

Operational

PLAN 2025 – 2026



CHARTERS TOWERS
REGIONAL COUNCIL

A scenic landscape at sunset. In the foreground, a blue cylindrical building with the words "THE WORLD" in white capital letters sits on a grassy hill. The background shows a vast, flat landscape under a sky filled with vibrant orange and yellow clouds, with a dark blue shape in the top left corner.

Acknowledgement of Country

We at Charters Towers Regional Council acknowledge the First Nations people of the land on which Charters Towers and its greater region are located, and where we conduct our business. We pay respect to their Elders past and present.

We are committed to a positive future for all.

Document approved by Council: 25 June 2025

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Strategic Context

The Operational Plan sits within and builds upon current strategic documents as well as government policy.

Introduction to the Operational Plan

Our Operational Plan sets the direction for the 2025–2026 financial year and identifies how we will measure our performance.

The Operational Plan is a one-year plan that details the operations of Council to deliver its services to the community; delivering on the Community Strategic Plan 2025–2035, Council's election commitments and funding requirements.

The development of Council's Operational Plan is a legislative requirement of the *Local Government Act 2009* and *Local Government Regulation 2012*. Legislation requires that the annual Operational Plan and Budget be consistent.

Strategic Framework

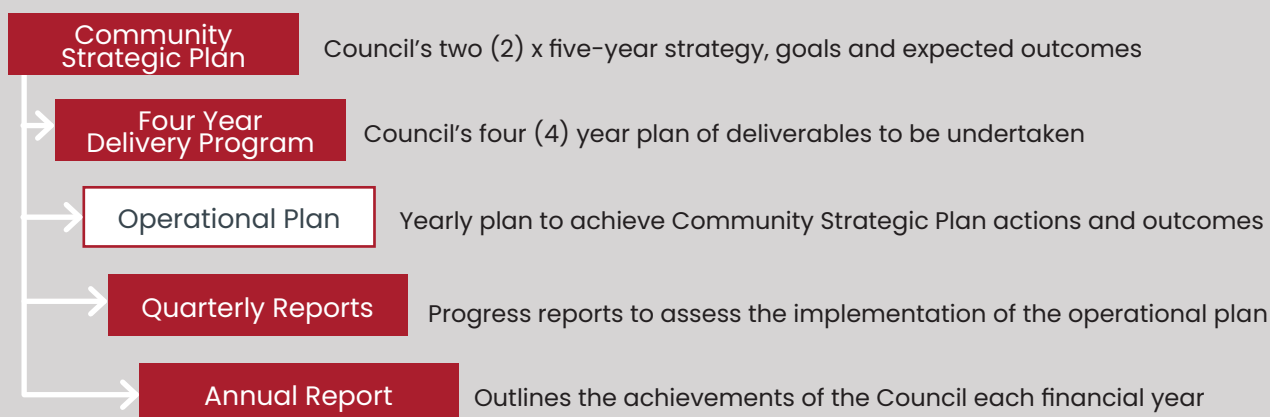
The operational planning process includes management of Council's strategic and operational risks.

Council's commitment to risk management is outlined in the Enterprise Risk Management Policy and is based on International Standard ISO31000:2018 Risk Management Guidelines.

Council will manage risk by integrating risk management practices into corporate and operational planning.

Council will assess the achievements of its Operational Plan on a quarterly basis and publish publicly-available quarterly performance reports.

Regular reporting provides Council with the opportunity to ensure programs are delivered in a timely manner, within allocated resources. It also enables Council to be more responsive to significant changes in the operating environment, whether they be social, economic, environmental, or internal changes that impact on organisational capacity to deliver our programs.



More information can be found at:

www.charterstowers.qld.gov.au/Forms-and-publications/Corporate-publications

HOW TO READ THE *Operational* Plan

Below is a guide to reading the tables which are found within the Operational Plan.

| The numbering relates back to the strategic objective in the Community Strategic Plan. | The action outlined in the Community Strategic Plan. | This is the deliverable that will be undertaken in 2025-26 . | This is the Lead officer that will manage the action. |
|--|--|---|---|
|  | 1.1 High quality health services High quality health services to maintain the Charters Towers Region as a vibrant and appealing place to live. It is essential to provide modern health and aged care. | | |
| OUTCOME | ACTION | DELIVERABLE | LEAD |
| 1.1.1 Advocate for additional investment into aged care services | Advocate for investment into Aged Care | Review, update and publish Advocacy Plan and call to action campaigns for the actions | Chief Executive Officer |

Your *Councillors*



Liz Schmidt

Mayor

- > Federal & State Advocacy
- > Regional & State Representation
- > Inter-Government Relations
- > Investment Attraction
- > Community Strategic Plan
- > Community Engagement Strategy
- > Four-Year Delivery Program
- > Ex-Officio Representative on all Portfolios



Kate Hastie

Deputy Mayor

- > Strategic Asset Management
- > Community Engagement Strategy
- > Council Facilities
- > Economic Development Strategy



Alan Barr

Councillor

- > Water & Wastewater
- > Biosecurity Plan
- > Workplace Health & Safety



Kim Farmer

Councillor

- > Financial Sustainability
- > ICT Strategy
- > Workforce Strategy
- > Commercial Activities



Graham Lohmann APM

Councillor

- > Strategic Land Use
- > Planning Scheme
- > Local Laws
- > Strategic Risk Management
- > Disaster Management



Steven Plant

Councillor

- > Roads Policies
- > Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA)
- > Road Maintenance Performance Contract (RMPC)
- > Open Spaces inc. Cemeteries
- > Waste Management Strategy
- > Flying-Fox Management Plan

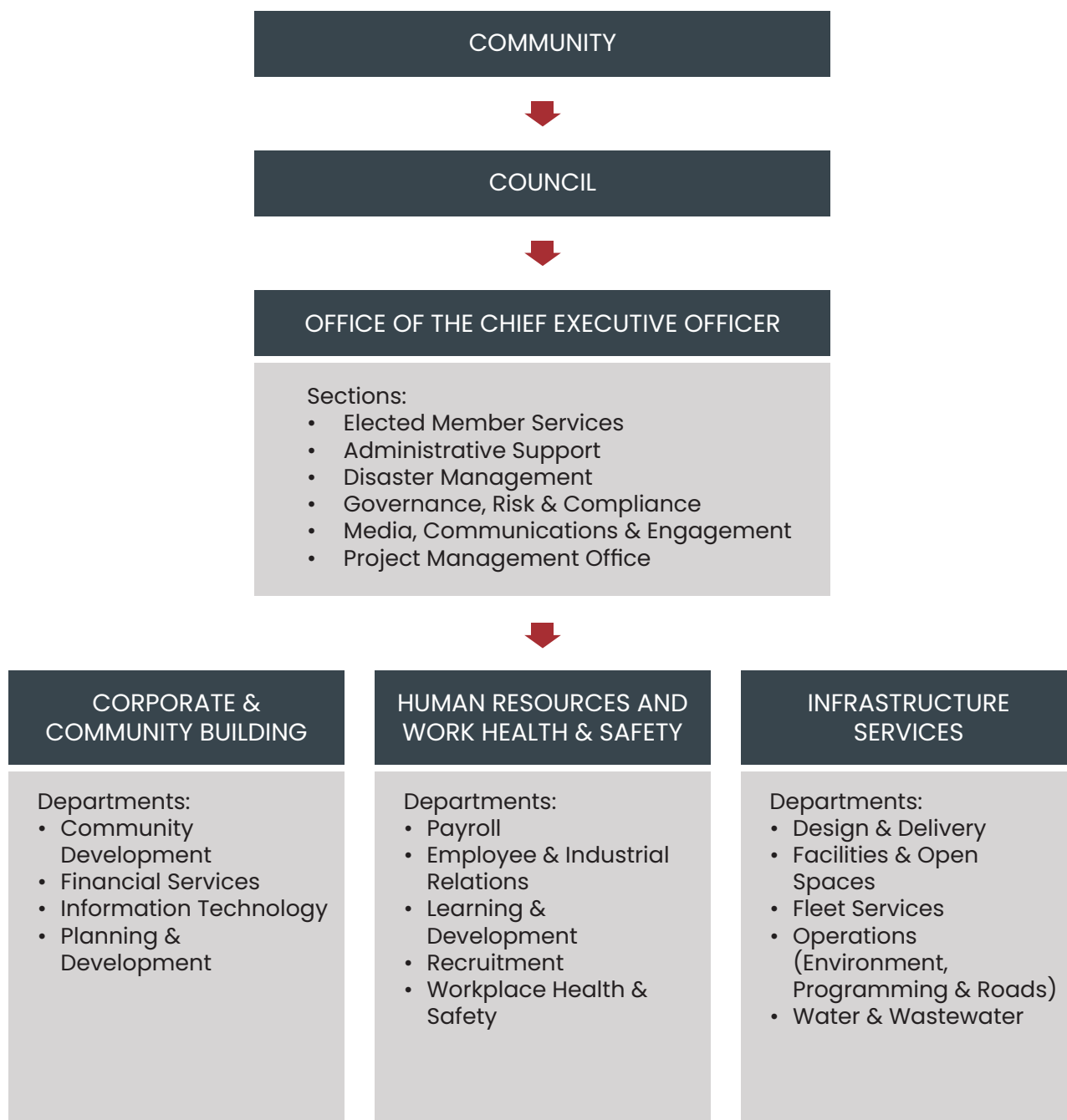


Julie Mathews

Councillor

- > Community Services & Events
- > Sport & Recreation
- > Destination Management Plan
- > Arts & Culture

Directorates



“This region’s potential for growth is limitless, and I’m thrilled to contribute to its promising future.”

Community Member



Community Focus Areas

The Charters Towers Region is at the centre of our organisation. We act in accordance with the principles of local government to deliver value and benefits to the Region. These community focus areas outline our priorities to providing services and infrastructure that meet the current and future needs of our community.



OUR COMMUNITY

A connected, resilient community built on inclusivity, belonging, and pride.

Our objective is to foster a connected, resilient community where inclusivity, belonging, and pride are at the heart of everything we do. Through collaboration, support, and shared purpose, we empower individuals to thrive and create a more welcoming, united future.



OUR ECONOMY

A thriving, diverse economy that fosters growth, innovation and opportunity.

Our objective is to cultivate a thriving, diverse economy that champions growth, innovation, and opportunity. By fostering entrepreneurship, embracing ideas, and supporting development, we enable businesses and individuals to flourish in an evolving landscape.



OUR ENVIRONMENT

A sustainable, healthy environment protected for future generations.

Our objective is to nurture a sustainable, healthy environment safeguarded for future generations. Through responsible stewardship, innovation, and collective action, we preserve natural resources, promote ecological balance, and ensure a thriving planet for years to come.



OUR CIVIC LEADERSHIP

Engaged, transparent leadership that empowers and unites our community.

Our objective is to foster engaged, transparent leadership that strengthens and unites our community. Through openness, collaboration, and shared purpose, we build trust, encourage participation, and create a future shaped by collective voices and meaningful action.

FOCUS 1: *Our Community*



1.1 High quality health services

To maintain the Charters Towers Region as a vibrant and appealing place to live, it is essential to provide modern health and aged care.

| OUTCOME | ACTION | DELIVERABLE | LEAD |
|---|---|---|-------------------------|
| 1.1.1 Advocate for the redevelopment of the Charters Towers Health Service and additional critical health services | Advocate for construction of a replacement hospital alongside Eventide Aged Care Facility | Review, update and publish Advocacy Plan and call to action campaigns for the actions | Chief Executive Officer |
| 1.1.2 Advocate for additional investment into aged care services | Advocate for investment into Aged Care | Review, update and publish Advocacy Plan and call to action campaigns for the actions | Chief Executive Officer |



1.2 Celebrate our Unique Character, Identity and History

Once known as “The World” during its prosperous period in the late 19th century, Charters Towers and surrounding communities have significantly contributed to Australia’s development and have much to celebrate.

| OUTCOME | ACTION | DELIVERABLE | LEAD |
|---|--|--|--------------------------------|
| 1.2.1 Opportunities for community participation and connection to enable quality social cohesion across the Region | Deliver a number of Council events across the Charters Towers Region | Events delivered across the Region | Manager Community Development |
| 1.2.2 Friends, family and visitors alike enjoy coming to and exploring the Region | Deliver the Destination Management Plan action plan deliverables | Creation of Tourism Marketing Strategy Review Venus Gold Battery & Ghosts of Gold Experience to identify Technology Upgrades required | Manager Community Development |
| 1.2.3 Leverage and protect the unique history of the Charters Towers Region | Review of the Town Planning Scheme, including local heritage | Review and update local heritage places, including Planning Scheme amendments | Manager Planning & Development |



1.3 Deliver High Quality Community Facilities

To attract new residents to the region, the Charters Towers Region needs to continually improve community facilities and services.

| OUTCOME | ACTION | DELIVERABLE | LEAD |
|---|--|---|---|
| 1.3.1 Invest in quality play and active recreation opportunities that are accessible | Seek government funding to invest in improving existing public spaces that are inclusive of all ages | Number of funding opportunities identified. Detailed asset condition assessments undertaken on playgrounds across region, and projects planned for future years delivery | PMO Manager Manager Council Facilities |
| 1.3.2 Visually appealing, inviting, and accessible public spaces | Maintain existing public spaces to a high and accessible standard through a Maintenance Program for each of the following: Charters Towers, Greenvale, Hervey Range, Homestead, Pentland, and Ravenswood | Enhancement to the World Theatre through the Stage and House Lighting refurbishment Maintenance programs are reviewed, updated and where required developed for communities, and maintenance programs delivered according to schedules | Manager Community Development Manager Council Facilities |

“Charters Towers Regional Council is a strong advocate, working with local groups to support elderly, youth, and Indigenous communities through genuine partnerships.”





1.4 Strengthen partnerships and relationships within our community

We will diligently enhance collaborations and connections with organisations and groups in our community to advance the cultural, social, environmental, and economic goals of elderly, youth, and indigenous community members.

| OUTCOME | ACTION | DELIVERABLE | LEAD |
|---|---|---|-------------------------------|
| 1.4.1 Community engagement will be inclusive and designed to reach diverse communities | Facilitate meaningful and effective community engagement in everything we do that is inclusive across the entire region | Investigate options for digital notice boards across the region; including smaller townships | Executive Services Manager |
| | | Review and update the Arts and Cultural Plan | Manager Community Development |
| | | Ensure the objectives of Council's Community Engagement Strategy are met in all activities across Council | Executive Services Manager |
| 1.4.2 Communities actively participate in decision making processes | Continue to develop community participation in Council advisory committees, surveys, Have Your Say Portal, and feedback sessions. | Re-establish the Indigenous Reference Group | Executive Services Manager |
| | | Review the needs of advisory groups for major Council projects/initiatives as/when required | Executive Services Manager |

FOCUS 2: *Our Economy*



2.1 Regional Collaboration & Advocacy

Creating an environment that supports sustainable economic development.

| OUTCOME | ACTION | DELIVERABLE | LEAD |
|--|---|--|---|
| 2.1.1 Increase Regional Collaboration | Strengthen partnerships with regional advocacy development organisations to deliver regionally significant projects | Attendance and participation in regional development forums (RDA Townsville & North West) | Manager Planning and Development |
| | | Attendance and participation in regional infrastructure advocacy groups (RRTG, Reef Guardian, NQWRAP) | Executive Manager Infrastructure Services |
| | | | Manager Operations |
| | | | Manager Water & Wastewater |
| 2.1.2 Enhance Stakeholder Collaboration | Facilitate greater and meaningful engagement between Council, industry and community to deliver a united vision for the region | Implement and facilitate pop up sessions and networking opportunities across the region. | Executive Services Manager / Executive Manager Corporate & Community Building |
| | | Host Local Supplier Forum in conjunction with Local Buy and VendorPanel | Chief Financial Officer |
| | | Develop Pentland Masterplan | Manager Community Development |
| | | Develop the Community Engagement Strategy for the CBD Masterplan to have ready prior to the project commencing and submission of the draft project concept | Executive Services Manager / Manager Planning & Development |
| | | Attendance and participation in the Rural Industry Advisory Group | Manager Operations / Executive Manager Infrastructure Services |
| 2.1.3 Promote priorities | Establish Charters Towers as a regional leader by promoting its economic priorities, driving strategic initiatives, and advocating for the region's needs at state and federal levels | Review, update and publish Advocacy Plan and call to action campaigns for the actions | Chief Executive Officer |



2.2 Investment Attraction & Local Business Support

To attract and develop new industries and support existing industries.

| OUTCOME | ACTION | DELIVERABLE | LEAD |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|----------------------------------|
| 2.2.1 Support small businesses | Foster the growth of existing businesses and encourage new startups by creating an environment that promotes innovation and entrepreneurship | Deliver the Business Excellence Awards | Manager Planning and Development |
| | | Shop Local Campaign | Manager Planning and Development |
| 2.2.2 Attract Investment | Promote key priorities and opportunities to attract investment from the private sector, but also the Queensland and Australian Governments. Create an environment that is attractive to external investors/businesses | Maintain Small Business Friendly Commitment | Manager Planning and Development |
| | | Development of Investor Information Pack and Business Welcome Pack | Manager Planning and Development |
| | | Review and update Industrial Land Prospectus | Manager Planning and Development |



2.3 Infrastructure Investment & Planning

Planning for future growth that supports and enables affordable housing and private investment.

| OUTCOME | ACTION | DELIVERABLE | LEAD |
|--|---|--|--|
| 2.3.1 Effective Planning | Align infrastructure planning with the region's growth priorities, focusing on transport, water security, digital connectivity, housing and education to support existing and emerging industries | Creation of 10-Year Capital & Operational Projects Plan Dashboard | PMO Manager Chief Financial Officer |
| 2.3.2 Deliver enabling infrastructure | Expand and strengthen the region as a place to do business by facilitating the delivery of the required enabling infrastructure to support growth | Infrastructure projects aligned with strategic plan priorities | PMO Manager |
| | | Develop a program for new, and to upgrade, infrastructure to support Planning Scheme amendments and improvements | Manager Water & Wastewater |



2.4 Ensure a clear vision and strategic goals for the region's visitor economy

Ensure long-term success, resilience and sustainability by leveraging the region's strengths, addressing challenges, and unlocking its potential as a premier tourism destination in Queensland.

| OUTCOME | ACTION | DELIVERABLE | LEAD |
|--|--|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 2.4.3 Showcase Charters Towers' distinctive character while supporting regional producers and fostering sustainable tourism | Deliver the Destination Management Plan action plan deliverables | Develop Tourism Marketing Strategy | Manager Community Development |



2.5 Additional Housing to Support Regional Migration

To realise the economic opportunities in the region, a skilled and ready workforce is required. To grow this workforce, additional housing is needed to support migration of skilled and ready workers to our region.

| OUTCOME | ACTION | DELIVERABLE | LEAD |
|--|--|--|---|
| 2.5.1 Development of broadhectare land into new residential areas | Identify unallocated State land for development and support conversion to freehold | Land tenure of State-controlled land reviewed by 30 June 2026 | Manager Planning and Development |
| 2.5.3 More Council provided housing for employees reduces pressures on the private market | Advocate for funding to build four additional houses for Council employees | Shovel ready project for construction of additional houses for Council employees | Manager Council Facilities Project Delivery Manager |
| 2.5.4 Increase in net migration (skilled labour) | Promote the lifestyle opportunities within the Charters Towers Region, including job opportunities, schooling and recreational opportunities for youth | Market and promote Charters Towers Regional Council as an employer of choice with a focus on the liveability of the region, ensuring consistency of branding | Executive Manager Human Resources |

“ A thriving, diverse economy is the foundation of opportunity – where innovation fuels progress and entrepreneurship shapes the future. ”



FOCUS 3: *Our Environment*



3.2 Manage issues associated with Flying-Fox roosts with the local government area

Reduce impacts on residents and habitat associated with flying-fox roosts in the Charters Towers LGA while being considerate of approvals potentially required, site values, and in accordance with legislation.

| OUTCOME | ACTION | DELIVERABLE | LEAD |
|---|---|--|--------------------|
| 3.2.1 Clearly define roles and responsibilities for management actions | Implement actions of the Flying-fox Management Plan | Develop a Statement of Management Intent | Manager Operations |
| 3.2.2 Minimise community impacts and avoid future conflict | Implement actions of the Flying-fox Management Plan | Active management of the Lissner Park roost aiming to maintain black flying fox population at the receiving site | Manager Operations |
| 3.2.3 Support ways for the community to co-exist with flying-foxes | Implement actions of the Flying-fox Management Plan | Identify flying fox management areas, as appropriate to mitigate impacts to residents | Manager Operations |
| 3.2.4 Ensure actions are in accordance with relevant legislation | Implement actions of the Flying-fox Management Plan | Ensure clear and up-to-date information is available regarding legislation and human and animal health | Manager Operations |
| 3.2.5 Improve community understanding and appreciation of flying-foxes | Implement actions of the Flying-fox Management Plan | Ensure clear and up-to-date information is available regarding flying fox ecology and best management practices | Manager Operations |
| 3.2.6 Conserve flying-foxes and their habitat. | Implement actions of the Flying-fox Management Plan | Ensure clear and up-to-date information is available regarding legislation and human and animal health | Manager Operations |





3.3 Provide strategic direction for the management of invasive plants and animals

Minimise the impact of invasive plants and animals on the environment, the economy, human safety and social amenity.

| OUTCOME | ACTION | DELIVERABLE | LEAD |
|---|---|--|--------------------|
| 3.3.1 Increase public knowledge of invasive plant and animal management | Implement actions of the Biosecurity Plan | Maintain Council's webpage with the most current initiatives for controlling invasive pest animals and plants | Manager Operations |
| 3.3.2 Take all reasonable and practical measures to prevent or minimise a biosecurity risk | Implement actions of the Biosecurity Plan | Develop an annual operational plan to outline activities for the year ahead | Manager Operations |
| 3.3.3 Prevent expansion of invasive plant and animal distributions | Implement actions of the Biosecurity Plan | Enhance community awareness via media campaigns | Manager Operations |
| 3.3.4 Determine the level of risk from invasive biosecurity matter | Implement actions of the Biosecurity Plan | Undertake basic surveillance on high priority areas / assets | Manager Operations |
| 3.3.5 Advocate best practice management wherever possible | Implement actions of the Biosecurity Plan | Actively participate in community and/or regional forums to advocate and promote Biosecurity Management best practices | Manager Operations |
| 3.3.6 Regularly reassess and update management practices | Implement actions of the Biosecurity Plan | Develop and implement compliance initiative for Council activities | Manager Operations |



3.5 Effective Waste Management

Improve waste management in the region.

| OUTCOME | ACTION | DELIVERABLE | LEAD |
|---|--|---|-------------------------|
| 3.5.1 Reduce waste to landfill | Deliver actions of the Waste Management Strategy | Investigate the economics of cardboard recycling | Manager Operations |
| 3.5.2 Sustainable waste management | Deliver actions of the Waste Management Strategy | Review landfill gate fees and waste related charges for value and sustainability | Manager Operations |
| 3.5.3 Regional market development and circular economy | Deliver actions of the Waste Management Strategy | Advocate for an increase to the Containers for Change rebate to support recycling | Chief Executive Officer |
| 3.5.4 Bring the community on the journey | Deliver actions of the Waste Management Strategy | Development of a communication plan for community engagement and awareness | Manager Operations |



FOCUS 4: *Our Civic Leadership*



4.1 Transparent and Accountable Processes and Decision-making

Transparency, accountability and confidence in Council's decision making is central to building and maintaining our social license with our community.

| OUTCOME | ACTION | DELIVERABLE | LEAD |
|--|---|--|---|
| 4.1.1 High community and external stakeholder awareness of Council's priorities and strategies | Actively include and incorporate community feedback and consultation in Council decision-making | Ensure that Council decisions are informed by the diverse perspectives, needs, and aspirations of the community, leading to more effective, equitable, and sustainable outcomes | Executive Services Manager |
| 4.1.2 Our decision-making, asset management and service delivery structures are understandable and accessible to all members of the community | Continually improve administrative release of information on day-to-day Council activities and achievements, strategic and operational goals, and progress in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Strategy | Conduct a thorough review of existing information release processes. This includes identifying current methods of communication, the frequency of updates, and the types of information currently being shared. This assessment will review the effectiveness of these methods in reaching the target audience and identify any gaps or areas for improvement. This review will be informed by Council's Community Engagement Strategy | Executive Services Manager |
| 4.1.3 The community is empowered to approach Council to discuss emerging and known issues | Continually improve internal and external accessibility to Council information | Website platform to be renewed and an Internal Audit undertaken to ensure information meets the needs of the community and is in accordance with legislation | Executive Services Manager |
| | Annual Community Meetings will be hosted in townships to ensure regional communities feel empowered to discuss emerging and known issues in a face to face setting | Community meetings held at each township and regular engagement opportunities are offered across Charters Towers and townships | Executive Services Manager |
| 4.1.4 Asset Management will be prioritised across all Council assets | Provide a consistent approach to asset management across the region | High level Asset Management Plans for key infrastructure asset classes are adopted by Council | Executive Manager Infrastructure Services |



4.2 People First Customer Service

Putting the needs of our customers at the forefront of our service delivery will ensure community satisfaction.

| OUTCOME | ACTION | DELIVERABLE | LEAD |
|---|--|--|--|
| 4.2.1 Best quality services delivered to residents across the region | Provide a consistent, knowledgeable and professional customer experience | Implement actions from the Administration Framework to ensure consistency across the organisation | Executive Services Manager |
| | | Finalise the review of all corporate policies, procedures, and corporate publications | Executive Services Manager |
| 4.2.2 Customer satisfaction with their interactions with Council | Undertake biannual community satisfaction surveys | Undertake biannual customer satisfaction surveys through Have Your Say and Customer Service points | Executive Service Manager |
| 4.2.3 Council has the right people, with the right skills, doing the right jobs at the right time, to deliver the services expected by the community | Implement Charters Towers Regional Council's Workforce Strategy Plan | Review of the Workforce Strategy Plan to be undertaken | Executive Manager Human Resources and Work Health and Safety |
| | | Implement Performance Development Plans to all employees | Executive Manager Human Resources and Work Health and Safety |
| | | Implement and rollout a digital incident reporting system | Manager Work Health and Safety |
| | | Review and implement the requirements of the Information Privacy and Other Legislation Amendment Act (IPOLA) | Executive Service Manager |
| | | Develop and implement a Recruitment Marketing Strategy | Executive Services Manager |
| | | | Executive Manager Human Resources and Work Health and Safety |
| | | Deliver a scope for a Business Continuity Plan (BCP) | Executive Services Manager (organisation wide) |



4.4 Innovation in Service Delivery

Innovation is more than just implementing new ideas, it's about how we can improve efficiency and quality of service delivery to our local community.

| OUTCOME | ACTION | DELIVERABLE | LEAD |
|--|--|--|-------------------------------|
| 4.4.1 Improved data collection for decision making | Invest in systems to digitise the collection of data across all council services | Develop and review software catalogue. Identify software as an asset category within the ICT Asset Management Plan | Chief Information Officer |
| | | Storage of Local History Data reviewed and new software investigated | Manager Community Development |
| 4.4.2 New technologies change the way Council does its business, increasing productivity | Identify and implement existing and new technology opportunities | Improve Council workforce mobility and connectivity abilities across the entirety of the region | Chief Information Officer |
| | | Implement IT Strategy initiatives in accordance with implementation, delivery and action plans | Chief Information Officer |
| | | Develop ICT Asset Management Plan to ensure efficient, effective and sustainable growth and maintenance of technology | Chief Information Officer |
| | | Implement Digital Payment Plan Platform | Chief Financial Officer |
| | | Investigate and implement responsive, sustainable and effective technology to minimise critical infrastructure risks, specifically water supply and security | Manager Water & Wastewater |
| | | Identify and implement sustainable opportunities to upgrade fleet assets and technology creating operational efficiencies | Manager Fleet Services |
| 4.4.3 Residents can access Council services in more convenient ways, improving service delivery | Identify and implement existing and new technology opportunities such as online booking and payment systems and community engagement tools | Development of an All-Hazards Risk Study | Executive Services Manager |
| | | Review Council owned regional connectivity abilities and opportunities | Chief Information Officer |



Operational Plan

PO Box 189 Charters Towers Qld 4820

ADMINISTRATION: 12 Mosman Street
Charters Towers Qld 4820 Australia

PH: (07) 4761 5300 | **F:** (07) 4761 5344

E: mail@charterstowers.qld.gov.au

ABN: 67 731 313 583

www.charterstowers.qld.gov.au