organisational 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.

SEQ Catchments

Environmental health officers assisted SEQ Catchments in monitoring selected locations in local creeks and the rivers for physical and chemical characteristics. In total nine sites are regularly monitored including sites on Northbrook Creek, Wallaby Creek, Reedy Creek, Cressbrook Creek, Ivory Creek, Maronghi Creek, Emu Creek, Apple Tree Creek and the Brisbane River.

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 organisations. Examples of collaborations over the past financial year include:

- Regular attendance at SEQ Council of Mayors, Environment and Sustainability Committee including associated technical groups such as Regional Corridors Technical Working Group.
- Close liaison with researchers from the University of Queensland on local koala research to develop locally relevant solutions.
- In partnership with Healthy Waterways and local contacts promoted the Connect to Your Creek program with canoeing activities on Brisbane River and at Stanley River Environmental Centre.

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:

- Greater emphasis on local high schools assisting in National Tree Day activities with nearby primary school
- Working with local commercial nursery to improve access to free tree scheme
- Supported over 80 participants in the region involved in the Land for Wildlife program

Pursue funding to implement remediation works.

- Secured additional \$100,000 from SEQ Catchments/Lockyer Valley Regional Council to target localised restoration projects along portions of Lockyer Creek impacted by previous floods.
- Completed a program in partnership with SEQ Catchments and Lockyer Valley Regional Council to allow Murra Innovations trainees to undertake weed removal along reaches of Lockyer Creek.

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

- Coordinated several Council workshops and reports to consider various koala conservation initiatives including formation of Brisbane Valley Koala Conservation Precinct Steering Committee which includes participation by SEQ Water, AgForce, University of Queensland, Bob Irwin Foundation and local wildlife carer.
- Adopted a policy which seeks to balance animal conservation and community concerns, to guide Council on management of Flying Fox Roosts under delegation powers relating to these animals.

Maintain Council land and assets.

- Adopted new process for permitting controlled burn offs on roadsides in partnership with Queensland Emergency Services.
- Ongoing facilitation of Somerset Region Environment and Educational Group interaction regarding management of Jensen Swamp (including commissioning of new toilet facility, commemorative plantings, flood impact and repair).

If requested, provide assistance to community groups with the preparation of applications for grants.

Following from success of previous grant writing workshops for local community groups, Council has organised further workshops to expand community capacity to source grants.

Participate in local and regional forums and strategies.

Attendance and participation in various regional discussions regarding NRM including SEQ Fire and Biodiversity Consortium, Mid Brisbane River and Lockyer Valley Steering Committees and Brisbane Valley Kilcoy Landcare. Assisted EHP in hosting Groundwater Dependant Ecosystem workshops across Somerset.

Apply for government funding for labour market programmes.

Applications made seeking federal Biodiversity Funds, and sponsored local groups in seeking Everyone's Environment Grants for projects within the region.

REGULATORY SERVICES

The role of Council's regulatory services team is to ensure outcomes are met to provide a level of service to the community that is acceptable and within the fairness and expectations of a small regional council covering large distances with limited resources.

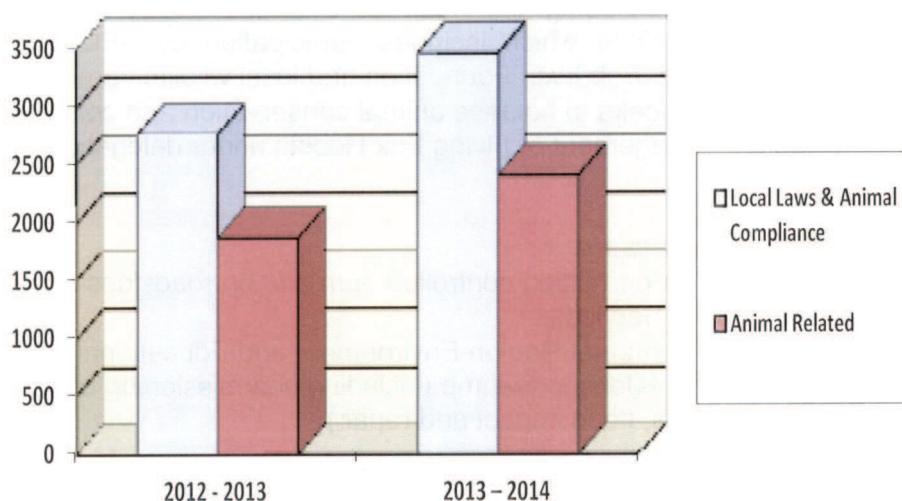
This report reflects on the past year and demonstrates the performance and achievements of the regulatory services section for the 2013/2014 year.

Investigate and take action on animal / local law complaints

Regulatory Services is made up of three regulatory services officers and one local laws officer. Below outlines the diverse range of requests officers attended to and completed within acceptable time frames and customer expectations.

Customer Service Requests for Local Laws and Animal Compliance

CUSTOMER SERVICE REQUESTS	2012 - 2013	2013 – 2014
Local Laws and Animal Compliance	2773	3459
Animal Related	1875	2403



Requests and services increased by 19% (686) on last years figures.

The table below shows the individual breakdown of complaints and duties:

WORK TYPE CATEGORY			
2013-2014			
Animal Attack - Animal	60	Request – Impound Vehicles	115
Animal Attack - Person	40	Illegal Camping	6
Animal Trap Hire	69	Infringement Notices Issued	46
Barking Dogs	110	Kennel Inspections	54
Dogs Wandering at Large	206	Local Laws - Searches	294
Nuisance	37	Local Law - Investigations - Misc	174
Visual Pollution	46	After Hours - Callout - Stock	115
Litter/ Illegal Dumping	85	After Hours - Callout - Dogs	21
Livestock Wandering at Large	229	Compliance - Inspections	496
Miscellaneous Animal Issues	410	Miscellaneous Dog Issues	213
Overgrown Allotments	299	Request - Impound Animals	334
			TOTAL: 3459

After Hours Service

Regulatory Services manages a dedicated after hours service to the region. Officers attended to 136 callouts during the period. The majority of calls related to stock wandering on roads and dog attacks. Council works in conjunction with the emergency services and other organisations, when required.

Encourage Responsible Pet Ownership

Council acknowledges many social, health and economic benefits of animal ownership in Somerset. While animals provide a wealth of benefits to their owners, it is important for the health and wellbeing of our community, as well as the ongoing protection of our environment that Council works with residents to ensure animals are appropriately cared for and managed.

Council has a range of programs, initiatives and information which are all designed to assist residents in their ownership of animals, including outdoor activities with dogs, tips for purchasing the right pet for your home, and the steps to locating lost animals.

Currently there are 3100 pet owners registering 4169 animals in the region.

During this period several fact sheets have been made available to the public including information on the Somerset Regional Council website. Fact sheets are free and provide an easy reference on a variety of topics.

Regular information pieces have been included in the Somerset Lifestyle and issued to the community through media releases.

Regulatory services will continue to produce further information and education tips to animal owners as we plan for population growth for not only humans but cats and dogs.

Conduct an ongoing compliance program for dogs/cats, breaches of local laws and kennels across the region.

Kennel Inspection Program

Regulatory services is responsible for the compliance of the regions approved kennels through the administration of the Integrated Planning Scheme and Council Local Laws. Officers inspected 54 kennels over the reporting period with the majority of kennels complying with the conditions and obligations of their development application or lawful use. All kennels were inspected and completed within the required time frames.

Patrols

Officers patrols undertake activities such as locating and impounding wandering dogs, illegal road side vending, and people engaging in prohibited/restricted activity for example selling cars on a road reserve. The service operates by patrolling community areas and identifying problems within the area. Patrols are a tool to identify unregistered animals, animal offences and presenting to the public a positive proactive involvement in the community. During the reporting period almost 500 compliance enquiries were followed up and successful outcomes met.

Patrols are conducted on weekdays and weekends at various times and locations. Officers continue to monitor markets for illegal road side selling of animals.

Somerset Regional Pound

Council's Pound and Animal Management Centre is open Monday to Friday from 8.30am - 4 pm by appointment (closed weekends and public holidays). Small domestic animals are housed at Esk and large animals at Coominya. The total number of animals impounded remained steady with no notable increases from other reporting periods. Re-housing of animals' is becoming increasingly difficult with animal re-housers unable to accept animals due to being full and struggling to find people to adopt.

The numbers of animals impounded over the period reached 334 of that number 215 were suitable for re-housing.

OPERATIONS

The operations department is responsible for all service delivery associated with operational activities undertaken by Council and the provision of engineering support to other areas of council and to external customers. Officers have been involved in various working groups such as the Council of Mayors, The Brisbane River Catchment Flood Study, The Regional Roads Group, The Regional Asset Management Group and the Disaster Management Engagement Group.

Council is well advanced with the restoration of public assets damaged in the 2011 and 2013 flood events. The only outstanding project from 2011 is the restoration of Mahons Road, which was not able to be restored on the original alignment. Following the investigation of options and a public meeting to gauge community sentiment, Council has decided not to restore the most damaged sections and to create a “no through road” with cul-de-sacs at the end of the useable sections of the old alignment.

Much of the restoration work associated with damage that occurred in 2013 has either been completed, underway or has been tendered with contracts let. All work is scheduled for completion by 30 June 2015.

Council has provided additional funds to enable the restoration of some assets to a higher standard, in an attempt to limit damage from future flood events. The State Government have also provided betterment funding to enable Council to replace nine damaged timber bridges with concrete structures and to upgrade a number of causeways by adding concrete approaches.

WORKS

All flood restoration works from the devastating floods of January 2011 were completed by 30 June 2014, and the flood restoration works from January 2013 are well advanced with works to be completed by 30 June 2015. Council has worked with the Queensland Reconstruction Authority (QRA) and obtained necessary approvals for works with the final damage bill of the 2013 floods estimated to cost \$36M. Further, Council took the opportunity to apply for betterment funding to enable restoration of some assets with improved flood resilience. Council was very successful with its betterment submissions, with thirty projects totalling \$14,213,352 approved. Of these thirty projects, seven existing timber bridges will be replaced and two bridges constructed to replace existing causeways. Delivery of works is well under way with work being performed by a combination of Council day labour and contractors. All civil contractors engaged within the flood restoration program live within or near the region and are using local resources, where possible, to deliver the restoration program, hence providing further economic benefit to the community.

Due to the rules of the Natural Disaster Recovery and Relief Arrangement (NDRRA), Council day labour has only been able to deliver a small component of the flood recovery program. Council is however using its workforce to deliver as many betterment projects as possible. Council day labour has also been actively constructing capital works projects and maintenance programs across the region. In addition to the capital and maintenance

programs, Council has also delivered a 'safer roads sooner' project on Wivenhoe Somerset Road on behalf of Department of Transport and Main Roads.



Ted Gaults Bridge, Harlin

RESTORATION OF ESSENTIAL PUBLIC ASSETS (REPA)

Council's 2011 flood restoration program was completed by 30 June 2014, as required under the NDRRA guidelines with flood restoration works from 2013 floods well under way with completion required by 30 June 2015. QRA announced the outcome of Council's betterment submission in December 2013, with thirty projects approved. Council has advanced quickly with this program with several betterment projects completed or under construction. The type of projects delivered under REPA and betterment has been extensive and some highlights are: Lowood Minden Road - pavement reconstruction, Lake Manchester road - new concrete causeway, Mountain View Road - Batter stabilisation & road restoration, Rocky Gully Road - double lane raised concrete causeway, Foggs Road - new concrete bridge, Mount Stanley Road - new concrete bridge and upgrade of several concrete crossing, Seib Street Kilcoy - pavement reconstruction, Post Office Lane Kilcoy - pavement reconstruction, Mount Kilcoy Road - pavement reconstruction and drainage restoration.

QRA completed an audit led by Mr John Fahey and members of the federal inspectorate in February 2013. The Federal inspectorate was satisfied and impressed with Council's delivery processes as implemented. It was noted that Council met the objective to deliver 'value for money' while supporting the local economies. Council successfully lodged various REPA submissions with the QRA undertaking infield assessments with all approvals granted. The REPA works were bundled into contracts based on work areas/type to ensure 'value for money' outcomes where achieved. All tenders have been awarded with the exception of Mahon Road at Patrick Estate.

Mahon Road was initially severely damaged in 2011 and impacted again in 2013 with increased damage. Due to the high repair cost (minimum of \$6M) associated with this road, Council investigated a number of options, including the possible re-alignment of a section of the road. Following consultation with the community it was felt that the high cost relocation was not the best use of public money and a decision was made not to reinstate the through road, but to construct cul-de-sac's to provide access to local residents only.

To further enhance flood recovery projects, Council provided funds in the 2013/2014 budget for complementary works, which enabled Council to 'value add' to some flood restoration works to provide an improved outcome for Council at minimum cost. Examples include constructing the causeway to double lane standard on Rocky Gully Road, Installing Kerb & Channel in Seib Street, Kilcoy, upgrading stormwater drainage in Post Office Lane, Kilcoy.



Foggs Bridge, Harlin

ROADS AND STREETS

As most of the road network was impacted by flood restoration works, Council has closely monitored and programmed its road and street maintenance works to ensure works are performed efficiently.

Our higher volume roads which are also known as local roads of regional significance have seen ongoing capital improvements across the region. One such project was the pavement strengthening, widening and bitumen surfacing on Gregors Creek Road.

Other road upgrades have been completed on Silverleaves Road at Mount Beppo, James Street in Lowood, Brown Street in Kilcoy, Burns Street in Fernvale, Main Street in Lowood, Seib Street in Kilcoy, Post Office Lane in Kilcoy, Winya Road at Winya.



Silverleaves Road, Toogoolawah

BITUMEN SEALING AND RE-SEALING

Since the floods, Council has needed to program reseals with consideration being given to the location of flood restoration works, to ensure efficient programming of reseals. Council also completed some asphalt overlay reseals at Cressbrook Street in Toogoolawah, Lowood Minden and Zabels Road North intersection in Minden and William Street in Kilcoy. Council's reseal program is ongoing and implements efficient practices to keep the road network well maintained.

Council has continued with its bitumen infill program within the regions towns to improve overall amenity. Streets that were bitumen upgraded include Heap Street, Esk and James Street, Lowood.

BRIDGES AND CULVERTS

As a direct result of the floods, Council reconstructed a further four bridges during the last year. The bridges reconstructed include Foggs Bridge on Foggs Road, Ted Gault Bridge on Maronghi Creek Road, Eskdale Ivory Creek Road Bridge and Old Man Camp Road Bridge with the last two bridges being replaced by concrete causeways. Further, Council was successfully in its application to construct a new bridge at Walshes Crossing at Mount Kilcoy under the Natural Disaster Resilience Program (NDRP). The NDRP is a Federal & State Government initiative to increase resilience within the community. The newly constructed two lane concrete bridge has been designed to cater for a Q30 flood event and will greatly assist the community during flood periods and provides an alternative access when the bridge at Kilcoy Creek on the D'Aguilar Highway is submerged.

Council has also been very successful with Federal and State funded betterment program. This program will see a further seven timber bridges replaced with durable concrete bridges along with two new bridges replacing causeways that have received ongoing flood damage over history. Many of these bridges are presently under construction or in the final stages of design.



Walshes Crossing, Kilcoy

DRAINAGE WORKS

Council's capital program continues to have a strong focus on drainage improvement works within the townships of the region. Projects included:- improvement to table drains and flow paths in Linville Town, new underground stormwater drainage in Post Office Lane and Seib Street in Kilcoy, enhanced stormwater drainage in William Street, Kilcoy, new underground stormwater drainage in Heap Street Esk, new underground stormwater drainage in James Street Lowood, and improvements to Esk Visitor Centre drainage and car park.

New kerb and channelling was completed in Burns Street in Fernvale, Main Street in Lowood, and Seib Street in Kilcoy.



Williams Street, Kilcoy

FOOTPATHS AND BIKEWAYS

With the assistance of State Government subsidy funding (40%), Council embarked on a project to replace and beautify the footpath in William Street Kilcoy. This project was to replace a fatigued uneven concrete surface replaced with new modern paving which is in keeping with other footpaths within the Kilcoy Town centre. As part of the project, underground stormwater was enhanced and fresh kerb and channel installed. To complete the project new asphalt surfacing with fresh line marking was completed in William Street Service Road.

Council continues to recognise the need to expand its footpath network in the region. A large footpath project was undertaken in Toogoolawah Town during the year to provide safe pedestrian and mobility scooter access between the Town Centre and Alkira aged person's accommodation. Other new footpaths/bikeways constructed throughout the year include: Clive Street in Fernvale, Park Street in Lowood, Vine Street in Coominya, Burns Street in Fernvale, Heap Street in Esk and a gravel path around the skate park facility in Lowood. The paved area at the Fernvale Community Centre was replaced and enhanced to provide an improved area for community functions.



Burns Street, Fernvale

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 region's towns functional and tidy.

Improvements have been carried out in several of Council's recreational facilities. This includes embellishments to the recently constructed dog off leash areas in Kilcoy and Esk to provide an improved experience for dog owners to let their dogs off leash in a safe environment. New park facilities have been installed in Haslingden Park transforming this once vacant park area into a fully functional park with picnic tables and playground equipment. Council has also installed new playground equipment for parks in Glamorgan Vale and Kilcoy. Council also engaged with the community before selecting a site for the upgraded playground for McConnell Park in Toogoolawah. Procurement of this playground equipment is in progress with new playground facilities expected to be installed by late 2014.

Council free tree program has once again been made available to encourage the community to plant trees and be mindful of our environment.

DEVELOPMENT – OPERATIONAL WORKS

The construction of approved Development Works continues to be encouraged within the region. Projects include the completion of works for subdivision at Neurum Road - Kilcoy, Atthow Street – Kilcoy, Lavender Hill Stage 4 - Fernvale, Schmidt Road – Fernvale, Cooper Road – Haigslea, Uniting Church – Fernvale, road upgrades to reservoirs by QUU, and access works for Poultry farm on Gatton Esk Road and West Road – Coominya.



From left to right: Completion of works for subdivision at Neurum Road – Kilcoy, Cooper Road – Haigslea, and Road upgrades to reservoirs by QUU

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 program 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.

Council continued an e-Waste recycling scheme for Somerset Region, in conjunction with Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water and Population and Communities (SEWPaC) and the company, DHL. The National Television and Computer Recycling Scheme involves a combination of government regulation and industry action to reduce the amount of television and computer waste going into the landfill and to increase the recovery of resources. This program was implemented at the Esk and Kilcoy Transfer Stations, with items also accepted at the Coominya and Harlin Transfer Stations to be recycled. The e-Waste program has proved to be very successful.

The "Drum Muster" program continues to be available to residents in the region. The program provides for eligible drums to be collected from residents free of charge, for them to be recycled without going into the landfill, and for Council to be reimbursed for the costs of the program.

Council approved the funding of another cell for the Esk Refuse and Recycling Centre and Landfill. This will be the third of six planned cells and is estimated to provide six (6) years of service at existing rates until the next cell will need to be constructed.

Council accepted a total of 29,132m³ of waste at the landfill, an increase of 3.4% from the previous year.

Council reviewed the results of a Kerbside Recycling and Waste Services Survey in May and decided to leave the existing services as is within the region. Residents in the former Kilcoy Shire receive kerbside recycling, while more than 60% of residents of the former Esk Shire who completed the survey were against the introduction of kerbside recycling. Recycling continues to be available at the region's refuse sites and available 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. The lawn and monumental sections of Council's cemeteries have continued to be regularly used.

Council has continued the surveying of the grave plots in its cemeteries and recording them into its asset management database with the goal to have all cemetery records and plans available electronically to the public.

Council reviewed and updated the layouts of the cemeteries during the year. The layouts included elements for access, parking, and future expansion.

CUSTOMER SERVICE SYSTEM

Somerset Regional Council has received a total of 6607 customer service requests received from members of the public for the period 01 July 2013 through to 30 June 2014.

Month	No. of CSR's Received	Corporate Services	Planning	Operations
July 2013	529	15	227	287
August 2013	418	17	196	205
September 2013	509	25	213	271
October 2013	520	21	266	233
November 2013	569	14	262	293
December 2013	455	9	229	217
January 2014	593	12	321	260
February 2014	647	7	337	303
March 2014	630	22	260	348
April 2014	619	16	213	390
May 2014	642	8	369	265
June 2014	476	10	294	172
TOTAL	6607	176	3187	3244

Council also received a total of 188 requests for action and/or investigation from Councillors and Senior Management for this financial year.

DISASTER MANAGEMENT

FLOOD MAPPING

During the course of 2013/14 Council commissioned floods studies for Kilcoy and Toogoolawah. These flood studies help augment the currently list of studies completed and are used for future planning and disaster management purposes.

Council continues to be heavily involved with the working group focussing on The Brisbane River Catchment Flood Study. This study of the Brisbane River, including areas of the Lockyer Creek that impact Somerset and will assist Council in developing plans to prepare and respond to flooding in those areas.

DMEG (SOUTH EAST QUEENSLAND DISASTER MANAGEMENT GROUP)

Following the 2011 Flooding a number of SEQ Council's sought to establish a group and meet on a quarterly basis. The meetings, which have been held since 2012, are used to facilitate discussion between the members in regards to disaster management issues that confront councils. The group also gives the Council's a united voice when it comes to dealing with Government Departments and/or Agencies. During the 2013/2014, a Terms of Reference was developed to help formalise the arrangements and seek each Council's endorsement of the group.

Membership consists of the following local authorities; Brisbane City Council, Gold Coast City Council, Gympie Regional Council, Ipswich City Council, Lockyer Valley Regional Council, Logan City Council, Moreton Bay Regional, Council, Noosa Shire Council, Redland City Council, South Burnett Regional Council, Scenic Rim Regional Council, Sunshine Coast Regional Council, and Toowoomba Regional Council.

EMERGENCY SERVICES RESTRUCTURE

The Keelty review proposed several recommendations, one of which was to integrate Emergency Management Qld (EMQ) and the Qld Fire and Rescue Service (QFRS) within the department of Qld Fire and Emergency Services (QFES). As a result of this change the State Emergency Service (SES) now falls with the control of this new department. The Commissioner of QFES has advised Council that the new restructure will have minimal operational impact on the Somerset community and be pretty much business as usual for the region.

GETREADY QUEENSLAND

Get Ready Week in Queensland was marked from 14-20 October 2013 and as a result Somerset Regional Council conducted several initiatives about emergency preparation. During the week Council:

- Delivered a preparedness newsletter to every household in the region
- Promoted a "Free" important document scanning service at each of our library facilities throughout the region.

- Purchased a number of Town Entry banners and Visual Display devices that will be used to promote Bushfire and Storm season preparedness.

LOCAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT GROUP (LDMG)

The Somerset Local Disaster Management Group (LDMG) met quarterly throughout the course of the year to discuss all aspects of disaster mitigation, prevention, preparedness, and response for the region.

The LDMG is a joint management group comprising local and state government and other agencies involved in disaster response.

LOCAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT PLAN (LDMP)

Council's Local Disaster Management Plan (LDMP) was updated by Council and subsequently reviewed by Queensland Police and Emergency Management Queensland as part of the annual review process. The plan was accepted and endorsed as compliant.

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

CAMERAS

Council have now installed 10 cameras throughout the region, 8 of which display images to the public via Council's website. Images can be viewed in 'real-time' or displayed on the website at 15 minute intervals. The images available provide Council's Incident Management Team (IMT) valuable intelligence during extreme weather events.



Select a camera to view:

[Esk - Gallanani Creek](#)
[Fernvale - Geoff Fisher Bridge](#)
[Fernvale - Savages Crossing](#)
[Fernvale - Twin Bridges](#)
[Lowood - Lyons Bridge](#)
[Lowood - Pointings Bridge](#)
[Kilcoy - Kilcoy Creek Bridge](#)
[Mount Stanley - Crossing No 1](#)

Fernvale - Twin Bridges

Wivenhoe Pocket Road
(GPS -27.436808, 152.633958)

[View Google map](#)

Refresh

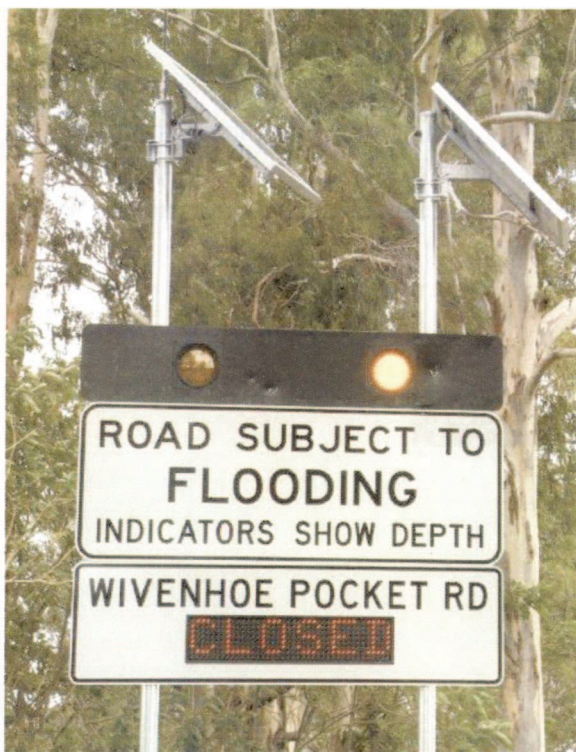
Council's website showing 8 cameras in operation



Images of Gallanani Creek on the Brisbane Valley Highway during inundation on 23 January 2014

WATER OVER ROAD SIGNS

Council have installed electronic water over road signs along the Brisbane River at Savages Crossing and Twin Bridges (both in Fernvale). Using levels from the Brisbane River, Council can monitor the crossings and automatically trigger the signs to advise motorists of the hazard ahead.



Variable Message Signs - Trailer Mounted

To assist in getting messages out to the Community during extreme events, Council have purchased two (2) VMS trailers. These units are solar powered and can be configured remotely using 3G technology.



Road Closures and Integration to 131940

The QITPlus Road Closure module has been completed and has been integrated with the Department of Main Roads (DTMR) 131940 service. Road closures entered into our system are automatically displayed on Council's and DTMR's website. This is a major advancement in an area that occupies much of Council's resources during an event.

QIT Plus :: Road Closures

State Wide Data Consolidation
[: Somerset RC :]

[Home](#)
[New Closure](#)
[Known Trouble Spots ▼](#)
[Map ▼](#)
[Reports ▼](#)
[Manage Lists ▼](#)

Currently Impacted Roads (2 records) 🗺️ 🔍

+

-

MAHON ROAD

COOMINYA

Closed

Closed to all vehicles
road damage

Quick Detail
Full Detail
Reset View

SOMERSET REGION STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE

During the July 2013 / June 2014 period, members of Council's SES Unit have made a valuable contribution to the local community through 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.

During the past twelve months, Somerset SES Unit volunteers logged almost 7,000 hours of service committing their "spare" time to numerous training and operational activities. The Unit added seven new members to its ranks during 2013-14.

RESOURCES (PERSONNEL AND EQUIPMENT)

The membership level of the Unit varied through the year with up to 70 active volunteers attending training and activations.

Each group is accommodated in purpose-built headquarters consisting of training/operations, administration, vehicle/equipment storage and kitchen areas. The Kilcoy SES Group's headquarters was extended to include a new vehicle storage area to house the group's lighting truck and flood boat.

The Unit's transport fleet consists of five 4-wheel drive passenger vehicles, a truck-mounted emergency lighting tower, four flood boats and a range of equipment trailers.

TRAINING ACTIVITIES

Members and officers have maintained and improved their skills in nationally recognised and accredited fields of leadership, instruction and specific fields of training in emergency-related topics.

All four groups have undertaken basic training elements of Safety, CPR / First Aid, and Volunteering in the SES as the new recruits have been introduced to the Unit's training programme.

Many SES members hold formal qualification in Traffic Control and First Aid 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 administration, training and stores officers have conducted weekly evening training activities to maintain their members' range of skill levels.

The Unit's training programme is overseen effectively by Deputy Controller Matthew Pinder, Kilcoy Group Leader Francine Jones and Lowood Deputy Group Leader Paul Williams.

Members of this Unit and also from Ipswich City participated in a valuable Land Search exercise in conjunction with Regional QPS officers in November, covering difficult terrain in the Kipper Creek Road Dundas area.

OPERATIONAL TASKS

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

- Searches for missing persons in Lowood, Redbank and Browns Plains areas
- Storm damaged residences in Coominya, Esk, Kilcoy, Lowood, Toogoolawah, Nanango and areas
- Providing lighting and refreshments for QPS at accident scenes

PUBLIC AWARENESS & FUNDRAISING

The Unit's markets the "Vollie Brollie" 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 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

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

Our SES Groups combined to assist with the staging of a number of sporting events and other activities including the Motocross at Dundas, the annual "Mud, Bulls & Music" and Off Road Expo events in Jimna, Lifecycle Avanti Cycling Classic in the Lowood area, the Lowood rodeo, the Wivenhoe Winter Sailing Classic on Lake Wivenhoe, the 2013 Brisbane Valley Rail Trail Fun Run, Archer Falls fly-in and ANZAC Day services and parades.

SES groups continue to enhance community safety by installing and replacing property numbers throughout the rural community on behalf of Somerset Regional Council.



CONCLUSION

The SES groups in Esk, Kilcoy, Lowood and Toogoolawah have been acknowledged by other emergency organisations and the community in general as a valuable local resource. Volunteer SES members are committed to providing emergency all-weather assistance "around the clock" to residents, travellers, other emergency services and Council within the Somerset region and beyond.

HUMAN RESOURCES AND CUSTOMER SERVICE

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

INTRODUCTION

This report has been prepared by the Manager Human Resource and Customer Service and details Somerset Regional Council human resource activities for the period 1 July 2013 – 30 June 2014.

STAFF

Status	Number of employees as at 30 June 2013	Number of employees as at 30 June 2014
Full-Time	161	162
Part-Time	10	8
Temporary	1	2
Casuals	15	11
Supported Wage	1	1
Apprentice	2	3
School-Based Trainee	7	6
TOTAL	197	193

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

Somerset Regional Council's certified agreements were due to expire on 30 June 2014.

However, Local Government industry is currently going through an award modernisation process with the State Government requesting the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission (QIRC) to modernise all state awards, including those applying to local government. In Local Government, the QIRC is working towards one award to cover all employees of Councils in Queensland.

All enterprise bargaining negotiations have been suspended until a new modernised award is complete as legislation will not allow new agreements to be ratified until a new award is made. The new award is scheduled to be finalised by 30 September 2014. Certified Agreements that were due to expire on 30 June 2014 have been extended to 1 October 2014.

Current Somerset Regional Council Certified Agreements that remain operative until 1 October 2014 are:

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

Negotiations for new agreements will commence upon the new award being finalised with the aim for agreement to be reached between employees, relevant Unions and Council promptly.

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 2013/2014.

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 2013/2014 financial year. This communication tool conveys important and 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 2013/2014 through policy review and/or implementation.

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

Thirty-six (36) positions were formally recruited during the 2013/2014 financial year. Please note: this does not include recruitment of casual employees for short term relief periods.

APPRENTICESHIPS, TRAINEESHIPS, CADETSHIPS AND STUDY ASSISTANCE

Traineeships, apprenticeships and labour market programmes.

Throughout 2013/2014 Council continued its involvement in the placement of apprentices and trainees.

The end of 2013 saw the completion of two (2) School Based Trainees - one (1) from the Esk Workshop and one (1) from Esk Administration. The hosted full-time Apprentice Mechanic from the Esk Workshop also completed at the end of 2013.

At the commencement of the 2014 calendar year, Council offered two (2) school-based traineeships in the Administration and Workshop areas and one (1) full-time apprenticeship in the Esk Workshop. All positions offered were successfully filled with suitable candidates.

The first quarter of 2014 also seen the completion of the full-time Apprentice Mechanic from the Kilcoy Workshop. This vacancy was filled with a suitable candidate.

As at 30 June 2014 Council employed a total of six (6) school-based trainees, (1) Apprentice Boilermaker at the Esk Workshop, one (1) full-time Apprentice Mechanic at the Kilcoy Workshop and one (1) full-time Apprentice Mechanic at the Esk Workshop.

TRAINING

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

Performance appraisals for staff were conducted during 2013/2014 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 2013/2014 financial year. The induction process covers relevant procedures and policies required for initial employment and is delivered in line with Council's workplace health and safety induction procedure.

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.

- ☐ Ongoing training on Council workplace health and safety procedures as developed and adopted
- ☐ Traffic control accreditation and traffic control renewals
- ☐ Traffic Management Level 2 Training
- ☐ Electrical Awareness M320 Training (Authorised person for working near powerlines)
- ☐ Emergency / Disaster Management Training
- ☐ Apply First Aid Competencies
- ☐ First Aid / CPR Updates
- ☐ Electrical Testing / Tagging (In service testing and tagging of electrical equipment)
- ☐ Refrigerant Handling Licence Renewal
- ☐ 1080 Refresher training
- ☐ ACDC (Commercial Operator) Accreditation Training
- ☐ Fire Ant Awareness training
- ☐ Dangerous Dog Training
- ☐ Asbestos Awareness Training
- ☐ Workplace Health and Safety Representative training
- ☐ Enter and Work in Confined Spaces
- ☐ Various Plant and Machinery competencies
- ☐ Certificate III in Civil Construction – Roads
- ☐ Certificate III in Civil Construction – Plant
- ☐ Certificate III in Conservation / Land Management
- ☐ Certificate IV in Training and Assessment
- ☐ Authorised Persons Local Government Act
- ☐ Animal Management Act – Cats / Dogs

Code of Conduct / Workplace Behaviour training relevant to Policy HR/001 Code of Conduct was provided to all employees as required under the Public Sector Ethics Act 1994.

Policy HR/001 Code of Conduct was reviewed in May 2014 and was approved by the Chief Executive Office and adopted by the Somerset Regional Council at the Ordinary Meeting of 14 May 2014. Training on the revised policy was conducted with all staff over the period between May and July in groups of administration and field personnel.

Enhanced staff knowledge and career path with Council

Council has continued with the highly successful cadetship arrangements with four (4) employees across the organisation completing their formal studies during 2013/2014.

These employees are currently employed in the Promotions & Tourism, Building and Planning & Development sections of Council and have been undertaking formal studies in their relevant fields whilst working full-time at Council over a period of years.

The remaining cadet in the Operations Department is on course to complete their formal studies during the first quarter of the 2014/2015 financial year.

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 2013/2014 procedures have continued to be reviewed to incorporate current legislative requirements.

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 continuing 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 in June 2014. The reviewed policy was approved by the Chief Executive Office and adopted by the Somerset Regional Council on 11 June 2014. This displays Council's continuing commitment to the intent of the new legislation.

Council has continued the development, implementation and / or continual improvement of SAFEPLAN to address compliance to legislation across the whole of the organisation.

Council is continually reviewing current documentation to meet the requirements to meet the requirements identified in new introduced legislation. Such as the Queensland National Heavy Vehicle legislation and changes to existing legislation e.g. Electrical Safety Act 2002 and Regulations.

INFORMATION DEVELOPMENT & TRANSFER

Specific workplace safety procedures are continually being reviewed.

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 have been updated and are in use to meet Queensland National Heavy Vehicle 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 are in progress on all lifting equipment to ensure safe operation and required repairs are to be 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 2013 / 2014, the LIFE program has continued to focus on improving the lifestyles of staff members by providing information about the benefits of a healthy and active lifestyle and also delivering a variety of events and activities.

At the end of 2013 a survey was conducted with staff with the aim of improving what the LIFE programme offers to assist employees achieve greater health and wellbeing.

Responses to this survey were used to create a report on the health and wellbeing of the organisation. This report was then used to identify the broad health needs of the organisation and opportunities for supporting health and wellbeing

The 2014 LIFE program was designed to complement these needs.

QGAP

Council has operated a Queensland Government Agency at its Lowood Office since 2000. Queensland Transport transactions continue to be in demand within the community.

	1/7/10 - 30/6/11	1/7/11 - 30/6/12	1/7/12 - 30/6/13	1/7/13 – 30/6/14
Total No. of Transactions	8,384	8,711	8,574	9299
Total collection value	\$1,575,093.87	\$1,450,655.72	\$1,440,504.10	\$1,487,980.61
Average time per transaction	4.81 minutes	4.85 minutes	4.44 minutes	4.87 minutes

LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

LONG-TERM FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY STATEMENT

Section 183(c) of the Local Government Regulation 2012

Somerset Regional Council
Long term financial sustainability statement
For the year ended 30 June 2014

Forecast measures of financial sustainability for future years

	Forecast	Target
Operating surplus ratio (Net result (excluding capital items) divided by total operating revenue (excluding capital items))		
FY2015	(2%)	Between 0% and 10%
FY2016	(1%)	Between 0% and 10%
FY2017	(2%)	Between 0% and 10%
FY2018	(1%)	Between 0% and 10%
FY2019	(0%)	Between 0% and 10%
FY2020	(0%)	Between 0% and 10%
FY2021	(0%)	Between 0% and 10%
FY2022	0%	Between 0% and 10%
FY2023	1%	Between 0% and 10%

Asset sustainability ratio
(Capital expenditure on the replacement of assets (renewals) divided by depreciation expense)

FY2015	283%	Greater than 90%
FY2016	93%	Greater than 90%
FY2017	112%	Greater than 90%
FY2018	68%	Greater than 90%
FY2019	71%	Greater than 90%
FY2020	67%	Greater than 90%
FY2021	122%	Greater than 90%
FY2022	99%	Greater than 90%
FY2023	71%	Greater than 90%

Net financial liabilities ratio
(Total liabilities less current assets divided by total operating revenue (excluding capital items))

FY2015	(191%)	Not greater than 60%
FY2016	(184%)	Not greater than 60%
FY2017	(178%)	Not greater than 60%
FY2018	(172%)	Not greater than 60%
FY2019	(167%)	Not greater than 60%
FY2020	(168%)	Not greater than 60%
FY2021	(161%)	Not greater than 60%
FY2022	(159%)	Not greater than 60%
FY2023	(163%)	Not greater than 60%

Council's financial management strategy comprises its budget, financial forecasts, 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 above that were adopted by Council.

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

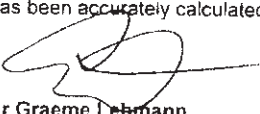
Council's long term financial forecast demonstrates its financial sustainability by reference to the State Government's recommended targets.

Certificate of Accuracy

For the long-term financial sustainability statement prepared as at 30 June 2014

This long-term financial sustainability statement has been prepared pursuant to Section 178 of the Local Government Regulation 2012 (the regulation).

In accordance with Section 212(5) of the Regulation we certify that this long-term financial sustainability statement has been accurately calculated.


Cr Graeme Lehmann
Mayor - 29/10/2014


Robert Bain
Chief Executive Officer - 29/10/2014

COMMUNITY FINANCIAL REPORT

Section 184 of the Local Government Regulation 2012

Somerset Regional Council
2013/2014 Community Financial Report
Section 179 - Local Government Regulation 2012

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 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 2014.

What was the cash position of the council at June 2014?

All figures are in round millions of dollars				
	As at 30 June 2014	As at 30 June 2013		
Council assets that will be converted to cash				
Cash	\$ 65	\$ 55	million	
Owing by ratepayers	\$ 2	\$ 2	million	
Owing by the Australian Tax Office for GST refunds	\$ -	\$ 1	million	
Other money owing to Council	\$ 2	\$ 2	million	
	<u>\$ 69</u>	<u>\$ 59</u>	million	
Cash owing by Council				
Owing to suppliers and contractors at 30 June	\$ (5)	\$ (7)	million	
Owing to the Australian Tax Office for GST payable	\$ (1)	\$ -	million	
Annual leave, long service leave and other employee entitlements	\$ (3)	\$ (3)	million	
	<u>\$ (9)</u>	<u>\$ (10)</u>	million	
Overall position - net cash assets	<u>\$ 60</u>	<u>\$ 50</u>	million	

What else did Council own in June 2014?

Council owns roads and other assets that cannot be sold for cash and which are needed to provide services.

Council also owns land and equipment that could be sold but which Council does not intend selling.

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

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

Replacement cost of roads, bridges, land, buildings, plant and drainage assets	\$372	million
Value remaining of roads, bridges, land, buildings, plant and drainage assets	\$236	million
Land held for sale (Haslingden Park Estate Lowood)	\$ 0	million
Amounts spent on incomplete capital works projects	\$ 4	million
Value of Council's 0.826% shares in Queensland Urban Utilities	\$ 23	million
Loan owing to Council by Queensland Urban Utilities	\$ 14	million
Diesel, fuel, concrete pipes, gravel and other materials held	\$ 1	million
Less: estimated amount required to rehabilitate Council gravel pits	\$ (0)	million
Total value of assets not easily convertible to cash	\$278	million
Net cash assets	<u>\$ 60</u>	million
Net worth of the Council	<u>\$338</u>	million
Difference between replacement cost and value left in roads, bridges, land, buildings etc	\$135	million
Deduct net cash assets	<u>\$ 60</u>	million
Infrastructure deficit	<u>\$ 75</u>	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 forecasts to demonstrate that future residents of the area will not be left with an unfair infrastructure replacement burden.

The 2014 deficit between the replacement costs of infrastructure and the value left in the infrastructure was \$135 million.

At June 2014, Council had enough cash reserves to replace \$60 million in assets if required.

A further \$75 million was needed to replace all assets with the same type of asset as at 30 June 2014.

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 never replaces old timber bridges with new timber bridges.

Council engineers believe that some Council assets like road pavements will not require replacement for another 20 years.

Most of Council's timber bridges will need to be replaced with expensive concrete bridges within the next few years.

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.

Cash held in reserve for asset replacement and other purposes was invested at an average of 3.7% during the year.

The interest returns to the community on this cash were equivalent to 12.5% of net rate revenue.

How did Council perform during the 2013/2014 financial year?

Councils are required to report their operating surplus ratio each year as one indicator of ongoing financial sustainability.

Council achieved an operating surplus during the year with the operating surplus ratio being 16%.

Council's operating result included operating revenue related to natural disaster repairs reimbursed for the previous year.

Excluding this one-off reimbursement, Council incurred an operating loss equal to 3% of operating revenue.

The Department of Local Government has advised that the operating surplus ratio target range is 0% to 10%.

Council's financial performance for operating surplus during the year was outside than the State Government target range.

Council's long term financial forecast shows that operating results broadly in the target range are projected however.

Council easily met its targets for asset sustainability and financial liabilities for the year as follows:

Measures of financial sustainability	Actual	Target
Asset sustainability ratio	402%	Greater than 90%
Net financial liabilities ratio	-159%	Not greater than 60%

These measures indicate that during the year Council was replacing and renewing its assets at a faster rate than they were wearing out and had no net interest bearing debt.

EXPENSES REIMBURSEMENT POLICY – RESOLUTIONS**Section 185(a) of the Local Government Regulation 2012**

No resolutions adopting or amending an expenses reimbursement policy were made during the financial year.

NON-CURRENT ASSETS

Section 185(b) of the Local Government Regulation 2012

At the Budget Meeting of 27 June 2013, Council adopted the following pertaining to Section 206(2) of the Local Government Regulation 2012:

Pursuant to section 206 of the Local Government Regulation 2012, the following asset capitalisation thresholds apply:

Asset Category	Capitalisation threshold
<i>Plant, furniture and equipment</i>	<i>\$5,000</i>
<i>Land</i>	<i>\$1</i>
<i>Buildings, infrastructure and other assets</i>	<i>\$10,000</i>

TOTAL REMUNERATION PAID TO EACH COUNCILLOR (INCLUDING SUPERANNUATION CONTRIBUTION)

Section 186(a) of the Local Government Regulation 2012

Total remuneration paid by Council to each of its councillors for the 2013/2014 financial year.

COUNCILLOR	ALLOWANCE/FEES
Councillor Lehmann	\$116,469.36
Councillor Hall	\$72,791.46
Councillor Bechly	\$61,874.82
Councillor Brieschke	\$61,874.82
Councillor Madden	\$61,874.82
Councillor Moriarty	\$61,874.82
Councillor Ogg	\$61,874.82
<i>Total Remuneration</i>	<i>\$498,634.92</i>

Total superannuation contributions paid by Council for each of its councillors for the 2013/2014 financial year -

COUNCILLOR	SUPERANNUATION
Councillor Lehmann	\$13,976.28
Councillor Hall	\$8,735.04
Councillor Bechly	\$7,425.00
Councillor Brieschke	\$7,425.00
Councillor Madden	\$7,425.00
Councillor Moriarty	\$7,425.00
Councillor Ogg	\$7,425.00
<i>Total Superannuation</i>	<i>\$59,836.32</i>

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

Section 186(b) of the Local Government Regulation 2012

Expenses reimbursed and facilities provided during 2013/2014 were –

COUNCILLOR	EXPENSES
Councillor Lehmann	\$30,250.44
Councillor Hall	\$24,390.86
Councillor Bechly	\$17,287.02
Councillor Brieschke	\$14,204.94
Councillor Madden	\$16,228.66
Councillor Moriarty	\$19,435.27
Councillor Ogg	\$16,561.20
<i>Total</i>	<i>\$138,358.39</i>

No non-cash property was transferred to Councillors.

EXPENSES REIMBURSEMENT POLICY

Section 186(c) of the Local Government Regulation 2012

The current Reimbursement of Expenses Policy was adopted by Council on 13th June 2012.



Policy Subject/Title: COUNCILLORS' REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES POLICY

Policy Number: EX001

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.

COUNCILLOR MEETING ATTENDANCE

Section 186(d) of the Local Government Regulation 2012

COUNCILLOR	ORDINARY MEETING
Cr G D Lehmann	25
Cr D Hall	24
Cr K Moriarty	24
Cr M Ogg	25
Cr J Madden	25
Cr H Brieschke	25
Cr A Bechly	24

COUNCILLOR MISCONDUCT

Section 186(e), (f) and (g) of the Local Government Regulation 2012

s186(e)(i)	There were no orders or recommendations made under section 180(2) or (4) of the <i>Local Government Act 2009</i>
s186(e)(ii)	There were no orders made under section 181 of the <i>Local Government Act 2009</i> .
s186(f)(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> .
s186(f)(ii)	There was no misconduct or inappropriate conduct engaged in by the Councillors.
s186(f)(iii)	There were no orders or recommendations made for a Councillor.
s186(g)(i)	There were no complaints about the conduct or performance of Councillors assessed as frivolous or vexatious or lacking in substance under section 176C(2) of the <i>Local Government Act 2009</i> .
s186(g)(ii)	There were no complaints referred to the department's chief executive under section 176C(3)(a)(i) of the <i>Local Government Act 2009</i> .
s186(g)(iii)	There were no complaints referred to the Mayor under section 176C(3)(a)(ii) or 176C(3)(b)(i) of the <i>Local Government Act 2009</i> .
s186(g)(iv)	There were no complaints referred to the department's chief executive under section 176C(4)(a) of the <i>Local Government Act 2009</i> .
s186(g)(v)	There were no complaints assessed by the chief executive officer as being about official misconduct.
s186(g)(vi)	There were no complaints heard by a conduct review panel.
s186(g)(vii)	There were no complaints heard by the tribunal.
s186(g)(viii)	There were no complaints to which section 176C(6) of the <i>Local Government Act 2009</i> applied.

ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION COMPLAINTS

Section 187 of the Local Government Regulation 2012

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 Regulation 2012 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 2013/14 Council received one application under this policy, which had not been finalised at year end. Council, also, received a number of applications for internal review for decisions made under its local laws or the *Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Act 2008*.

OVERSEAS TRAVEL

Section 188 of the Local Government Regulation 2012

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 189 of the Local Government Regulation 2012

The local government's expenditure for the financial year on grants to community organisations was \$135,795.44. In addition \$11,459.69 was provided in Regional Arts Development Fund grants.

Councillors did not have discretionary funds during the financial year.

ANNUAL OPERATIONS REPORT FOR EACH COMMERCIAL BUSINESS UNIT

Section 190(1)(c) of the Local Government Regulation 2012

There were no commercial business units to report for the 2013/2014 financial year.

CONDUCTING A JOINT GOVERNMENT ACTIVITY

Section 190(1)(d) of the Local Government Regulation 2012

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.

INVITATIONS TO CHANGE TENDERS

Section 190(1)(e) of the Local Government Regulation 2012

There was one invitation to change tenders during the year. On 6 November, 2013, tenderers who had previously submitted tenders for *Tender 860 - Kilcoy Showground*

Eastern Electrical Reticulation and Show Ring Floodlighting were invited to resubmit tenders for the project incorporating a reduced scope of works.

REGISTERS KEPT BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Section 190(1)(f) of the Local Government Regulation 2012

- Register of Cost-Recovery Fees
- Asset Register
- Register of Council Policies
- Delegations by Council
- Delegations by Chief Executive Officer
- Register of Interests
- Register of Local and Subordinate Local Laws
- Non-Conforming Use Register
- Rezoning Register
- Consent Register
- Subdivision Register
- Development Application Register
- Cemetery Register
- Food Premise Register
- Road Register
- Register of Contact with Lobbyists

SUMMARY OF CONCESSIONS FOR RATES AND CHARGES

Section 190(1)(g) of the Local Government Regulation 2012

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 2013/2014 Revenue Statement as follows:***

R28. 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 120 of the Local Government Regulation 2012.

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 14 August 2013*

"THAT a rebate of general rates for the difference between the rating category assessed and rating category 11 be granted from 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014 in relation to L49 SP184632 80722-14000-000 on hardship grounds."

3. *The following concession as resolved by Council on 14 August 2013*

"THAT a rebate of net general rates of \$10,000.00 be given to the leaseholder of Lot 205 CSH2421 for reasons of hardship and because the leaseholder is a not-for-profit organisation with the rebate to be applied in equal halves for each rating period."

4. *The following concession as resolved by Council on 9 October 2013*

"THAT a rebate of rates and charges be given to the owner of Lot 1 RP28857 assessment 02352-80000-000 for the period 1 July 2013 to 31 December 2013 equal to the difference between the net general rates actually charged for the property on the rate notice issued 27 August 2013 and the net amount that would have been payable if the property had been categorised in rating category 302 because the payment of the rates or charges would cause hardship to the land owner."

THAT provided extraction of materials on the property does not occur prior to February 2014, a rebate of rates and charges be given to the owner of Lot 1 RP28857 assessment 02352-80000-000 for the period 1 January 2014 to 30 June 2014 of the same amount as the 2013 rebate plus the amount of the half yearly extractive industry inspection levy because the payment of the rates or charges would cause hardship to the land owner."

REPORT ON THE INTERNAL AUDIT

Section 190(1)(h) of the Local Government Regulation 2012

See Attachment 1 – Report on the Internal Audit.

INVESTIGATION NOTICES FOR COMPETITIVE NEUTRALITY COMPLAINTS

Section 190(1)(i) and (j) of the Local Government Regulation 2012

There were no investigation notices given in the financial year under Section 49 of the Local Government Regulation 2012.

As such, there were no responses required from Council in the financial year relating to QCA recommendations on competitive neutrality complaints under Section 52(3) of the Local Government Regulation 2012.

IDENTIFY BENEFICIAL ENTERPRISES

Section 41 of the Local Government Act 2009

Nil

IDENTIFY SIGNIFICANT BUSINESS ACTIVITIES

Section 45 of the Local Government Act 2009

Nil

ATTACHMENT 1 - REPORT ON THE INTERNAL AUDIT

Section 190(1)(h) of the Local Government Regulation 2012

Somerset Regional Council
Internal Audit Progress Report
Audit Committee Meeting
10 September 2014

Background

- S211 (1) (b) (iii) of the Local Government Regulation 2012 states that the Audit Committee shall be provided an internal audit progress report “for the internal audit for the preceding financial year including the recommendations in the report and the actions to which the recommendations relate”.
- Somerset Regional Council has appointed Bentleys to provide internal audit services for the financial years ending 30 June 2014-16.
- The Audit Committee approved the three year Internal Audit Plan at its meeting on 11 September 2013.

Progress to date

- All scheduled internal audits for the 2013-14 financial year have been completed.
- Scheduled internal audits for the 2014-15 financial year are listed at Appendix 1.
- An internal audit regarding Asset Management was conducted during the week beginning 25 August 2014. The report for this internal audit is currently being finalised.
- Internal audit received full co-operation from council while conducting internal audits.
- Summary of recommendations is provided in Appendix 2.
- No matters have been identified by internal audit that cause us to recommend a change to the Internal Audit Plan for the financial years ending 30 June 2015 or 2016.
- We have not identified any other matters that require your attention.

Appendix 1

Internal Audit Plan

2014-15 Financial Year

Name of Proposed Internal Audit	Description of Internal Audit	Risk	Resource allocation
Asset Management	<p>Review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data conversion to 'Bizeasset'. • Adequacy of asset registers. • Assessing the condition of asset. • Planning maintenance to minimise whole of life costs. • Planning for replacement of assets. 	Medium	45
Risk Management	<p>Assess the effectiveness and efficiency of council's risk management framework to identify, analyse, evaluate, treat and monitor risks.</p>	High	40
Corporate Card	<p>Review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant policies and procedures. • Appropriateness of card transaction limits. • Approval/acquittal of card expenses. • Cardholder compliance with relevant policies. 	Medium	35

Appendix 2

Review Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangement (NDRRA) claims and acquittal of funding received

Recommendation	Risk Level	Accepted by Management	Action Taken
The Manager (Finance) reconcile expenditure recorded in general ledger account 7577-2000-000 to total NDRRA related expenditure when preparing Form 9 progress claims.	High	Yes	Implemented
The Manager (Finance) reconcile Form 9 progress claim emergent works expenditure calculations to emergent works claims submitted to the QRA prior submitting final restoration claims to the QRA.	High	Yes	Implemented
The Flood Engineer ensure that NDRRA program progress reports identify submission deadlines and these are regularly reported to senior management. It is recommended that Council lodge emergent works submissions as soon as practical after the end of the emergent works period.	Moderate	Yes	Implemented
The Manager (Finance) apply to QRA for working capital funding when delivering restoration works for the 2013 natural disaster.	Moderate	Yes	Implemented

Collection of the Emergency Management, Fire & Rescue Levy

Recommendation	Risk Level	Accepted by Management	Action Taken
The Manager Finance monitor the effectiveness of procedures to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identify changes to land parcels that may result in the EMFRL changing; and update PCS to reflect the appropriate EMFRL class. 	Medium	Yes	Implemented
The Manager Finance investigate these (reconciling items) properties and ensure the correct levy code is reflected in PCS.	Medium	Yes	Implemented
The Manager Finance liaise with State Government and monitor changes to the interpretation of 'contiguous land'.	Medium	Noted by Council	Matter resolved.
The Chief Executive Officer consider various project management methodologies available to Council and adopt a suitable methodology for large/high risk projects.	Business improvement	Under consideration	In progress.

User Access Privileges to Accounting Systems

Recommendation	Risk Level	Accepted by Management	Action Taken
<p>At least two employees with PCS admin access:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> review the audit log for the PCS admin login on a monthly basis; and attest whether or not they have identified any transactions that are incompatible with the duties of PCS admin 	High	Yes	Implemented
<p>The Manager Finance review all generic PCS logins and where possible delete these passwords in favour of logins that are specific to an employee. Where it is necessary to keep a generic PCS login, the Manager Finance notify the Chief Executive Officer and seek endorsement to retain that login.</p>	Medium	Yes	Implemented
<p>The CEO or Manager Finance periodically (eg six monthly) communicate with staff that sharing of login details or passwords is not acceptable and may result in disciplinary action.</p>	Medium	Yes	Implemented
<p>The Manager Finance investigate implementing a more formal process to request access or change access to PCS. This more formal process would involve written application by the employee's supervisor justifying the level of access requested.</p>	Low	No	NA
<p>The Manager Corporate & Community Services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop policies and procedures relating to the allocation of alarm security codes and FOBs; ensure that the register of allocated alarm codes/FOBs is reviewed at least monthly for accuracy; and review the accuracy of the Council's key register and resulting impact on security at Council buildings. 	Low	Yes	Implemented

ATTACHMENT 2 - FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
Section 183 of the Local Government Regulation 2012