



Mayor and Councillors' Community Report Card

Cr Deirdre Comerford
Mayor of
Mackay Regional Council
Emergency Management portfolio



"In a little over two years, the councillors and I have been faced with many challenges and the 'business as usual' approach is no longer an option as we serve our community.

I pay tribute to my fellow councillors as we have often had robust, honest discussions and I can safely say, the benefit to the community has always been utmost in our minds.

We have consolidated our working relations with neighbouring councils by forming the Whitsunday Regional Organisation of Councils. We have a much stronger dialogue with our development industry with

the establishment of the monthly Developer Forum. We are reshaping council to deliver more efficiently and cost effectively.

We know we are criticised for some of our efforts, but I implore you to take a moment to read this special edition of Council Connect – our report card back to the community."

Mayor Deirdre Comerford



Baby Welcoming Ceremonies have become part of our local celebrations in the Mackay region.

Cr Kevin Casey
Deputy Mayor of
Mackay Regional Council
Road and Drainage portfolio



"My key focus has been to develop and maintain infrastructure that will adequately service our vibrant community. Completing our extensive Capital Works Program coupled with the ongoing flood recovery repairs has been a significant achievement."



Paradise Street - a key connector road to our city has been revived with drainage works, resurfacing and line marking.

Achievements:

- **Connors Road Project**
 - the largest road project undertaken by council
- Improvements to key connectors such as **Paradise Street** and **Bridge Road**
- A new look **Evans Avenue** in North Mackay
- **Midge Point Road upgrade**
- **1500kms of rural roads** and **400kms of urban roads** were repaired as part of the NDRRA program
- **Drainage upgrades** and maintenance to our drainage network
- Improved shared paths and bikeways, including the **Cross City Link** as part of the Bluewater Trail.



Cr Chris Bonanno Festival, Events and the Arts portfolio

"We have worked tirelessly at linking the community with new and existing events to help lift the spirits of residents. There has also been a concerted effort to secure more national and state events to our region by collaborating with Tourism Queensland."

Achievements:

- **Christmas Carols funding** for rural and regional locations
- Revamped the **Sarina Festival** to take on a more community approach
- Member of **City Centre Taskforce** to reactivate the area with events and public art initiatives
- **Re-opened Artspace Mackay on Sundays** and implemented new initiatives to increase patronage
- Involved in City Safe initiatives including **City Centre CCTV** and **lighting upgrades**
- Worked with **South Mackay Sporting Precinct** and **Stadium Mackay**
- Established an **ASSI steering committee** to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the arrival of South Sea Islanders to Queensland.



Artspace Mackay is now open on Sundays.



Cr Laurence Bonaventura Waste, Health and Regulatory Services portfolio

"I have spent considerable time in the field with staff getting hands-on experience in all areas of my portfolio. There has been significant investment in waste facilities as well as the introduction of many new initiatives in this term of council."



The dump voucher trial was implemented in 2014.

Achievements:

- Construction of **\$2.9m Waste Transfer Station** at Sarina
- Introduction of **dog off leash areas** at three beaches and two parks
- Construction of **Cell 2 at Hogans Pocket landfill site**
- **Securing Royalties to Regions funding** to assist in the development of Cell 3 at Hogans Pocket landfill
- The introduction of a **dump voucher system** allowing residents to dispose of up to six ute loads of green waste or three ute loads of general waste annually without charge
- Taken the **rural safety message** to over **900 children** in rural areas, over the last three years.



Cr Frank Gilbert Water and Sewerage portfolio

"The construction of new facilities, implementation of an advisory board and other initiatives has resulted in a more sustainable water supply for our future. Through a diligent approach and ongoing collaboration, I have endeavoured to provide a better outcome for the ratepayer."

Achievements:

- Established the **Water & Waste Capital Advisory Board** with three highly qualified water experts to independently review our water, sewage and waste capital programs
- **Upgraded the raw water intake** to increase the volume of water that can be transferred from the Dumbleton Weir to the Nebo Water Treatment Plant



Sarina Water Recycling Plant.

- Completed construction of the **\$37 million sewage treatment plant** for Sarina to meet growth needs until 2030
- Improved water services with the construction of the **South Mackay Water Trunk Main**
- Improved water pressure for **Marian and Mirani** residents
- Installation of **new trunk water mains** to replace aging cast iron pipelines
- Supported the installation of **automatic meter reader technology** to be the first provider in Queensland to roll out the program.



Cr Alison Jones Community and Client Services portfolio

"I have worked hard to engage the community and act as a liaison between council and local groups. A key focus of my work is to promote the positive services and facilities on offer and facilitate open communication."



Tai Chi classes became part of the Healthy Rural Communities program

Achievements:

- Facilitated councillors to **experience time in council's call centre** to appreciate what the issues are for rate payers phoning council
- **Read for Life: Early Childhood Symposium** co-hosted by council with special guest speaker **Jay Laga'aia**
- Roll out of the **Healthy Rural Communities Mackay** initiative and its sustainability for the rural community
- **Japanese Children's Day** at Artspace and Caneland Central to celebrate our relationship with Matsuura City Council
- Establishment of a **Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group** to draft a document for council's endorsement
- Official opening of the **Sarina Neighbourhood Centre**
- Development of the **Stand for the Silent Night** regional anti-bullying campaign
- **Ooralea Community Day** in collaboration with CQUniversity and the Ooralea Community Network.



Cr Greg Martin Tourism & Economic Development portfolio

"In my portfolio, I have focussed on collaboration to boost the region's economic and tourism activity through the delivery of catalyst projects. This included securing \$9 million in federal funding for the joint \$18 million City Centre Revitalisation. Over the next decade, this will boost new investments by \$60 million and tourism by \$17 million."



An artist's impression of the revitalised City Centre.

Achievements:

- City Centre Taskforce Chair to ensure the sustainability of our CBD and successful **street party** held in the city
- **Field of Dreams Sarina Master Plan** and helped facilitate external funding for **Sarina Men's Shed project**
- Collaborated with Mackay Airport to secure new **direct routes with Gold Coast and Melbourne**
- Deputy Chair Mackay Tourism board which secured **TEQ funding** to deliver **new branding for Mackay region** and also a **Destination Tourism Plan**
- Assisted and facilitated external funding for showcase regional events **River Sessions** and **Mackay Beach Horse Racing Festival**
- Secured funding to assist **tourism** activation opportunities in the **Pioneer River** and **Bluewater Trail**.



Cr Theresa Morgan Parks and Environment portfolio

"There has been a tangible improvement in the condition of many parks and beaches in our region. I have had a real focus on our visual amenity and the ongoing work towards a more sustainable future for the environment."

Achievements:

- Secured government funding with work starting on the upgrade to **Edward Lloyd Park in Marian**
- Completion of **Beach Plans for Town and Far Beach** providing a plan for the future management of this area
- Involved in the vegetation design of the **Southern Entry Statement** at Stockroute Road roundabout
- Chair of Sustainable Futures Advisory Committee and the Natural Environment Advisory Committee to facilitate council's partnership with **Griffith University** during the **biodiversity study at Eungella** monitoring the impacts of climate change
- **Major upgrade of Swayne Street Natural Environment Centre**, creating a more eco-friendly depot
- Developed partnerships with external stakeholders to upgrade **Grendon Park at Half Tide Beach** and the **Grasree Beach playground**



- Planning, design and opening of the **first fenced dog off-leash park** at the Gooseponds, North Mackay.



Cr David Perkins

Planning and Development portfolio

“Our engagement on the Draft Mackay Region Planning Scheme was the most accountable process in Queensland. As the portfolio councillor, I have adopted a methodical approach to development issues and looked at ways to work with all parties for joint outcomes.”

Achievements:

- Member of steering committee for the **Regional Sustainability Strategy** that will determine the sustainable growth of the Mackay region over the next 20 years
- **Open and accountable planning process** since September 2012 to allow submitters of impact assessable applications to present to the mayor and councillors
- Our council is one of only five in Queensland that nominated for and **participated in the State Government Planning Health Check program** to improve planning procedures for better outcomes
- Committed to **Development Innovation Assessment Program** to mirror the success of initial program in South East Queensland
- Implementation of **Focus on Development Program**, an outcomes rather than only process-driven initiative in consultation with development industry with very specific KPIs
- Signing of **Memorandum of Understanding “Charter”** with UDIA (Urban Development Institute of Australia) Mackay/Whitsunday Branch to achieve the goals of the Focus on Development program.



Cr Paul Steindl

Sport, Recreation and Facilities portfolio

“Our community has had a real focus on an active, healthy lifestyle and council has facilitated a variety of events and activities. I have been a key driver in the annual Sports Expo and Sign-On Day and an integral part of the South Mackay Sports Working Group.”

Achievements:

- The \$325,000 multipurpose **Skate Park**, located within Brewers Park, Sarina was officially opened in 2013
- Visit by Olympian and health crusader **Lisa Curry** for two days, offering exercise sessions and seminars to the community
- Collaborating with CQUniversity, businesses, and athletics to **master plan a future sporting precinct**, including Track and Field facility
- Partnership formed with BHP Billiton Mitsubishi Alliance to construct a car park on council land at Leisure Court, which provided a **sealed car park for the Sporting Precinct**
- Completion of project to provide **power backup facilities** to essential council buildings during power failure or disasters through the **installation of generators**
- **Lease issued to Mackay and Regional Football Zone** to relocate to a new site at Glenella, with council contributing **significant funding to facilitate the project.**



Shane Webcke was a guest at the Sports Expo and Sign-On Day.



Cr Ross Walker

Finance and Technology portfolio

“It’s certainly been pleasing to deliver the lowest rates rise in five years for owner/occupiers and continue to work towards reducing our operational costs. My key priority is to further enhance our internal business management processes and long term financial forecast.”



Pensioner rate rebates are \$400/year, one of the highest in Queensland.

Achievements:

- Continued review of council’s fleet, **downsizing council’s vehicles** to reduce operating costs
- Implementation of “How to do business with council” info sessions
- **QTC Credit Review** - council’s sound credit rating maintained
- **Pensioner council rebate increased** from \$268 to \$400 – one of the largest in Queensland
- **Digital mail boxes** developed, this will enable rate assessments to be forwarded electronically (second rate instalment 2014/2015)
- **Major upgrade of MiMaps** to broaden availability of the external mapping system
- **Significant review of Long Term Financial Forecast** to reduce average rate increase across 10 year period, reduced from 5.6 per cent to 3 per cent.