

Northern Areas Council Strategic Plan 2020 - 2027



CONTENTS

Our Vision 2027	1
Mayor's Message	2
Our Community	3
This Strategic Plan	4
Council's Mission / Council's Role	5
Community Aspirations, Needs & Perspectives	6
Goals & Strategic Drivers	7
Goal 1: A Thriving Local Economy	8
Goal 2: A Desirable Place to Live, Work & Visit	9
Goal 3: Strong Communities Across our Region	10
Goal 4: Quality Infrastructure & Community Assets	11
Goal 5: Sustained Financial Stability	12



VISION 2027

Our vision is a region of safe, sustainable and inclusive communities. A Community proud of its heritage and encouraged by a promising future. A place to enjoy a rural lifestyle, where business is encouraged to grow and visitors are welcomed.



MAYOR'S MESSAGE

I am pleased to present to you, on behalf of the Northern Areas Council, our Strategic Plan 2020 - 2027.

The Plan sets out the Council's vision for our district and Community over a 7 year period. It is a vision that we believe represents both where we are as a Council and Community in 2020, and where we want to be by 2027.

This vision and indeed the entire Plan recognises the inherent qualities that define the region in which we live, as well as what is important to our community: country lifestyle; friendly and welcoming people; well maintained and safe towns; and the importance of our well-established agricultural industry along with other developing industries as well as our local businesses. Many of these qualities are recognised within the Plan as 'Strategic Advantages' of the area.

In developing this Plan, the Council has applied both care for the retention of these qualities, as well as forethought about opportunities and improvement.

Our considerations have been informed by the community voice which we have listened to through a Community Survey, community consultation forums and through comments on a draft of the Plan made available for public comment before being finalised by Council. We will provide further opportunities for review and consultation throughout its lifetime.

This Plan is a statement of the journey that Council will undertake to deliver upon our vision, starting with 5 goals which reflect the priorities for our Council over the coming 7 years.

These goals reflect practical interests to our Community: having a strong local economy; being a great place to live and visit; good quality services for our people; sound roads, footpaths and other infrastructure; and the financial sustainability of our Council to meet and continue to deliver against Community needs.

The Plan directly informs our annual business plans and budgeting processes which set out what specifically what we will do to achieve our vision.

We embark upon this journey with the valued contribution of the many individuals, groups, organisations and businesses that comprise the Northern Areas community.

Mayor Denis Clark
Northern Areas Council



OUR COMMUNITY

The Northern Areas Council is situated in the heartland of the Southern Flinders Ranges, approximately 200 kilometres north of Adelaide and within the traditional lands of the Ngadjuri and Nukunu people.

Council's towns and communities were developed during the prosperous times of traditional cereal and grazing practices complemented by forestry and rail operations and in more recent years, tourism, events and wind energy infrastructure.

Jamestown is the main service centre for the district with additional services offered at Gladstone, Laura and Spalding providing for the smaller communities of Caltowie, Georgetown, Gulnare, Stone Hut, Tarcowie and Yacka.

Council's close network of towns offers a range of opportunities for shopping, recreation, employment, health and education.

Together, Council and the community have built and maintained infrastructure such as recreation facilities and town halls to support the activities of local communities as well as generating interest and income from visitors and tourists.

The Council area hosts a number of significant events, including the Jamestown Fly-In and Air Spectacular, Laura Folk Fair, Ram and Ewe Ball, Jamestown Show and Jamestown Races as well as a number of local community events.

The economy remains firmly based in broadacre farming, with the Jamestown Saleyards one of the few remaining regional livestock sales facilities. Recent windfarm development has made a strong contribution to the economy and has brought new families into the district.

The projected roll-out of high speed broadband through the Mid North will make the district more attractive to telecommuters and expand opportunities for health and education within the region.

4603 population	617 businesses
25% employed in agriculture	298,618 ha land area
4.8% Unemployment	2.3 people per household
2,197km of roads	2926 registered motor vehicles



Source: 2018 ABS Australian Census Northern Areas (DC) LGA 45120

THIS STRATEGIC PLAN

This Northern Areas Strategic Plan 2020 - 2027 defines the Council's vision, mission, priorities and strategies for our area, communities and people over a 7 year period between 2020 - 2027.

The Plan is the centrepiece of Council's suite of strategic management documents which includes Council's:

- Annual Business Plans
- Annual Budgets
- Long Term Financial Plan 2019/20 - 2028/29
- Asset Management Plans.

The achievement of goals, implementation of strategies and actions contained within this Plan is supported by these plans.

In developing this plan, Council engaged with the Northern Areas community, initially through a community survey seeking views on aspirations and priorities for the region as well as feedback on Council performance. Further information about this survey can be found on page 6.

Following the development of a draft plan, community consultation workshops were conducted providing those in attendance with an opportunity to provide input into the Plan. Additionally community were given the opportunity to make comment on the plan through written submissions to Council.

This plan will be regularly reviewed to ensure it remains relevant to the Northern Areas community and region.

Whilst this is a plan that Council has developed, and will seek to implement and achieve, through the various roles that Council performs (detailed on page 5), Council acknowledges the contribution that many individuals, groups, organisations and businesses make to the Northern Areas community and region, and the role these Stakeholders can play in supporting the achievement of the vision and goals contained within the Plan.



COUNCIL'S MISSION

As we pursue our vision, as the Northern Areas Council we will:

- Foster a sense of community, pride and inclusion for all of our community
- Maintain and improve our infrastructure including roads, footpaths and the presentation of our townships
- Provide quality services across all of our community
- Advocate for the protection of our environment and heritage
- Implement initiatives for the responsible use of resources
- Advocate for economic development across the region, to achieve sustainable towns and services and enhance employment opportunities
- Demonstrate sound leadership and work with our community to meet their expectations whilst operating in a financially responsible manner.

COUNCIL'S ROLE

Leader - Council demonstrating leadership on community priorities and issues and driving a vision for the community and region.

Service Provider or Owner - Council directly delivering services, providing and managing community assets and managing community financial resources.

Partner - Council contributing financial resources or in kind support, and working with Stakeholders.

Facilitator - Council bringing together stakeholders to achieve outcomes

Regulator - Council fulfilling a particular role as determined by legislation

Advocate - Council making representations on behalf of the community

COMMUNITY ASPIRATIONS, NEEDS & PERSPECTIVES

Between March and April 2019 the Northern Areas Council conducted a community survey. Across 25 survey questions Respondents were asked about what is important to them, their aspirations, issues and priorities for the community.

Additionally the survey asked Respondents about the relevance of priorities within the Council's previous Strategic Plan 2012-2022 and how they rated Council's progress against these, as well as Council's general performance.

In addition to conducting a community survey, community consultation workshops were held to inform this strategic plan.

50% of Respondents indicated they live in Jamestown, 16% in Gladstone, 13% from Laura, 7% from Spalding, 13% outside of but within 30km of the township and 1% more than 30km from a township.

A report was provided to Council and made available to the public.

Here are some of the key results.



STRATEGIC DRIVERS

**Goal 1:
A Thriving
Local Economy**

Regional Employment

Agricultural Industry

Developing Industries

**Goal 2:
A Desirable
Place to Live or
Visit**

Local business

Ageing in place

Population

Community Expectations

**Goal 3:
Stronger
Communities Across
our Region**

Climate

Asset Maintenance & Renewal

**Goal 4:
Effective
Infrastructure
& Community
Assets**

Regulatory requirements

**Goal 5:
Sustained
Financial
Stability**

OUR GOALS

Goal 1: A Thriving Local Economy

Our Strategic Advantage-

- ✓ Strong primary production industries and support services within Region
- ✓ Regional livestock saleyards
- ✓ Experience with the renewable energy industry
- ✓ Proximity to Adelaide and regional centres
- ✓ Reliable rainfall
- ✓ Council's willingness to work with industry in support of local economic development & job opportunities

Strategy	Actions	Measures
Encourage Investment in Local Business & Industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with Stakeholders / Interested Parties, Government and RDA (Regional Development Australia) Develop an Economic Development Plan Develop an Economic Assistance Policy Attract economic investment within the region including leveraging the strong agricultural and established renewable energy industries Planning and Development facilitation of solutions to Business needs within the Planning Development Infrastructure Act framework (PDI Act) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in Gross Regional Product Implementation of an Economic Development Plan Implementation of an Economic Assistance Policy Increase in local employment opportunities
Support Local Business to Drive Local Employment Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support local businesses to work together through, for example, development of a Local Chamber of Commerce. Council regulations, procurement and operations support local business growth and investment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved health of local business Increased employment via local business and industry

Goal 2:

A Desirable Place To Live or Visit



Our Strategic Advantage-

- ✓ Good level of essential services across region
- ✓ Health services across region
- ✓ Affordable property values
- ✓ High quality community facilities
- ✓ Natural environment
- ✓ Proximity to Adelaide and regional centres
- ✓ Proximity to regional University

Strategy	Actions	Measures
Support Safe, Sustainable & Inclusive Communities Across the Region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain township infrastructure, streetscapes, parks and open spaces to a high standard • Develop emergency management preparedness programs and recovery plans • Support community safety initiatives • Conduct a bi-annual community survey to measure Community satisfaction • Planning and Development facilitation of solutions to domestic development within the Planning Development Infrastructure Act framework (PDI Act) • Regulatory controls support healthy communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in local population • Increased participation in community surveys
Retain Essential Services in the Region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate for the retention of hospital, medical, school, police, ambulance, CFS and SES services in the region. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retention of essential services across the region
Be an Attractive Stop or Short-Stay Destination for Tourists & Visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support new tourism infrastructure • Enhance existing tourism infrastructure • Support the attractiveness of local towns as a drop in and short stay tourist destination by providing amenity such as public wifi • Support the promotion of local and regional tourism assets • Encourage expansion of on-water activities within the area • Support regional tourism initiatives including the promotion of the Northern Areas region as a tourism destination within itself and as part of the Southern Flinders region • Encourage development of a high end accommodation and conference facility • Support existing community events and encourage new events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased tourism contribution to local economy • Increased patronage of local tourism assets • Increase in number of new events • Increased patronage of existing events

Goal 3: Stronger Communities Across our Region



Our Strategic Advantage-

- ✓ Community grant funding program
- ✓ Council support for community groups
- ✓ High level of volunteer participation
- ✓ High quality community facilities
- ✓ Forward thinking (shovel ready projects)
- ✓ Access to community land for fund raising
- ✓ Renewable energy industry support for community

Strategy	Actions	Measures
Secure Sustainable Provision and Enhancement of Services to Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lobby State and Federal Government for continued and improved funding of services across community Conduct service-specific community surveys Prepare for grant opportunities through identification of shovel-ready projects Pursue opportunities to improve community wellbeing and social inclusion Advocate for improved local and regional transport networks and services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retention of existing community services Enhancement of community services High satisfaction with community services via specific service surveys Improved regional transport services
Support Capacity Building of Community Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support community groups to improve capability and financial strength through strategic planning, grant applications and access to Council services Support opportunities for volunteer participation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased engagement with community Groups Continued high levels of volunteering

Goal 4: Effective Infrastructure & Community Assets



Our Strategic Advantage-

- ✓ Council's financial stability
- ✓ Council's Asset Management Plans
- ✓ High quality Community facilities
- ✓ Forward thinking (shovel ready projects)

Strategy	Actions	Measures
Enhanced Local & Regional Road Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lobby State and Federal Governments for improved access to road network funding • Review Road Asset Management Plan • Review Footpath Strategy • Develop and implement a footpath renewal program • Implement measures within bridge assets management plan • Develop plans for scheduled maintenance activities • Develop service level standards for road assets • Participate in review of 2030 Regional Transport Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved level of road funding • Community satisfaction with road assets • Implementation of plans for scheduled maintenance activities • Implementation of service level standards for road assets
Effective Management of Community Assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop service level standards for all asset classes • Develop plans for scheduled maintenance activities • Implement measures within stormwater management plan • Implement asset management software to facilitate the more effective and efficient management of community assets • Develop a program of asset rationalisation for community buildings and land in consultation with community • Review all asset management plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satisfaction with community assets • Progress against actions and targets within asset management plans • Implementation of plan for asset rationalisation • Completed reviews of asset management plans

Goal 5: Sustained Financial Stability



Our Strategic Advantage-

- ✓ Financial sustainability of Council
- ✓ Suite of strategic management plans
- ✓ Financial performance in-line with Long Term Financial Plans

Strategy	Actions	Measures
Maintain Council's Financial Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Council's financial ratio targets Review Council's performance against financial results Conduct a review of Council's rating structure Continue with progress against Long Term Financial Plans Effective management of Council's assets Enhance Council's preparedness for grant opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of financial targets conducted Review of Council performance against financial targets conducted Review of Council's rating structure completed Progress against Council's long term financial plans
Pursue Productivity Improvements & Cost Reduction Initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pursue opportunities for shared resources with other Councils Review products and services provided to Council to ensure competitive pricing Identify productivity improvements achievable through new or improved IT software and systems Review Council's organisational structure Continually review methodology for service delivery against financial sustainability goals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved resourcing achieved through shared service arrangements Review of products and services completed Recommendations for productivity improvements through IT received Review of Council organisational structure completed