

# 2016/17 – A Year in Review

## Corporate Plan Theme 1: **The Noosa Environment**

*“Our environment is protected, enhanced and valued by the community”*

Key achievements as we work towards our long term goal include:

- Council committed to a three-year agreement to remain part of the Healthy Waterways Program.
- Council reviewed its management approach to the Noosa River and has committed to refresh and rewrite the Noosa River Plan with an expanded focus on river catchment areas. The revised Noosa River Plan is currently being drafted.
- Council adopted the Noosa Shire Koala Conservation Plan in July 2016. A further report to Council on actions to implement the Plan will be provided in due course as requested during the recent budget meetings.
- Council undertook an audit of waste water facilities in Cooran. Cooran is not serviced by a sewerage system and accordingly, residential properties use on site waste water facilities and an audit was undertaken to determine the level of compliance from an environmental protection and health perspective.
- Council adopted the Noosa Parklands Park Management Plan following significant consultation with local residents. Staff are currently working to develop a suite of other management plans for other bushland reserve areas within the Shire. Those plans are substantially complete.
- Council made a submission to the State government on the green paper on Fisheries Management Reform. Council has also made a number of direct representations to the Minister on this topic.
- Council has adopted its Zero Emissions Strategy focused on eliminating our organisation’s emissions by 2026. This was a major initiative of Mayor Wellington and work has been undertaken in 2016/17 to establish the baseline level of emissions (which have been recently re-calculated). A major report has just been finalised by ERM in relation to the energy use of 9 of Council’s largest energy producing sites to identify which energy efficiency projects should be undertaken in the first instance to both reduce costs and emissions.
- Council adopted a new street sweeping contract (using the firm Environmental Waste Water Catchment Services) which has resulted in an increased length of roads being serviced by the street sweeper. This reduces the amount of rubbish going into drains and waterways.
- Stage 2 of the Munna Point foreshore revitalisation project has been implemented with the aim of reducing environmental damage to Munna Point from erosion. While it is too early to tell whether the geo-textile bags approach has been successful, early indications are positive.
- In December 2016, Council adopted the Noosa Biodiversity Assessment Report. This report is an important input into our Council’s new Planning Scheme and also acts as a benchmark for future assessment of biodiversity across the Shire. The report will also be useful as part of the 10 year renewal application for the Noosa Biosphere Reserve.
- In one of the largest contracts our Council has entered into, Council awarded a new waste management contract to Cleanaway for the period 2017 - 2024 at an approximate cost of \$46 million. This contract covers the collection, disposal and recycling operations for the Eumundi Road Waste Recovery Centre and includes the introduction of a green waste recycling bin which will reduce green waste being buried in the landfill, thus significantly reducing methane gas.
- Council was successful in receiving a grant (managed by the Local Government Association of Queensland) for the development of a Coastal Hazard Adaption Plan. A Project Officer has been appointed and work is currently underway to develop both a Coastal Hazard Adaption Plan (year one) and a Climate Change Adaption Plan (year two).
- Council entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with Healthy Waterways and Catchments for the ongoing “Land for Wildlife” program. This program helps support property owners who care for their land to encourage environmental protections.
- Council undertook an environmental clean-up of asbestos which was dumped illegally on Walter Hay Drive.
- A systematic inspection of our industrial areas has been undertaken to identify any issues with run-off etc to local waterways. The detailed report has identified some key areas for improvement and the Council will be considering the option of introducing a licencing regime under our local laws.

- The Waste Reduction and Recycling Plan has been rolled out in 2016/17. This included significant media coverage and school education sessions.
- Council has entered into a contract for the purchase of Johns Landing (approximately 50 ha) in order to undertake the long-term protection of important environmental land on the Noosa River. Council is also working with the current owner of the property to assist with the transition to alternative housing for those residents living on the current site.
- Council has facilitated the approval processes for a project being funded by the Noosa Biosphere Reserve Foundation to re-establish oyster reefs in the Noosa River. This has entailed obtaining both town planning approval from Council and environmental approvals from the State government. In addition, Council also provided \$250,000 to the Noosa Biosphere Reserve Foundation for projects that advance the purpose of the Noosa Biosphere Reserve.
- Council has addressed a range of significant planning and environment applications during the last 12 months. As can be seen from the table of statistics at the end of this report, Council approved 98.7% of planning applications. Some of the more interesting applications considered by Council during 2016/17 included:
  - Village Bicycle
  - Proposal to extend a deck at the Noosa Marina
  - Tewantin RSL
  - Service Station at Taylor Court, Cooroy
  - Proposed Elanda Point jetty
  - 90 Beach Road, Noosa North Shore
  - A number of microbreweries and of course, a chocolate factory!
- Council had considerable success in the Planning and Environment Court with a significant victory for our Planning Scheme in the Noosa Civic case. The court supported Council's position that it was inappropriate under the Planning Scheme to expand retail operations on that site. During 2016/17, the appellant in the poultry farm case also withdrew their appeal as did the appellant in the Service Station Centre appeal at the Good Shepherd Lutheran School site on Eumundi Road.
- In an environmental first, Council has trialled a range of new environmentally friendly asphalt processes in conjunction with our contractor. This has included the introduction of recycled printer cartridges into the asphalt mix and the use of different temperatures to undertake the planning process. We have also trialled different combinations of recyclable material including shredded car tyres and recycled glass. Further details on this interesting initiative together with the environmental benefits are listed below.

**The Noosa 2016/17 Road Surfacing Contract aimed to deliver sustainable road infrastructure by incorporating waste products:**

- > 1 million printer cartridges (toner only);
- about 6,700 car tyres;
- approximately 3,950 tonnes of recycled road; warm mix asphalt production technology; and
- reducing CO<sub>2</sub>e by 334 tonnes.

**Product snapshot**

**Noosaphalt:**

- Designed with TMR and Council design process;
- Improved performance compared to asphalt with C320 binder
- Incorporates TonerPave, high recycled content and warm mix
- Reduces energy consumption in production

**Tonerseal:**

- Complies with Austroads S45R grade spray seal binder
- Blend of bitumen, recycled tyre rubber and toner from recycled printer cartridges
- Utilises the same design, handling and spraying methodology to S45R
- Lower Carbon Footprint when compared to conventional S45R



**Recycled content breakdown**

- World-first spray seal binder incorporating greater than 20% post-consumer materials such as toner and tyres.
- Asphalt mix incorporating greater than 35% post-consumer materials such as toner and reclaimed asphalt.



**Lower carbon emissions**

- Up to 45kg of CO<sub>2</sub>-e savings per tonne of Tonerseal sprayed when compared to a standard S45R grade binder.
- Up to 25kg of CO<sub>2</sub>-e savings per tonne of Noosaphalt produced when compared to virgin asphalt.



**Sustainability credentials**

- Every 1km of road lane sprayed with Tonerseal will incorporate:
- approximately 6,400 Toner Cartridges; and
  - about 145 Car Tyres (equivalent passenger unit).
- Every 1km of road paved with Noosaphalt will incorporate:
- approximately 29,400 Toner Cartridges;
  - about 158 tonnes of reclaimed asphalt; and
  - up to 40 Gigajoules of energy saved in manufacturing.



**Improved performance**

## Corporate Plan Theme 2: The Noosa Community

*“Our community is connected, safe and happy and able to meet their potential”*

Key achievements as we work towards our long term goal include:

- Council adopted a three-year implementation plan for the Noosa Social Strategy. This includes an annual update to Council on progress for implementation of the Noosa Social Strategy. Included within the Social Strategy is the establishment of the Noosa Community Round Table which has been successfully operating to assist with the transition process at Johns Landing.
- There has been significant progress on the backlog of community lease renewals. A separate report to Council has identified the degree of progress that has been made in the last 12 months to reduce the number of outstanding community leases.
- Staff have been working to develop a Sport and Recreation Plan. This has included initial community engagement and a draft Plan has been developed in preparation for a formal round of community consultation.
- Council has entered into a three-year agreement with the Cooroy Futures Group Inc for the operation of the Cooroy Butter Factory Arts Centre. This agreement was entered into after a trial management period following an extensive community engagement process on the future of the Cooroy Butter Factory.
- Council has undertaken two community Council meetings during 2016/17. In October 2016, we held a Council meeting at Cooroy and in April 2017, we held a Council meeting at Boreen Point.
- Council commenced the development of a Noosa Arts, Culture and Heritage Plan. A Consultative Committee has been established and work is well advanced on the development of that Plan.
- Council undertook extensive community engagement with the Cooroy community regarding the future of the Cooroy Community Hall. Council agreed to accept trusteeship of the Deed of Grant in Trust and supported the establishment of the Cooroy Community Hall Association Inc. A lease is being provided to the Association in order that they can manage the Hall. Council has also agreed to fund 50% of the restoration costs (capped) with the community funding the remaining 50%. This has been an excellent outcome for the Cooroy community.
- Council extended the lifeguard services agreement for a five-year term. This agreement enables our community and visitors to safely use our beaches with a high level of safety based on our lifeguard services.
- Council introduced a community support scheme for those residents living in the vicinity of Wallace Park who were directly affected by large numbers of flying foxes that came to Wallace Park on an intermittent basis. The scheme included the provision of cleaning materials, car covers and other tangible support materials to reduce the impact on local residents. Council also employed a project officer for a period during 2016/17 to help roll out the support items.
- Council undertook a sports field audit to provide additional assistance to sporting clubs who have the responsibility of maintaining their sporting fields. Council agreed to provide membership to the Sports Turf Association of Queensland to 12 sporting clubs to assist in increasing expertise within the clubs on field and turf maintenance.
- Council has commenced a process to review options for the future use of the Noosaville foreshore. This included an extensive community engagement process which will be completed in 2017.
- Council has reviewed and updated its Community Engagement Policy. Significant community engagement projects in 2016/17 included:
  - Cooroy Memorial Hall
  - Sunshine Beach Skate Park
  - Digital Hub, Peregian Beach
  - Botanic Gardens Masterplan
  - Noosa Planning Scheme
  - Noosa Transport Strategy
  - Waste Reduction and Recycling Plan
  - Corporate Plan
- Council has accepted a contract for the restoration and upgrade of the Sunshine Beach Skate park at a cost of \$380,000. This is an important facility for the younger demographic in our Shire.
- Council has undertaken numerous Library and Gallery programs to support our community. Our Library Services have physically issued over 570,000 items to our community during the last 12 months.
- After considerable work with the local community including United Synergies and local Rotary Clubs, Tait Duke Cottage was restored and open for community use in June 2017. This milestone was significant after many years of work to identify an appropriate site and working in partnership with the local community to restore the building and make it available for ongoing community use.



- To encourage community interaction, Council has installed chalkboard walls as part of the International “Before I Die” wall movement. This has been successful (particularly at Cooroy) with one of the walls recently being transferred from Noosa Junction to Peregrine Beach.
- Council continued to provide its community grant program supporting our community groups. During 2016/17, we provided over \$810,000 in grants to local community groups to support projects, acquisition of equipment or events. Council staff also facilitated a number of evening information sessions for community organisations to help improve their governance and grant writing skills.

## Corporate Plan Theme 3: The Noosa Economy

*“Our economy is diverse and resilient”*

Key achievements as we work towards our long term goal include:

- The design of the Peregrine Beach Digital Hub was completed and town planning approval obtained. Council was successful in obtaining \$1 million of funding from the State Government. Associated road works and parking in Rufous Street have substantially been completed and preparatory works have commenced on the Digital Hub building. Tenders have been called for the management of the Digital Hub component of the building and in addition, Council has submitted an application to the Commonwealth under the Building Better Regions Fund for additional work associated with the project.
- Council appointed an Economic Development Manager who has brought significant experience and focus to our economic development programs.
- Council undertook a detailed review of the proposal from CCIQ Noosa for a Noosa Convention and Cultural Centre. Council recognised that such a proposal could have potential economic benefit but identified that the cost of construction and operation should not be borne by Noosa ratepayers but rather, Council expressed a willingness to consider financial options driven by the market.
- Council undertook its first Economic Development Grants Program providing financial support for programs that will support the outcomes of the Local Economic Plan.
- Council entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Small Business Solutions section of TAFE Queensland to provide support for training and development of local small businesses.
- Council continued to work closely with Tourism Noosa to develop the Noosa Tourism market. In particular, Council provided significant input into the development of the Noosa Tourism Strategy 2017 - 2022 adopted by the Tourism Noosa Board. This strategy included a focus on “value over volume” in relation to tourism so that the focus is on yield per visitor rather than simply more visitor numbers.
- Council continued to work closely with Regional Development Australia (Sunshine Coast) on a range of projects including a successful entrepreneurship program.
- Council undertook an audit of footpath trading across the shire and also provided information to the operators while the audit was being undertaken.
- Council worked with the private sector to assist with the establishment of Innovative Noosa. This is part of a regional program that attracted significant funding from Advance Queensland to develop innovation on the Sunshine Coast.
- Council continues to manage our Holiday Parks including awarding a new three-year contract for the management of the Noosa River Holiday Park. During 2016/17, Council also commenced a process to redevelop the Noosa North Shore Beachfront Campground including the development of concept designs and sorting out tenure issues.
- Council undertook its three yearly review of commercial high use permits and following a tender process, awarded new permits for the operation of commercial activities on Council controlled land in the Hastings Street precinct.

## Corporate Plan Theme 4: Long term planning for Noosa Shire

### *“Noosa Shire is well managed and sustainable”*

Key achievements as we work towards our long term goal include:

- Council undertook significant work on the development of the new Planning Scheme during 2016/17. Council adopted the *New Noosa Plan Discussion Paper* for the purposes of public consultation and undertook an extensive community engagement process to seek feedback. Council also finalised a range of studies to support the development of the new Planning Scheme including:
  - Resources and Minerals Planning Study
  - Study into Agriculture and Agricultural Land in Noosa Shire
  - On-Site Effluent Disposal Noosa Shire Study
  - Housing Needs Assessment
- Council was able to provide significant input into the ongoing development of the draft South-East Queensland Regional Plan which will achieve a good outcome for the Noosa community.
- Council undertook a significant review of our infrastructure plans to enable us to meet new legislative requirements for the imposition of contributions from developers towards the cost of infrastructure.
- Council adopted its new Corporate Plan which will guide key corporate decision making for the next 20 years. The Corporate Plan was developed following a series of Councillor workshops analysing future trends and developed a new vision – *“Noosa Shire - different by nature”*.
- Council has adopted the Noosa Local Disaster Management Plan which guides our responses to natural disasters. Council has also undertaken considerable work in developing our response to natural disasters including undertaking disaster management exercises to train our staff. This was put to the test with the arrival of the remnants of Cyclone Debbie in February 2017. Our management of that response was good and our Local Disaster Management Plan was able to deal with that scenario. Council was also successful in obtaining State funding to install new flood alert stations at a cost of \$206,000.
- Council adopted a Transport Policy and Transport Strategy following extensive community consultation. This was one of the signature long-term pieces of planning for our community undertaken in 2016/17. There were two rounds of community consultation including targeted consultation with key stakeholders. One of the challenges for 2017/18 is the implementation of that Strategy. Also during 2016/17, Council successfully delivered its Christmas and Easter free holiday bus program.
- Council adopted an Asset Management Plan Roadmap in 2016/17. The roadmap sets out the priorities for developing more robust long-term asset management plans and ensuring that asset management becomes more central to our decision making processes. Converting this roadmap into action is also one of the challenges for 2017/18.

## Corporate Plan Theme 5: Excellence as a Council

*“The Noosa Shire community is proud of its Council”*

Key achievements as we work towards our long term goal include:

- Although our end of year financial statements have not yet been finalised, it is clear that we have had another successful financial year. Revenues were above budget, expenses were below budget, debt levels are lower than at the beginning of the financial year and cash reserves are higher than at the beginning of the financial year. At the end of 2016/17, Council adopted its budget for the 2017/18 financial year with a 2% general rate increase.
- Council has successfully achieved another unmodified audit from the Queensland Audit Office with the 2015/16 financial statements being signed off by the QAO in late 2016.
- Behind the scenes, the Audit and Risk Committee has continued to add value to our compliance and performance for governance and finance. This has included an oversight of our strategic risks, review of key governance and financial policies, review of organisational KPI's, development of Business Continuity Planning etc. Our two external members of the Audit and Risk Committee in particular have added significantly to our overall governance practices. Although not high profile, this Committee plays an important role in making sure that Council “dots the i's and crosses the t's” both in governance and in the management of risk. Council's Internal Audit Program included internal audits on Procurement and Council investments.
- Council commenced a review of our organisational structure at the end of 2016 with the new structure being adopted in March 2017. Following considerable internal consultation, the Planning and Infrastructure Department was split in two with a new Environment and Sustainable Development Department and a new Infrastructure Services Department being created. Also during 2016/17, Council added additional staff resources to our Infrastructure Design and Delivery Branch and Asset Management Branch to enable them to deliver expected outcomes.
- Our enterprise risk management has been further developed with risk management practices being further embedded into Council operations. Council was recognised by Local Government Mutual for our risk management practices. The Leadership Team reviews strategic risks on a quarterly basis and operational risk registers have been established at a Departmental level. Our comprehensive Business Continuity Plans are all but complete and will be tested in early 2017/18.
- Our Noosa Aquatic Centre, Noosa Leisure Centre and The J all had outstanding years. The Noosa Leisure Centre had its highest ever annual attendance, The J had its highest ever revenue and the Noosa Aquatic Centre had its strongest ever financial performance. Reports will be provided to Council in due course in relation to the annual performance of our community facilities.
- Council has recently undertaken its first external customer service survey. The survey was undertaken by Market Facts to enable us to benchmark with other Queensland local governments (LGAQ also use this firm to undertake state wide customer service surveys). A report will be provided separately to Council in relation to this matter but our benchmark scores are above state averages.
- Council continued to undertake a series of service reviews looking in detail at operations to find ways in which we can be more efficient in delivering services. This included areas such as the Noosa Leisure Centre, Environmental Health, and Building and Plumbing Services. Following these reviews, Council adopted additional staff resources in some parts of the organisation to ensure that appropriate service levels can be delivered.
- The transformation of our Workplace Health and Safety performance has continued. Significant progress has been made in relation to our documentation, processes and practices for Workplace Health and Safety. Based on the LGW Workcover Performance statistics for category D Councils we have transitioned from one of the worst performing local governments of our size to one of the best performing local governments of our size for Lost Time Frequency and Lost Time Injury.
- A Digital Strategy has been developed for management to focus on opportunities available with emerging digital technology. This strategy focuses particularly on improving our organisational efficiency using digital technology as well as improving our interface to our community. During the year, more mobile technology was rolled out to our external workforce.
- We commenced negotiations for a Noosa Council Certified Agreement. Given the recent changes to industrial relations legislation and awards, it is only now become possible for Council to begin to develop our own Noosa Council Certified Agreement rather than continuing to be bound by the former Sunshine Coast Council Certified Agreements. These negotiations with unions will continue into the 2017/18 financial year.

- We transitioned our ICT systems to the latest version of the Cloud which provided enhanced security and stability for our systems which is important given the number of cyber-attacks occurring at the moment. We have also continued to roll out our ICT strategy to enhance our system capabilities.
- We undertook significant training and development for leadership capabilities within the organisation. This included the continuation of the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) program for our senior management staff (approximately 30 staff leaders). While undertaking a significant amount of professional development training for our staff, we still have more to do to successfully implement an annual staff development program.
- Although commencing in the 2015/16 financial year, the process of bringing our new Council up to speed with the myriad of Council issues was a predominant theme in the first few months of the 2016/17 financial year. This involved a significant number of workshops and presentations to Councillors to brief them on key strategies, projects and priorities. This was quite a seamless process resulting in good governance and good decision-making processes.



## Some Statistics

To put the level of “day to day” activity into perspective, the following statistics are provided:

Services Provided in 2016/17	Data
Number of visitors to the Noosa Aquatic Centre	245,208
Number of visitors to The J	79,740
Number of visitors to the Noosa Leisure Centre	101,877
Number of clients serviced at Noosa Community Support	2,915 clients (39,355 services delivered)
Number of physical items issued by our Libraries	572,435
Number of bins collected	General Waste - 1,846,152 Recycling - 1,206,385 Green waste - 213,779
Number of calls answered by our customer service team	65,713
Number of development applications and percentage approved	444 applications 98.7% approved (including tree removal applications)
Number of rate notices issued	62,262
Length of road resurfaced	Asphalt – 10km Spray sealing – 23km Total – 33km
Length of road serviced by our street sweeper	11,480km