

COMMUNITY SERVICES HIGHLIGHTS AND SIGNIFICANT ISSUES REPORT – MONTH ENDING JANUARY 2010

Author: DIRECTOR COMMUNITY SERVICES

Purpose

To review Community Services Department highlights and significant issues for the month ending 31 January 2010.

Background and Discussion

Highlights and Significant Issues for January 2010 are as follows: -

COMMUNITY SERVICES MANAGEMENT

- Further development of the Hotel Attraction and Broadband Rollout studies with REDC
- Attendance at the community plan working group
- Participation in the Uncle Toby's Splashathon
- Asia Pacific Triennial Kids Day held at Artspace
- Melba House opening following the transfer from PVTDA to MTL
- Finalisation of the 3 year funding agreement between Mackay Tourism and MRC
- Visit to Mirani Swimming Pool and Caravan Park as part of the long term planning for the facility
- Big Aussie Breakfast and launch of the CBD Sunday Markets for 2010

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND LIBRARIES

Community Development

- Minister for Disability Services and Multicultural Affairs Hon Anastacia Palaszczuk MP visited Mackay during January to announce the State funding rounds for the Multicultural Assistance Program.
- Mackay Regional Council was successful in both applications through the Multicultural Assistance Program for Multicultural Swimming Lessons and for Maltese band Skorba to be a part of Global Grooves 2010.
- Community Development welcomed two new staff. a casual youth worker at the Sarina Youth Centre and an admin trainee.

- In December 2009 Mackay Region Aboriginal and Islanders Development Association Inc., (MARABISDA) was launched. MARABISDA was formed to assist Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, Australian South Sea Islander, as well as those people from disadvantaged groups to participate in sporting, cultural, educational and employment aspirations. The launch was attended by approximately 250 people. The association will raise funds and assist Community members who are experiencing financial barriers to participation in their sporting, cultural, educational and employment opportunities.
- Since the launch MARABISDA has assisted a number of community individuals as follows:- primary school student was assisted to attend a State Primary School sporting carnival, a young man was assisted to acquire a machinery operators ticket to gain employment, and a women's rugby league team was assisted to purchase first aid equipment and uniforms for their team.

Libraries

- General

The Mobile Library was not operating during January 2010 as it was off the road for maintenance. The major items involved with the maintenance are the replacement of the front landing leg, resizing of the capsule and an upgrade to the trailer suspension.

- Young People's Services

Around the world was the theme for school holiday activities. 113 children made Japanese yoyos and igloos at Walkerston, Mirani, Gordon White, Mackay City and Sarina libraries. Children also played *Four corners of the world* game which everyone enjoyed.

Another successful afternoon of tie-dyeing was held at Mackay City Library in spite of the heavy rain. Teens also watched the film *The sisterhood of the travelling pants* at the Gordon White Library. 24 young people attended the Finally it's Friday activities.



Left: Elise Dunckis Irving (15) with her tie-dyed shirt



Right: Jade (8) & Tahlia (10) Fiyen displaying the decorated jeans

The Summer Reading Club program finished with a party which 12 children attended. The children decorated jeans and watched a movie *Snow Buddies*. 68 children registered for the Summer Reading Club across 5 libraries.

Our regular Storytime and Baby Bounce programs have started again for 2010.

- Statistics

Computer Use and Classes	Total
DiscoverIT Classes (participants)	N/A
Public Computers - Users	2193
Public Computers – Bookings	3786
Public Computers – Express Computers	1026
Public Computers – Wireless (hrs)	203

Information Requests	Total
Online Enquiries	11
Ask the Library Queries	26
Reference Queries – Staff	602
Reference Queries – Phone	872

Website Visits	Total
Website Visits – Total	23,231
Website Visits - Home	9287
Website Visits - Catalogue	10,996
Website Visits – Locations & Opening Times	740
Website Visits – Ask the Library	214
Website Visits – Online Resources	193
Website Visits – Joining & Borrowing	184
Website Visits – Services for Children and Young People	180
Website Visits - Booklovers	119
Website Visits - Kidzone	113
Website Visits – Technology & Training	110
Website Visits – Heritage Collection	100

Database Visits	Total
Databases - EBO	0
Databases - Newsbank	0
Databases - EBSCO Host	17
Databases - Thompson Gale	6

Computer Requests	Total
Computer Support Requests – Mackay City Library	3
Computer Support Requests – Gordon White Library	2

InterLibrary Loans	Total
Customer Requests	100
Requests made by other Libraries	79

Home Library Service Statistics	Library Branch		
	Gordon White	Mackay City	Sarina
Assistive Technology Computer	19	12	
Home Library customers	N/A	N/A	
Bulk Loans	N/A	N/A	
Phone calls	N/A	N/A	
Reservations	10	N/A	
Kilometres travelled by FOML	N/A	N/A	
Number of items loaned	N/A	N/A	

Heritage Collection Room	
Total Users	72
Research Enquiries * up to 1 hr research required	6
Microfilm Reader Bookings	44

- Another 143 images from the Library's historical photograph collection have been uploaded to State Library of Queensland's Picture Queensland photographic database. This brings Mackay Regional Council Libraries contribution to the database up to 447.
- The Library Service has recently added the Mackay and District World War II Honour Roll as part of the Heritage collection microfilm resources. The original collection of registration cards includes details of A.I.F, R.A.A.F, R.A.N and Nursing volunteers from the City of Mackay and Shires of Pioneer, Mirani, Sarina and Nebo.
- Membership and loan statistics

New members

Library Branch	Previous Year	Current Year
Gordon White Library	217	166
Mackay City Library	291	250
Mirani Library	16	27
Mobile Library	30	Nil – off road
Sarina Library	33	32
Walkerston Library	17	20

Loans

Library Branch	Previous Year	Current Year
Gordon White Library	28908	29322
Mackay City Library	28278	29315
Mirani Library	2214	2672
Mobile Library	2640	Nil – off road
Sarina Library	4504	4706
Walkerston Library	2115	2002

- Sarina Branch

The participation numbers keep climbing with the holiday activities getting more and more popular with Sarina children & parents. Sarina had the biggest crowd yet with the children making igloos and Chinese yo yo sticks. The 1918 Mackay Cyclone display was showcased at Sarina Library which attracted a lot of attention. The new bayends were installed with acrylic shelves for signage and display. Customers are making positive comments how bright and open the area is now looking.



RECREATION SERVICES

Management / Sport and Recreation

General

- Signage was ordered for two new 10,000 Steps program routes (Bluewater Lagoon and Sandfly Creek). The two new 10,000 Steps routes are scheduled to be launched in March 2010 and aim to capitalise on the Bluewater Trail.
- The internal Transport Survey data was compiled and finalised. Council's Sports & Recreation Officer presented the results from the transport survey to the Sustainable Futures Advisory Committee - Transport Working Group.
- Further progress was made regarding the Mackay cycling map, a merger of two maps developed by Council's Economic Development and Recreation Services programs.
- Planning activities associated with the Active CBD/Eat Well Be Active funding continue.
- General club inventory update completed.
- Strategic Leisure Pty Ltd was appointed on January 29 to undertake the aquatics strategy study.
- Research commenced regarding the suitability of firms for planned aquatic facility audits.
- Sport & Recreation Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) were made available on the Council's website.
- Recreation Services' 'Sport & Recreation Newsletter' has been made available to the community on Council's website.
- Nominations opened Monday January 11 for the North Queensland Sports Foundation (NQSF) - Sport Star Awards.
- Discussions commenced with Council's Health & Regulatory Services program regarding the development of a 'Commercial Recreation Permit'.

Key Club Development Activities

- Pioneer Boxing Club - assistance with acquittal and advice on grants.
- Sarina Athletics – grants advice.
- Sarina Senior Rugby League Club - payment matters.
- Brewers Park clubs - electricity upgrade planning matters.
- Mackay Junior Tennis - works occurring at the end of Leisure Court.
- Dolphins Oval, Bucasia – investigation of land use.
- St John's South Mackay – investigation of land use.
- Adrenalin Rush Sports – assistance provided regarding kite surfing trailer proposal.
- Mackay Junior Tennis – lease arrangements.
- North Queensland Rifle Association - sporting grants.

Media / PR

- Local print media:
 - NQSF Sport Star Award 2010 nominations
 - Mackay's inaugural 'Big Splash-a-thon' event
- Local visual media:
 - 'Big Splash-a-thon' event.
 - \$5,640 grant to deliver swimming lessons to people of a non-English speaking background. Manager Recreation Services was interviewed by a local radio station regarding this news.
- Ashleigh Stebbeings (NQ Sports Foundation Bursary Recipient) was awarded Pioneer Valley Junior Sports Award on Australia Day for her outstanding feats in water skiing.
- The issue of unattended youngsters at the Bluewater Lagoon was extensively highlighted by local media.

Aquatic Facilities

Bluewater Lagoon

- The Queensland Government's Division of Workplace, Health and Safety completed a safety audit.

Memorial Pool

- Key bookings
 - Water Polo - 5 x training sessions
 - 2 x school group bookings
 - 8 x Mackay Master Swimmers Bookings
 - 5 x Barb's Aqua Bookings
- Minor repairs were carried out in the female showers.
- Duty Supervisor team continues to attend to plumbing issues.
- 'Mission Inflatable' obstacle course activity continues to attract customers.
- Preparation begins for a face lift to the Plant Room.

Pioneer Pool

- Key bookings
 - 9 x school bookings
 - Pioneer Swim Club - 1 x Club Night
 - 1 x community group bookings
 - 1 x Youth Group night time booking

- 'Mission Inflatable' obstacle course activity continues to attract customers.
- The Queensland Government's Division of Workplace, Health and Safety completed a safety audit.
- Contract plumbers replace leaking diaphragm in the chlorine dosing system and replace water pressure booster on the Hot Water System servicing the male and female amenities.
- Aquatics staff carry out underwater inspections and some minor repairs to suspect tiles in the 50m pool.
- New Hazchem signs were erected outside the plant room.
- A significant amount of programs and activities re-commenced after the school holiday period including:
 - Adult Swim for Fitness program
 - The Orcas program
 - Term 01/2010 Learn-to-Swim program
- The 'Big Splash-a-thon' event was successfully held on January 23 at Pioneer Swim Centre. The event attracted approximately 700 visitors and raised money for RLSSA and Mackay Life Stream. The event was extensively covered by the media.
- Aquatics program staff promoted the aquatic facilities and associated activities at several events during January.
- Two AUSTSWIM courses were organised in Mackay in January, the 'Teacher of Swimming and Water Safety' course (23 – 24 January) and the 'Teacher of Infant Aquatics' course (24 – 26 January). Council's Aquatics Programs Coordinator delivered sections of the courses.
- Royal Life Saving Society Australia (RLSSA) conducted a workshop on January 22 at the Pioneer Swim Centre covering the updates made to the RLSSA Swim & Survive program. Council Learn-to-Swim teachers attended the workshop

Mirani Pool

- Water leaks located in the male and female change rooms attended to by contract plumbers.
- New chlorine pump replaces malfunctioning pump to enable automatic dosing to resume.
- Council staff consult with lessee in regards to upcoming audit to be undertaken by the Division of Workplace, Health and Safety.

Sarina Pool

- Council staff consult with lessee in regards to upcoming audit to be undertaken by the Division of Workplace, Health and Safety.

The following customers have attended the Aquatic Facilities during January 2010:

Bluewater Lagoon*

Type of Customer	Bluewater Lagoon January 2009	Bluewater Lagoon January 2010
Children's Lagoon	4,553	6,561
Middle Lagoon	16,042	18,880
Upper Lagoon	3,881	7,085
TOTAL IN WATER CUSTOMERS	24,476	32,526
TOTAL PRECINCT (non-swimmers)	13,756	40,140
GRAND TOTAL	38,232	72,666

* Source: Lifeguard Statistics - Monthly Reports January 2010 - Visitations PDF by Surf Lifesaving Queensland (SLSQ)

Memorial Pool**

Type of Customer	Memorial Pool January 2009	Memorial Pool January 2010
Persons 15 years or older	1,515	1,499
Children from 3 years to persons under 15 years	395	439
Pensioner	60	87
TOTAL	1,970	2,025
Multi Visit Pass (persons 15 years or older)	119	134
Total Kiosk Revenue	\$3,541.95	\$3,087.70

** Source: Monthly Reconciliation Spreadsheet (Microsoft Excel)

Pioneer Pool**

Type of Customer	Pioneer Pool January 2009	Pioneer Pool January 2010
Persons 15 years or older	1,617	1,625
Children from 3 years to persons under 15 years	1,290	1,297
Pensioner	107	83
TOTAL	3,014	3,005
Multi Visit Pass (persons 15 years or older)	85	107
Total Kiosk Revenue	\$6,476.20	\$7,608.00

** Source: Monthly Reconciliation Spreadsheet (Microsoft Excel)

Mirani Pool***

Type of Customer	Mirani Pool January 2009	Mirani Pool January 2010
Persons 15 years or older	591	296
Children from 3 years to persons under 15 years	893	339
Pensioner	48	24
TOTAL	1,532	659

*** Source: Information received from Lessee of Mirani Pool

Sarina Pool****

Type of Customer	Sarina Pool January 2009	Sarina Pool January 2010
Persons 15 years or older	149	307
Children from 3 years to persons under 15 years	251	391
Pensioner	1	116
TOTAL	401	814

**** Source: Information received from Lessee of Sarina Pool

Revenue Received:**

Type of Customer	Pioneer Pool		Memorial Pool	
	January 2009	January 2010	January 2009	January 2010
Actual Gate	\$13,706.50	\$14,344.65	\$11,102.50	\$11,841.50
Season Tickets	\$1,240.00	\$530.00	\$1,795.00	\$1,825.00
Miscellaneous	\$6,509.22	\$8,078.34	\$3,557.75	\$3,223.40
TOTAL	\$21,455.72	\$22,952.99	\$16,455.25	\$16,889.90
Multi-visit pass sales component of Actual Gate	\$2,550.00	\$3,210.00	\$3,570.00	\$4,020.00

** Source: Monthly Reconciliation Spreadsheet (Microsoft Excel)

PROPERTY SERVICES

Management

- Attended meetings of the Paget Depot Project and Steering Committees.
- Participated in several meetings with the Dows Creek Community Hall Committee to discuss the future of the hall and required work to enhance the structural integrity of the building.
- Commenced work on preparing the Property Services draft 2010/11 Budget.

Property Services

- Undertaken extensive work in Paget Depot Project including ESD Report review and work with Change Management and Communication Consultant. Commenced preparation of relocation and Logistics Plan.
- Repairs completed on Slade Point Community Hall roof.
- Site investigation undertaken by Electrical Engineer for Brewers Park Sporting Complex project.
- Initiated Works Program to undertake project requirements for Andergrove Neighbourhood Centre.
- Mackay Admin Building Refurbishment Stage 1 – Council Chambers nearing completion of Construction and sourcing fit-out of interior requirements.
- Mackay Admin Building Refurbishment Stage 2 – New Corporate Services area progressing with painting completed and scheduling of Electrical and Carpet requirements.
- Sarina Cultural Hall, part A Bar Improvements has been initiated with the installation of a new glass washer and refurbishment works being scheduled.
- Attended Community Housing Tenant Meetings at several housing facilities.
- Undertaken review of community housing units and compiled a priority list for refurbishment.
- Commenced process of establishing a Fire Warden working group and also arranged training which was undertaken in January.

Property Co-ordinations

Leases and Easements

- Midge Point Road, Bloomsbury Tender/Lease for Grazing in exchange for Maintenance.
- Mackay Pioneer BMX Club Inc new lease agreement.
- Program staff are currently dealing with 18 Leases and 8 Easements

Land Dealings

- Perry Road, Walkerston Realignment.
- Barclays Road, Dumbleton Realignment.
- Sarina Water Treatment Plant, Easement and Resumption of Land.
- Michelmores Street, Paget Road Truncation
- Program staff are currently dealing with 28 land dealings.

Sarina Sugar Shed

Total Sales for January are down in comparison to last year's figures. This has been due to a decrease of ticket sales for tours, the wet weather and the road works at the entrance to the Field of Dreams. The down turn in ticket sales has been offset by an increase in sales of alcohol, sauces, gift shop items and cafe takings.

Staff and volunteers continue to work on the bond room, plans are now being prepared for the Excise Department in preparation for their inspection and approval of this area.

A new visual presentation screen has been installed in the factory to give visitors a better overview of the facilities production process. As the miniature factory runs on a batch basis it is impossible to view the whole process during the limited time available on each guided tour. Filming of our production process will need to take place early in the crushing season. Once completed this will give visitors an improved all year round tour of our facility.

New products include a light style mango chutney. This non traditional chutney is designed to excite our customers developing taste buds. Chef John Walker describes the flavours – as Sarina meets Delhi (interesting!!).

The other new product is our HTLS. This product is for the serious chilli lovers, local chilli are fermented and brewed with Sugar Shed mango vinegar.

Both these products are on trial for the next three months to monitor their sales before being added to our Chefs Gusto range and labelling.

The new Sugar Shed DVD is almost complete with only minor changes required prior to it being available for use in tours, with front covers for the DVD being prepared to allow the item to be sold in the gift shop.

Regional business, tourism operators and RTO's have been invited to participate in our February family tours. The idea of the family tours is to assist these groups in increasing their destination and product knowledge of Sarina Sugar Shed and enhance their confidence in promoting the facility to their customers and visitors. Staff have allocated four days over a two week period for the tours which will commence on Monday 8th February.

CONVENTION PRECINCT AND EVENTS

Management

- Managed and oversaw the refurbishment of the MECC north foyer (ex MEC foyer) ensuring essential refurbishment works were completed during the Centre's Xmas shutdown
- Commenced planning for the 50th Anniversary Commemorations of the Abel Tasman air crash. The largest domestic air crash in Australian History
- Completed the 2010 Mackay Professional Theatre & Music Season and Dalrymple Bay Young People's Theatre Season programmes ready for launch in February.
- Actively participated in Mackay Tourism Week planning forums
- Assisted with Australia Day celebrations
- Welcomed actress Amanda Muggleton to Mackay for five weeks, facilitating much media
- Assisted with Sunday market activities
- Staff recruitment
- Managed many media inquiries re MECC theatre programme and Sunday Markets.

Mackay Entertainment and Convention Centre

The Mackay Entertainment and Convention Centre is reported on in the MECC Performance Report.

Festivals and Events

- There were no Council managed events coordinated by the Festivals & Events team in January, although assistance was provided to the Corporate Communications team who managed Council Australia Day celebrations and associated Citizenship and Awards ceremonies.
- Mackay's City Centre Sunday markets recommenced trading in January, which is earlier than previous years. Inclement weather has impacted on the January markets which have been quiet with fewer traders and visitors than normal. A marketing campaign approved by the City Heart traders will occur in February with a range of monthly themed activities planned and advertising through radio station Zinc FM. Further details of January market activities are reported in the Economic Development section of this report.

Artspace Mackay

- 2,532 people visited Artspace Mackay during January 2010
- 472 people visited the Town Hall during January 2010
- 9,390 people visited the Artspace Mackay website during January 2010

Exhibitions in January:

McAleese Gallery	18 Dec – 31 Jan 2010	<i>Fiona MacDonald: Local studies</i>
Mackay Mazda Foyer	18 Dec – 31 Jan 2010	<i>Expressions of self: An Artspace Mackay Volunteers' Exhibition</i>
Cox Rayner Gallery	Continuing exhibition	<i>Unpacked: Recent Acquisitions, Mackay Regional Council</i>
Seminar Room	1 Dec – 24 Jan 2010	<i>Matsuura Drawing Exchange Project</i>

Public & Education Programs in January

758 parents and children attended the extremely popular Kids' APT (Asia Pacific Triennial) Summer Spectacular organised in partnership with the Queensland Art Gallery. The children (and many of the parents) participated in seven different drawing and craft activities developed by leading artists whose work is included in the 6th Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art. Artspace Staff talked to many first-time visitors to the Gallery.



Holiday Art workshops for children at Artspace and Artspace-To-Go Holiday Art workshop at Gargett were all fully booked and well received

MP3 Guided Tours in January

Gallery visitors are now able to listen to the current exhibition's Floor Talk via MP3 players available from the Information Desk. The first talk was by artist Fiona MacDonald and Curator, Jo Holder talking about the exhibition *Fiona MacDonald: Local studies*. Floor Talks may also be downloaded from Council's website.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Management

- Meetings regarding Grant Funding – application for \$150,000 funding from Proceeds of Crime to potentially fund additional Mackay CBD CCTV cameras in the City Centre. Application submitted by Council Grant Officer February 2.
- Follow up meetings with CEO REDC, Narelle Pearse and council Directors, for the Hotel Attraction strategy & accommodation inventory project currently being project managed through REDC in conjunction with Mackay Tourism Ltd.
- Re- Opening of Melba House following agreement with the Pioneer Valley Tourism and Development Association (PVTDA), Mackay Tourism Ltd (MTL) has assumed management of Melba House effective 4 January.



The Melba House Visitor Information Centre re-opening took place on Monday 18 January with Mayor Col Meng and councillors in attendance.

MTL plan to operate the centre as an accredited Visitor Information Centre on a seven days per week basis. Volunteers will be a key resource for the centre.

Mayor of the Mackay Region, pictured with Mackay Regional Councillors and Mackay Tourism Ltd Chair, Paul O'Connor.

- Attendance at MWI REDC planning meeting for Investment Attraction Conference to be held in Mackay in 2010

City Focus Advisory Committee

City Focus Advisory Committee meetings were in recess during January, however initiatives including an Explore Mackay map, news update sheets and a campaign to establish an email database of City Centre traders and property owners are on foot.

A City Focus workshop to be held in early February will be presented with a number of communication options, including developing a City Centre webpage.



Despite wetter than wet weather, Mackay Region Mayor and Councillors joined forces with the Variety Club of Mackay to cook up a bbq breakfast at the City Centre Markets on January 24. Economic Development Portfolio, and City Focus Chair, Cr Dave Perkins, served bacon and egg rolls while urging market patrons to donate to a worthy local charity. Variety Club are one of the many local groups that find the City Centre markets offer a great fund raising venue.

Consultation

There has been consultation with Community Services Program Managers.

Resource Implications

Nil.

Conclusion

All programs are progressing well at this stage of the financial year with most operational plan goals for the 2009/10 year well advanced

Director's Recommendation

THAT this report be received.