



Office of Mayor and CEO

Annual Review

Period - June 2020 to July 2021

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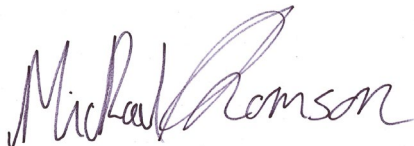
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OVERVIEW

This report is for the Office of the Mayor and CEO Annual Review.

- The safety of our staff, the community and contractors Safety continues to be the highest priority for officers. For the 2020-21 year, twelve (12) lost time injuries have been recorded and a total of 206 days have been lost. Statistics and graphs will not be included in this annual summary report as they were comprehensively reported on within the June report for the Office of Mayor & CEO.
- Council was the beneficiary of significant external funding, with over \$34M actually received within the 2020/21 year.
- Despite the challenges of 2020/21, staff continued to deliver the core Council functions and services, and major projects continued. Details of these will be contained within the various Departmental summary reports.



Michael Thomson
Chief Executive Officer

PROJECTS/INITIATIVES

Council Meetings/Briefings

Council meetings followed the standing cycle of the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month.

However, COVID-19 has also impacted Council meetings. For the first time in the history of the Mackay Regional Council, Council meetings were held outside the Mackay Council Chambers. The MECC was utilised to allow correct distancing.

Council meetings were held back in the Council Chambers from January 2021 however, due to an outbreak had to return to the MECC on 14 April 2021. The restrictions were relaxed in the weeks after and the meetings were moved back to the Council Chambers from 28 April 2021.

The public were still able to participate in meetings by viewing the live-streaming which is being recorded for each meeting.

Details of Council meeting minutes, and recorded live streaming, are all available on Council's website.

For the Year 2020/21, the following Council meetings/briefings were co-ordinated:

- Ordinary Council meetings: 22
- Special Budget meetings: 1 (23 June)
- Briefing Sessions held: 160
- Council in Community Days: 9
- Total No. of registered members of the public to Ordinary meetings: 32
- Total No. of registered members of the public to Special meeting: 6

Funding

Council has been the beneficiary of significant external grant funding with a total of \$34,025,333.92 received during 2020/21.

Major individual funding included –

- | | |
|--|-------------|
| • Financial Assistance Grant 2020/21 | \$2,778,228 |
| • Financial Assistance Grant 2021/22 | \$2,992,561 |
| • Works for Queensland COVID | \$6,930,000 |
| • Works for Queensland Round 3 | \$4,990,000 |
| • Local Roads & Community Infrastructure Phase 1 | \$1,956,590 |
| • Local Roads & Community Infrastructure Phase 2 | \$2,186,862 |
| • Roads to Recovery 2019-2024 | \$1,956,590 |
| • Transport Infrastructure Development Scheme (Ball Bay Rd) - | \$1,013,637 |
| • Transport Infrastructure Development Scheme (Milton/Archibald St Intersection) - | \$770,453 |
| • Queensland Reconstruction Authority – Dalrymple Rd | \$1,066,568 |

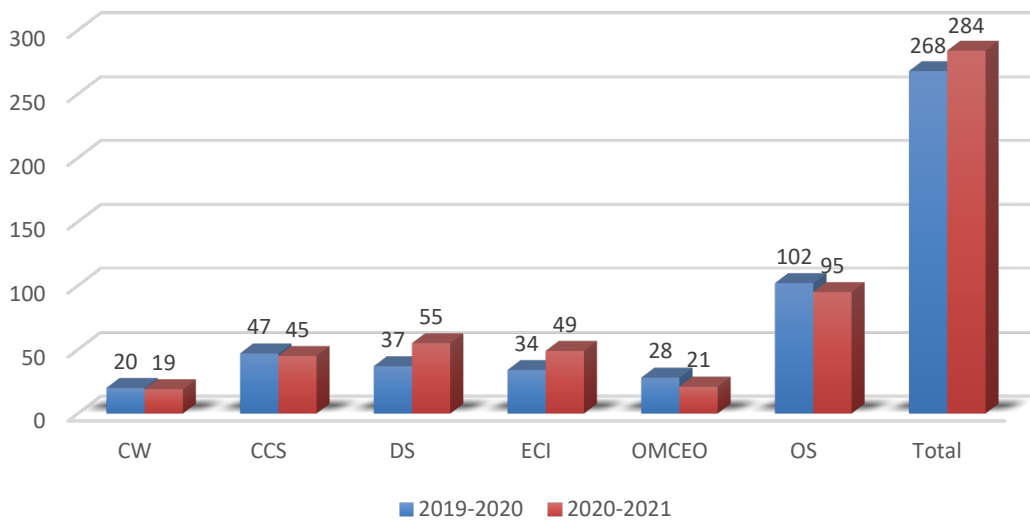
It should be noted that these are only monies actually received during 2020/21

LEGAL SERVICES

Overview

During the 2020-21 financial year, the Legal Services Program continued to provide legal advice, representation, and support across Council, as shown in Figure 1. The total number of formal legal requests received, and matters opened, increased by roughly 6% to 284. This total volume roughly equates to 24 new formal requests per month, or a little more than 1 per working day on average.

Figure 1 Matters Opened by Directorate



As shown by Figure 2, most of the 284 new legal requests opened in the 2020-21 financial year were in the areas of property (115), contracts & agreements (66) and administration and governance (46). Given this, it is not surprising that Figure 3 shows that most new legal requests fall into the categories of general advice (92) and drafting and reviewing documents (73).

Figure 2 Legal Matters by Area of Law

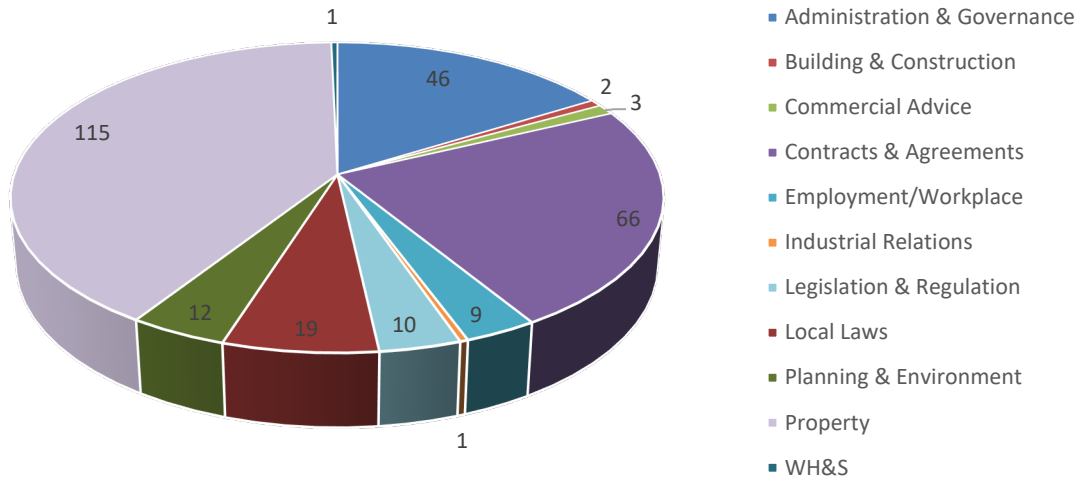
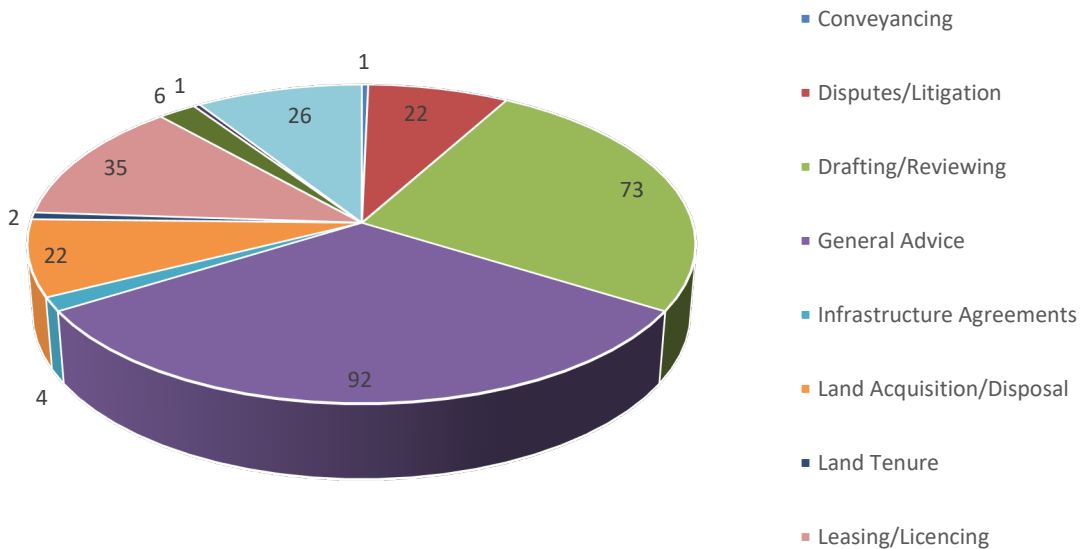


Figure 3 Legal Matters by Activity Type



The number of matters involving external legal counsel grew from 19 (7%) in 2019-20 to 24 (8.5%) in 2020-21. This reflects both the complexity and scale of some legal requests as well as, and perhaps more importantly, a deliberate decision to engage specialist legal practitioners on retainer arrangements to improve efficiency and productivity and better service Council programs.

In the 2020-21 financial year the number of dispute/litigation matters briefed to external solicitors increased from 1 to 7. If the dispute matters are excluded, only 6.5% of files involve external legal advice.

Value added to Council

The true value from an in-house legal team is not the extent to which external legal costs are reduced by replacing them with internal salary and wages. The real benefit to the organisation is realised when the in-house legal team can apply their deeper understanding of the organisation and its internal and external operating environments to the problem at hand. Further, this type of legal and commercial advice often arises informally around discussions about other things, or where a quick drop-in or phone call can resolve something before it is a problem.

The legal services program continues to actively engage with programs from across all Council operations to provide timely and effective advice, representation, and assistance. Notable milestones for the 2020-21 financial year include:

- Effective completion of a multi-year project removing land acquisition notices from properties that are no longer required.
- Engagement of an external legal provider on retainer to assist Development Services to assist with complex and difficult planning matters and help clear a backlog.
- Engagement of an external legal provider on retainer to review and respond to proposed departures Council's standard contract terms by tenderers. This is a very recent engagement, with the true benefits to be realised from the 2021-22 financial year.

GREATER WHITSUNDAY COUNCILS OF MAYORS (GWCōM'S)

Greater Whitsunday Council of Mayors (GWCōM's) – formerly Whitsunday Regional Organisation of Councils (WROC)

Overview

Joint group in conjunction with the Councils of Isaac and Whitsunday.

Membership involves the Mayor and CEO of each of the three (3) Councils, supported by various staff.

A CEO's Group has been established as part of the GWCōM's. The intent of this group is to handle the 'business' matters and look for possible synergies between Councils at CEO level and allowing focus on higher level and strategic issues for the region by the wider group.

The below is a summary of the activities for the 2020/21 year

Meetings

The following meetings were held of the GWCōM's CEO Group –

- 7 August 2020
- 20 November 2020
- 12 February 2021

- 19 March 2021
- 11 June 2021

The following meetings were held of the GWCoM's –

- 20 August 2020 – Whitsunday
- 15 October 2020 – Mackay
- 7 December 2020 – Mackay
- 26 February 2021 – Moranbah
- 22 April 2021 – Mackay

Members

Representatives for the period included –

Whitsunday

- Mayor – Andrew Willcox (Chair of GWCoM's)
- CEO - Rod Ferguson

Isaac

- Mayor – Anne Baker
- CEO - Gary Stevenson - To April 2021
- CEO - Jeff Stewart-Harris – From April 2021

Mackay

- Mayor – Greg Williamson
- CEO – Craig Doyle – To August 2020
- CEO - Michael Thomson – From August 2020

Mayor Andrew Willcox continued as the Chair for the year, and also fulfils the role of LGAQ Policy Executive District representative for the area (Division 7).

Mayor Greg Williamson continued as the GWCoM's representative on the Greater Whitsunday Alliance (GW3)

Meeting Attendees

Regular meeting attendees during the years included-

- LGAQ
- GW3
- Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning (DSDIP)
- Regional Development Australia Mackay-Isaac-Whitsunday Inc (RDA)
- Department of Premier and Cabinet
- Greater Whitsunday Communities (previously Regional Social Development Coalition - RSDC)

Regional Queensland Council of Mayors (RQCoM's)

Regional Queensland Council of Mayors (RQCoM's) – formerly Northern Alliance of Councils (NAOC's)

Overview

At the Annual General Meeting, and a separate Special Meeting, of NAOC's held in Townsville on 30 November 2020, the decision to rename the Association to better reflect the alliance of local government and Mayors from Regional Queensland was made with the new name of Regional Queensland Council of Mayors Inc adopted, along with associated changes to the Constitution to broaden the membership options for all Council's in Regional Queensland.

Mayor Williamson was appointed as the President, and the new Executive consisting of –

- Mayor Williamson (Mackay) – President
- Mayor Hill (Townsville) – Deputy President
- Mayor Willcox (Whitsunday) – Management Committee
- Mayor Scott (Cook) – Management Committee
- Mayor Beveridge (Charters Towers) – Management Committee
- Mayor Kerr (Port Douglas) – Management Committee
- Mayor Manning (Cairns) – Management Committee

Meetings have continued since this time with a focus of reinvigoration of this entity and a view to strong representation for Regional Queensland.

Meetings for 2020/21 included –

- 2 March 2021 - Mackay
- 20 April 2021 - Cairns
- 7 June 2021 – Videoconf/Teams

Per the Constitution the CEO of the Council represented by the President becomes the Secretary, and as such Michael Thomson CEO of Mackay Regional Council is the Secretary, however recruitment for an Executive Officer role has commenced to ensure that the entity is correctly serviced.

An expanded membership drive continues and whilst not yet complete good responses have been received including from the major Regional centres.