



SHIRE OF SANDSTONE
SERVE THE PEOPLE

SHIRE OF SANDSTONE



STRATEGIC COMMUNITY PLAN 2017 - 2027

Expressing the vision, aspirations and objectives of the community

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Our Vision

***“A welcoming and friendly community
recognising our rich heritage and
embracing economic opportunity, whilst
nurturing our natural and built
environment”***



Foreword

We are proud to present the Shire of Sandstone Strategic Community Plan 2017 – 2027. The Strategic Community Plan shares our visions and aspirations for the future and outlines how we will, over the next decade, work towards a brighter future for the Shire of Sandstone community.

This Strategic Community Plan could not have been produced without the input of the local community. We are grateful to the community for their response and especially to those who took the time to provide input into the Strategic Community Plan. Your responses gave us valuable insight into your vision for the future.

We believe we have captured the community's aspirations and have reflected these in our desired outcomes. As a local government, we will work in partnership with the community and other key stakeholders to deliver these outcomes using the strategies we have detailed in this Strategic Community Plan.

We look forward to continuing our focus to ensure the Shire of Sandstone community is 'a welcoming and friendly community recognising our rich heritage and embracing economic opportunity, whilst nurturing our natural and built environment'.

Beth Walton
President

Harry Hawkins
Chief Executive Officer

22 February 2018

What is the Strategic Community Plan

The Strategic Community Plan is the highest-level planning document in the Integrated Planning and Reporting process. This Strategic Community Plan is designed to be a 'living' document that guides the development of the Shire of Sandstone community for at least the next ten years.

One of the key features of the strategic community planning process is community engagement and the part it plays in influencing the Shire's strategic direction as it seeks to achieve the community's long term vision and aspirations.

Strategic community planning is a recurring process, requiring constant refinement and review. Every second year a desktop review of this Strategic Community Plan is scheduled to occur which will alternate with a comprehensive review every four years to ensure the Strategic Community Plan remains in line with the community's vision, aspirations and objectives.

How the Strategic Community Plan will be used

The Strategic Community Plan outlines how the Shire will, over the long term, work towards a brighter future for the Shire of Sandstone community as it seeks to achieve its vision inspired by the community's aspirations and objectives.

Looking to the future, the Strategic Community Plan will influence how the Shire uses its resources to deliver services to the community. The Strategic Community Plan forms the primary driver for all other planning undertaken by the Shire.

The Shire of Sandstone intends to use the Strategic Community Plan in several ways, including:

- Guide Council priority setting and decision making;
- Be a mechanism for the ongoing integration of local planning initiatives;
- Inform the decision making of other agencies and organisations, including community and State Government;
- Provide a rationale to pursue grants and other resources by demonstrating how specific projects align with the aspirations of our community, within the strategic direction of the Shire;
- Inform potential investors and developers of our community's key priorities, and the way we intend to grow and develop;
- Engage local businesses, community groups and residents in various ways to contribute to the Shire's future; and
- Provide a framework for monitoring progress against our vision.

Importantly, plans are only effective if adequate resources are dedicated to ensure they can be delivered.

The strategies are prioritised and actions applied (after a further assessment of available resources) through the development of a Corporate Business Plan. Strategic performance indicators will be used to report back to the community on the Shire's performance in achieving the outcomes.

Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

All Western Australian local governments are required to prepare a Plan for the Future for their district under *Section 5.56(1) of the Local Government Act 1995*. The Plan for the Future comprises the following two key strategic documents¹, which a local government is required to have regard for when forming its annual budget.

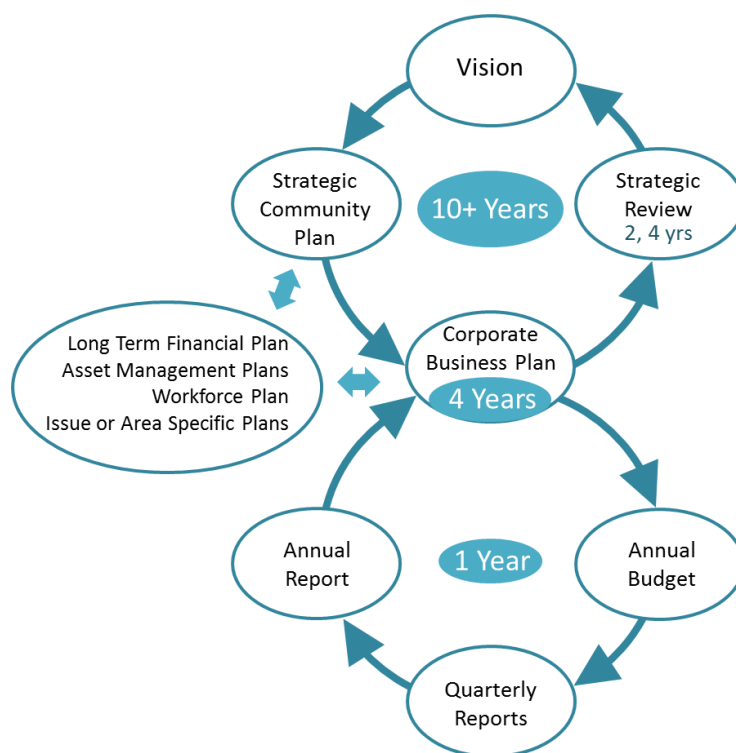
Strategic Community Plan – Council’s principal 10-year strategy and planning tool. It is the principal guiding document for the remainder of the Shire’s strategic planning as community engagement is central to this Strategic Community Plan.²

Corporate Business Plan – Council’s 4-year planning document. The core components of this Corporate Business Plan include a 4-year delivery program, aligned to the Strategic Community Plan and accompanied by 4-year financial projections.²

Development of the Strategic Community Plan and Corporate Business Plan is undertaken in accordance with the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework and Guidelines. An essential element of the Integrated Planning and Reporting process is to enable community members and stakeholders to participate in shaping the future of the community and in identifying issues and solutions. It is designed to articulate the community’s vision, aspirations, outcomes and priorities for the future of the district.

Importantly, the Strategic Community Plan and Corporate Business Plan are informed by several other key plans and processes. The connection between the community and the Shire’s strategic plans, annual budget and corporate documents developed to guide the Shire in delivering services to the community are shown in the diagram below. The term of each key plan is shown in the blue circles.

Diagram: Integrated Planning and Reporting Cycle²



¹Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996, Paragraph 19BA.

²Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries, Integrated Planning and Reporting: Framework and Guidelines, September 2016

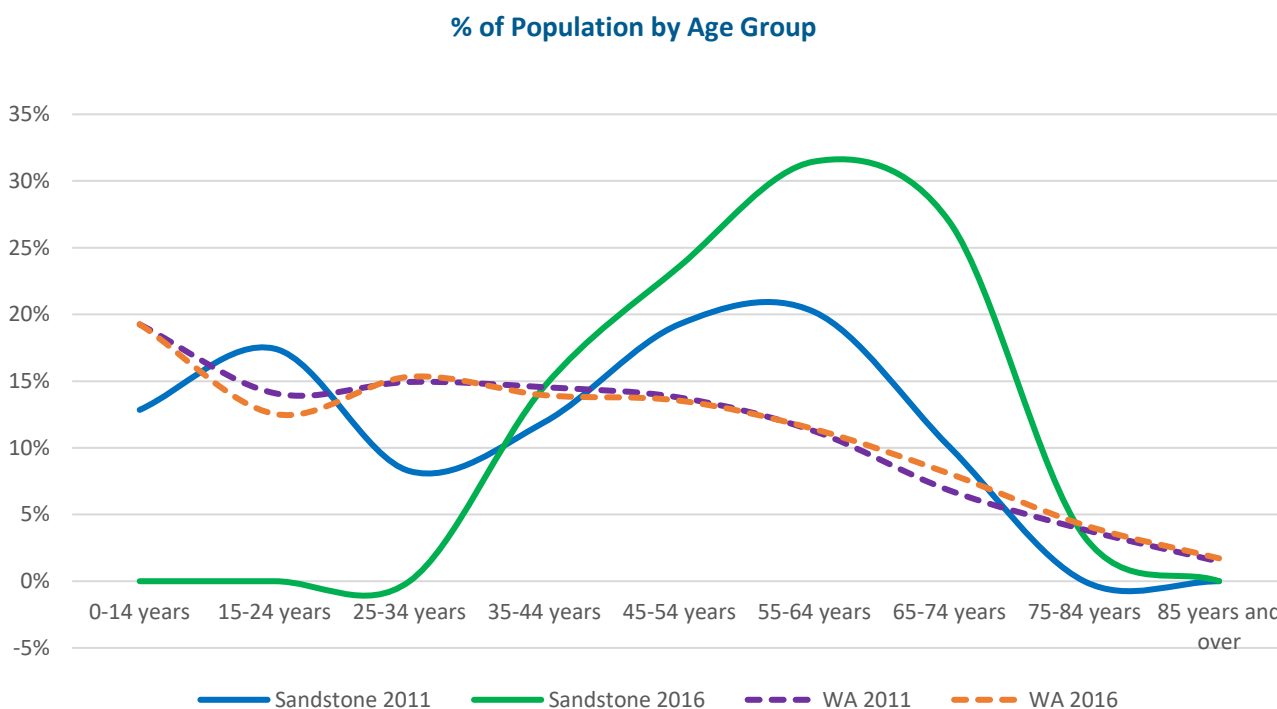


*"I hope Sandstone remains
a welcoming tourist
attraction as it is now"*

Profile of the Shire of Sandstone

Demographic Trend

In 2016, the Shire of Sandstone's population on the night of the census was 89³, with no significant variation forecast. The chart below reflects the percentage of the estimated resident population within each age grouping for the Shire of Sandstone (represented by the blue (2011) and green (2016) lines) and Western Australia (represented by the purple (2011) and orange (2016) dotted lines).



When comparing the Shire's demographic to Western Australia (reflected by the dotted orange and purple lines), the Shire has a lower proportion of residents in the 0-44 year old age bracket. The 2016 census indicated there are no residents under 35 years, and no education facilities are operating within the district. The percentage of the resident population from 45 to 84 years is noticeably higher than the State average with the percentage over 55 increasing from 2011 to 2015 by 28%.

Sandstone Natural and Built Environment

The Natural Landscape

Sandstone is a rural community located in the heart of the spectacular Murchison District, 742 km north-east of Perth in Western Australia. The Shire of Sandstone covers 32,605 square kilometres⁴.

Throughout the Sandstone area natural rock formations or breakaways contrast dramatically with the rust stained sandstone landscape which gives the town its name. The mainly flat surroundings of Sandstone and the distant horizons give the impression of a very large sky which provides that wide open and free feeling which one can only experience in the outback.

Sandstone is home to Australian wildlife such as emus, bungarras and kangaroos. It is not unusual to see a kangaroo hopping in the main street after dark.

The red terrain and the vivid blue of the mostly cloudless sky, enhances the natural beauty of this unique place. Sandstone is a wonderful, peaceful environment to experience the glory of the night skies. In the evenings you can witness the truly spectacular sunsets Sandstone has to offer. At night, far from the interference of city lights, the darkness of the outback makes Sandstone a great setting for stargazing and viewing the magnificent sky of the southern hemisphere. Sandstone also boasts a spectacular wildflower display in July to September when the landscape is transformed from red earth to a carpet of magnificent wildflower colours.

The Built Environment

In 1894 Ernest Shillington and a number of fellow prospectors found gold about 20 kilometres southwest of the present town site.

For a period of six years from 1907 Sandstone was a large town of some 6,000 to 8,000 people. It had four hotels, four butchers, many cafes, stores and business houses, as well as a staffed police station and two banks. During this boom period, in July 1910, the railway came to the town. However by 1919 only 200 people remained and many buildings were pulled down and moved. Fortunately Sandstone was able to survive as a centre for the region's growing pastoral industry. In more recent times, gold-mining has re-emerged as Sandstone's principal industry.

The Shire has retained a number of heritage assets which draw many tourists, including the old police station, Sandstone Heritage Museum, National Hotel, primary school – originally the Warden's Court, Black Range Chapel and a historic miner's cottage. The Shire continues to maintain and develop these assets to service the community and visitors. The townsite is home to a nursing post, tea rooms, post office, Shire administration office, visitor information centre, hotel, onsite accommodation and caravan park.

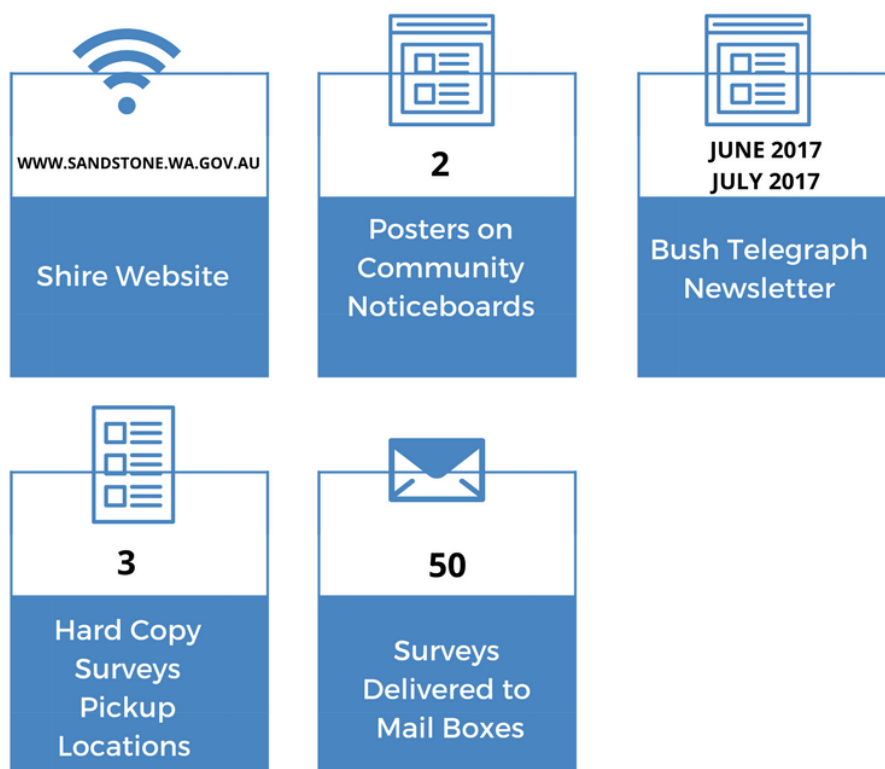
4 Australian Bureau of Statistics, Sandstone (S) (LGA57630) 2016 Census of Population and Housing, viewed 12 July 2017

Community Engagement

The Strategic Community Plan review process commenced in May 2017 and sought to obtain the community's aspirations, vision and objectives for the future, as well as obtaining feedback in relation to Shire services and facilities.

The campaign was promoted and advertised in the local newsletter the Bush Telegraph, local noticeboards, the Shire of Sandstone website and included a link to the electronic survey form. The survey was mailed out to all residents and hardcopies were available at the Shire Office and Tourist Information Centre.

A summary of the community communications undertaken to seek community involvement is provided below.



A summary of the community engagement response is provided on the following page.

Community Response

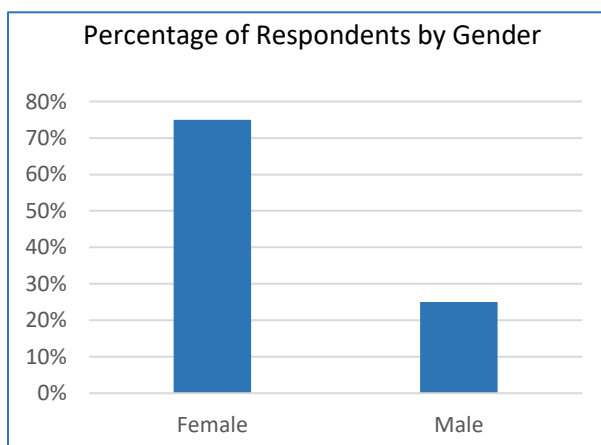
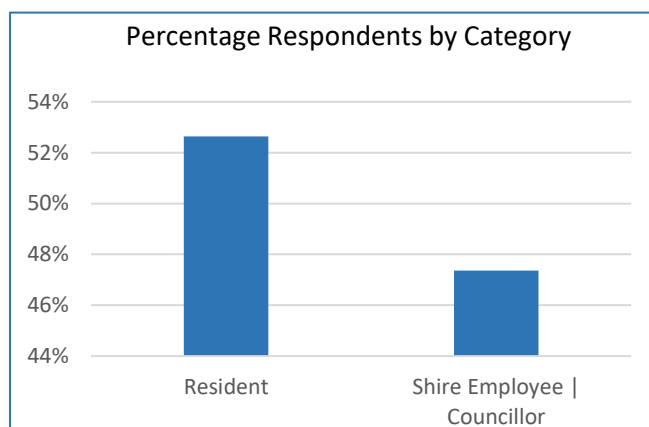
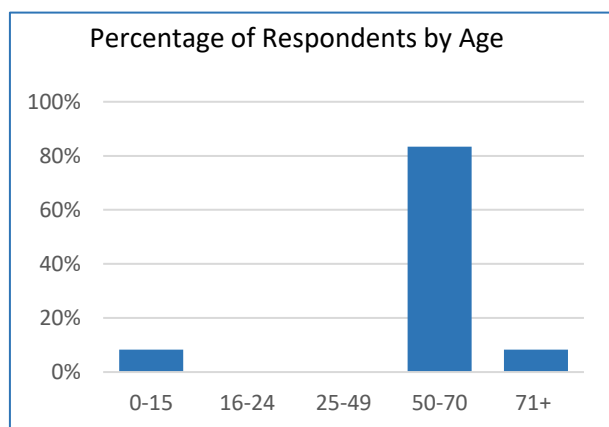
The community engagement provided valuable insight into the key issues and aspirations as identified by the residents and ratepayers. Importantly for the Council, these views have established and confirmed clear priorities and shaped the visions, values, objectives and strategies documented in this Strategic Community Plan.

A community workshop was held in Sandstone on 11 July 2017 at the Shire of Sandstone Council Chambers. Responses were received from 22 individuals, who either completed the survey or attended the community workshop.

A summary of the community responses received from the two engagement processes is provided below.



The community survey responses were from a range of age groups, gender and categories as represented in the charts below. All survey respondents identified as residents in the Shire of Sandstone.

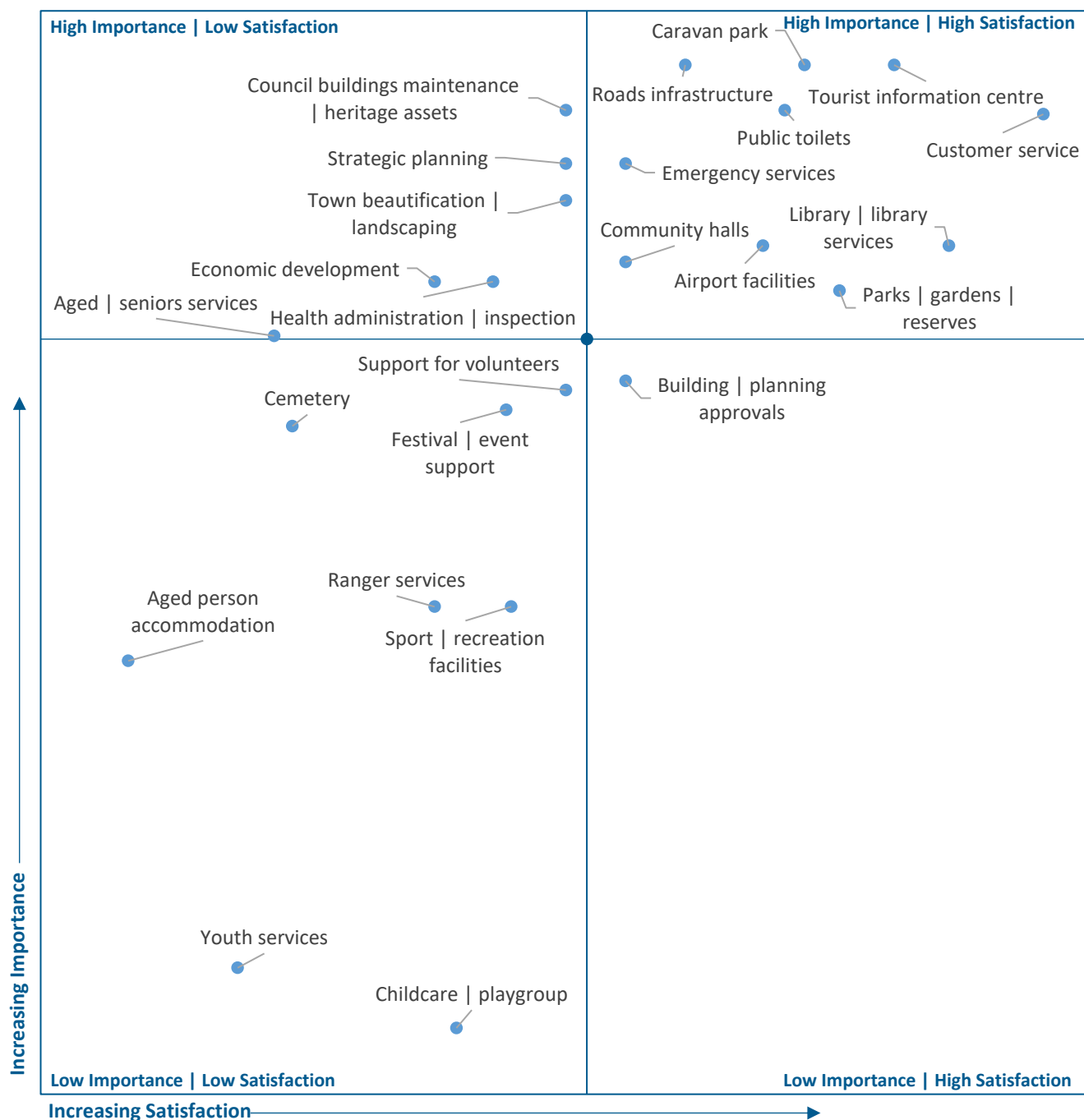


Community Response (continued)

Survey respondents rated their perspective of the importance and their level of satisfaction with current and anticipated Shire services and facilities. Based on the survey results, the relative importance and satisfaction of various Shire services, community facilities and infrastructure was determined.

Services and facilities with a higher than average importance to the community are reflected in the top half of the chart below. Services and facilities the community is most satisfied with are reflected in the right half of the chart below.

Relative Importance and Satisfaction with the Shire's Services and Facilities



Structure of the Strategic Community Plan

Based on community engagement, the Strategic Community Plan sets out the vision for the Shire's future and captures the community's aspirations and values.

A strategic objective has been developed for each of four key themes of community interest, being:

- **Economic:** A prosperous, diverse and thriving local economy;
- **Environment:** A natural and built environment, recognising our heritage for the benefit of present and future generations;
- **Social:** A safe, welcoming and resilient community; and
- **Leadership:** Strong governance and leadership.

Desired outcomes for each objective have been determined and strategies to achieve the outcomes established. In undertaking the review, the Shire had regard for the community's feedback, current and future resources, strategic performance indicators and demographic trends. Commentary on each of these is provided within the Strategic Community Plan.

For each strategic objective, the following information has been provided:

- A summary of the major issues highlighted by the community;
- A selection of community comments;
- Tables of strategies to achieve the desired outcomes; and
- Strategic performance indicators to monitor achievement of desired outcomes.

The structure of the Strategic Community Plan within the overall Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework and its relationship to the annual budget is represented in the diagram below.

Diagram: The Integrated Planning Structure





SPRAY PARK SAFETY RULES

- Children must be supervised by an adult
- No Running
- Surfboards may be lost
- Please don't use the surfboard park area
- No Swimsuits, swim caps, or towels are allowed in the park
- No food or drink in the park
- No glass or other sharp objects in the park
- Please don't drink from the water fountains

“a great little town”

Objectives and Outcomes

Based on the community feedback received, the Shire of Sandstone has set out four key objectives within this Strategic Community Plan as it delivers services to the community. An objective has been defined for each of four key themes, being: social, economic, environment and leadership. Each of the four objectives has a number of desired outcomes the Shire is aiming to achieve over the 10+ years of this Strategic Community Plan.

The following summarises the desired outcomes of working toward the strategic objectives in achieving the vision and aspirations. The tables on the following pages detail the strategies developed to achieve these desired outcomes and the strategic performance indicators to provide a signal of whether the Shire is meeting the objectives and will be monitored and reported.



ECONOMIC

A prosperous, diverse and thriving local economy

Outcome 1.1 An attractive destination for visitors

Outcome 1.2 A diverse and stable economy

Outcome 1.3 An effective transport network



ENVIRONMENT

A natural and built environment, recognising our heritage for the benefit of present and future generations

Outcome 2.1 An effectively managed natural environment

Outcome 2.2 A built environment supporting the community and retaining our heritage



SOCIAL

A safe, welcoming and resilient community

Outcome 3.1 A welcoming and resilient community

Outcome 3.2 A healthy and safe community



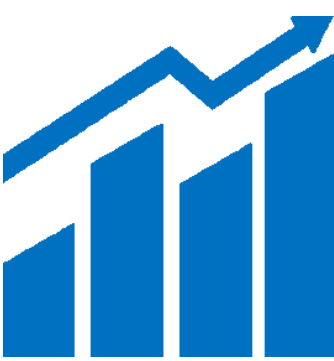
LEADERSHIP

Strong governance and leadership

Outcome 4.1 A strategically focussed Council

Outcome 4.2 An efficient and effective organisation

As the Shire strives to achieve these outcomes, the community will be kept informed of the progress by means of the Annual Report.



Economic Objective

A prosperous, diverse and thriving local economy

Community Feedback

The community recognise and value the mining and pastoral industries as the primary economic drivers for the district, with support for these essential for economic stability and growth. Maintaining existing business whilst supporting new development and industry is important to the community.

Economic Aspirations and Opportunities

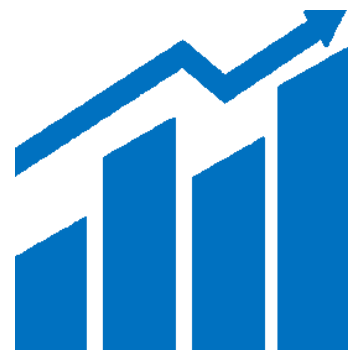
Creating economic growth and employment opportunities is challenging for the district, with increased promotion of the region seen as a priority. Opportunities for promoting and attracting increased visitor numbers were identified by the community, with a desire to see further development.

Maintaining and improving the transport and communication network throughout the district is seen as essential to the continued economic prosperity.

Comments from the Community:

“we need to expand our heritage and visitors services”

“the outback and the serenity of our town is a great draw card for visitors”



Economic Objective

A prosperous, diverse and thriving local economy

The following outcomes and strategies have been identified to achieve this objective.

Outcome 1.1 An attractive destination for visitors

1.1.1	Provide quality tourism facilities, events and information
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Outcome 1.2 A diverse and stable economy

1.2.1	Continue to provide support to existing businesses and those wishing to establish themselves in Sandstone
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Outcome 1.3 An effective transport network

1.3.1	Enhance and maintain our transport network
-------	--

Strategic Performance Indicators:

Visitor Numbers
(increasing)

Road Expenditure
(in line with budget)

Statutory Asset Management Ratios
(maintain healthy ratios)



Environment Objective

A natural and built environment, recognising our heritage for the benefit of present and future generations

Community Feedback

The community values the natural environment with native reserves, granite rocks, wildflowers, bird life and tree covered bushland blending with pastoral land.

Existing built infrastructure, including roads, parks, buildings and facilities contribute to a valued lifestyle and community life.

Environment Aspirations and Opportunities

The community appreciate the local attractions, both the built heritage and natural environment and would like these to be protected and enhanced for the enjoyment of current and future generations.

Managing and enhancing the Shire's significant natural environment along with the built infrastructure are important to the community.

Comments from the Community:

"a tidy safe and friendly community with the peace and tranquillity that only the outback provides"

"beautiful sunsets and night sky surrounded by the bush with its diverse flora and fauna"



Environment Objective

A natural and built environment, recognising our heritage for the benefit of present and future generations

The following outcomes and strategies have been identified to achieve this objective.

Outcome 2.1 An effectively managed natural environment

2.1.1	Maintain environmental diversity and bio-security of the district
2.1.2	Effective and efficient resource utilisation
2.1.3	Efficient and effective waste management

Outcome 2.2 A built environment supporting the community and retaining our heritage

2.2.1	Well maintained community infrastructure
2.2.2	Provide multi-purpose community facilities

Strategic Performance Indicators:

Compliance with Waste Management Regulations
(maintain compliance)

Building Maintenance and Renewal
(in line with budget)



Social Objective

A safe, welcoming and resilient community

Community Feedback

The residents highly value the strong sense of community displayed in the Shire of Sandstone. The relatively safe, peaceful and quiet atmosphere along with the strong volunteer spirit were highlighted as elements that make Sandstone special.

The medical and health services currently provided in Sandstone are viewed as very important. Due to the remote location and population size, the community recognise increased service provision is unlikely.

Social Aspirations and Opportunities

Retention of the strong sense of a community and welcoming spirit is of key importance, with an expressed wish to see more events organised during the year, encouraging engagement and attracting new residents and visitors to the district.

Retention of the medical and health services and accommodation are seen as essential to the district.

Comments from the Community:

"I enjoy the peace and tranquillity of our township and would like to see this remain"

"unique town, friendly people"



Social Objective

A safe, welcoming and resilient community

The following outcomes and strategies have been identified to achieve this objective.

Outcome 3.1 A welcoming and resilient community

3.1.1	Support for community events and groups
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Outcome 3.2 A healthy and safe community

3.2.1	Maintain and improve health care facilities and services
3.2.2	Maintain and promote a safe community

Strategic Performance Indicators:

Website Activity
(increase level of posts and engagement rate)

Provision of Health Services
(maintain level of service)



Comments from the Community:

*“quiet little town,
neat and tidy, great
streetscape”*

“good Shire services”

Leadership Objective

Strong governance and leadership

Community Feedback

The community prides itself on offering a country lifestyle and a welcoming friendly environment. To retain these important traits, the community acknowledged that working together is essential.

The community wants the Shire to continue to advocate for the maintenance and where possible increased services provision on its behalf.

Leadership Aspirations and Opportunities

The community would like the Shire to continue to service the needs of the district through the provision and delivery of a high level of governance and accountability.

The Council is committed to strategic forward thinking, strong representation and providing the community with leadership. We will proactively communicate and acknowledge local feedback to ensure the services we deliver are representative of our community's needs.

Opportunities exist to work to leverage partnerships through greater collaboration. A primary aim is to continually enhance community capacity and investment whilst maximising efforts to advocate and lobby for more funding, resources and better services.



Leadership Objective

Strong governance and leadership

The following outcomes and strategies have been identified to achieve this objective.

Outcome 4.1 A strategically focussed Council

4.1.1	Engage and communicate with the community
4.1.2	Strongly advocate for the Shire's interests

Outcome 4.2 An efficient and effective organisation

4.2.1	Provide appropriate services to the community in a professional and efficient manner
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Strategic Performance Indicators:

Statutory Financial Ratios
(maintain healthy ratios)

**Employee Retention
Rates**
(maintain / increase)

**Currency of Strategic
Plans and Reports**
(maintain currency)



*“a truly great place for
tourists”*

Services and Facilities

Services and facilities provided by the Shire have been linked with the relevant strategies in the Strategic Community Plan in the following table. The table provides a connection between the services and facilities and the desired outcomes and community vision for the Shire of Sandstone.

Services	Economic	Environment	Social	Leadership
Aged seniors' services			3.1.1 3.2.1	4.1.2
Airport facilities	1.3.1			
Building planning approvals				4.2.1
Caravan park	1.1.1	2.2.1		
Cemetery		2.2.1		
Council buildings maintenance heritage assets		2.2.1		
Customer service				4.2.1
Economic development	1.1.1 1.2.1			4.1.2
Emergency services			3.1.1 3.2.2	
Festival event support	1.1.1		3.1.1	
Health administration inspection				4.2.1
Library library services				4.2.1
Parks gardens reserves		2.2.1		
Public toilets		2.2.1		
Ranger services				4.2.1
Roads infrastructure	1.3.1			
Sport recreation facilities		2.2.1 2.2.2	3.1.1	
Strategic planning				4.1.1 4.2.1
Support for volunteers			3.1.1	4.2.1
Tourist information centre	1.1.1			
Town beautification landscaping	1.1.1	2.2.1		

Resource Capacity

This Strategic Community Plan was developed with an understanding of the Shire's current resource capacity, including financial, workforce and asset resources. Whilst future resource capacity is not currently known, expected future resource capacity was considered in the development of this Strategic Community Plan.

At 30 June 2017, the Shire had the following estimated current resource profile⁵. Future resource capacity is partially dependent on other levels of government, however the following long term trends expected in each resource level are provided in the table below.

Resource	Current	Future Trend
Workforce	14 FTE	Stable
Infrastructure Assets	\$38.5m	Stable
Property, Plant and Equipment	\$9.4m	Stable
Cash Backed Reserves	\$5.0m	Increasing
Borrowings	\$0	Stable
Annual Rates Revenue	\$0.9m	Stable Increasing
Annual Revenue	\$7.3m	Stable Increasing
Annual Expenditure	\$4.2m	Stable Increasing

Review and further development of Asset Management Plans, the Workforce Plan and Long Term Financial Plan will influence expected future resource levels for consideration during Corporate Business Planning and Annual Budget processes.

⁵ Shire of Sandstone Draft Long Term Financial Plan 2017-2032

Strategic Risk Management

It is important to consider the external and internal context in which the Shire of Sandstone operates, relative to risk, in order to understand the environment in which the Shire seeks to achieve its strategic objectives.

The external and internal factors identified and considered during the preparation of this Strategic Community Plan are set out below.

External Factors	Internal Factors
Increasing community expectations in relation to service levels and service delivery	The objectives and strategies contained in the Council's current Strategic Community Plan
Rapid changes in information technology changing the service delivery environment	The timing and actions contained in the Council's Corporate Business Plan
Increased compliance requirements due to Government Policy and Legislation	Organisational size, structure, activities and location
Cost shifting by Federal and State Governments	Human resourcing levels and staff retention
Reducing external funding for infrastructure and operations	The financial capacity of the Shire
Changes in mining and pastoral practices and the associated social impacts	Allocation of resources to achieve strategic outcomes
Climate change and subsequent response	Maintenance of corporate records



“We strive towards being a thriving community that attracts visitors and encourage new businesses”

References and Acknowledgements

Acknowledgement and appreciation is expressed to the ratepayers and residents of the Shire of Sandstone for their time and effort in being a part of the community engagement process and for their invaluable input into the Strategic Community Plan.

The Shire of Sandstone Strategic Community Plan 2017 – 2027, has been developed by engaging the community and other stakeholders. Council's Elected Members, management and staff have also had input to the development of the Strategic Community Plan. Much of the information contained in this Strategic Community Plan has been derived from documents in the public domain and liaison with key stakeholders and the community.

Reference to the following documents or sources were made during the preparation of the Strategic Community Plan:

- Shire of Sandstone Strategic Community Plan 2012 - 2022;
- Council website: www.sandstone.wa.gov.au;
- Australian Bureau of Statistics, Sandstone (S) (LGA 57630), 2016 Census of Population and Housing General Community Profile, viewed 12 July 2017; and
- Shire of Sandstone Annual Financial Report 2015 – 2016.

Disclaimer

This Plan has been prepared for the exclusive use by the Shire of Sandstone.

This Plan contains quantitative and qualitative statements, including projections, estimates, opinions and forecasts concerning the anticipated future performance of the Shire of Sandstone, based on a large number of assumptions, and will be, subject to significant uncertainties and contingencies many, if not all, of which are outside the control of the Shire of Sandstone.

This Plan is supplied in good faith for public information purposes and the Shire accepts no responsibility for any loss occasioned by any person acting or refraining from action as a result of reliance on the Plan.

Review of the Strategic Community Plan

In accordance with statutory requirements, the Strategic Community Plan is reviewed and updated on a 4-year review cycle including community consultation, with a desktop review being undertaken every 2 years.

Document Management

Status:	Final V1.2
Date of Adoption:	22 February 2018



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