



Strategic Plan

Flinders Council

September 2015

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Flinders Council Vision

To retain our lifestyle and unique landscapes through positive leadership that encourages innovation, population growth, asset attraction, partnerships, and improved health and wellbeing for our community.

Strategic Focus Areas



Mayor's Welcome

I welcome you to discover in this Strategic Plan the Flinders Council vision for the future of the Municipality and the strategic focus areas and outputs that have been identified to support that vision. The current Elected Member Group was elected in October 2014 and ten months on we have set this Strategic Plan to guide the direction of Council for the next three and a half years when it will be reviewed by a new Councillor group.

This year's and future Annual Plans will be guided by the outputs in this Strategic Plan - outputs that support population growth, increased tourism, primary industries and entrepreneurial activity that are sympathetic to the scale, remoteness and natural assets of the islands. This Strategic Plan is forward looking and in many ways ambitious, seeking to build on the momentum of the recent past in creating new opportunities, supporting the core strengths of the islands and driving sustainable and sensitive growth and development.

A community consultation process in August and September of 2015 informed the refinement of the Strategic Plan and I would like to thank those residents who made comment. Community input into the development of Council's plan for the future of the Municipality is vitally important. Council thanks those that made the effort. The finalised Strategic Plan provides an overview of what Council believes is required to drive the islands' future needs whilst protecting and enhancing the important existing characteristics and lifestyle attributes of our island life, so valued by the Community. The plan also provides the flexibility to respond to opportunities and challenges that fit with the overarching strategic direction of Council as they arise.

The Strategic Plan will guide Council's actions over the coming years as it strives to support, strengthen and inspire the Community. I look forward to the many benefits the islands will derive from Council's activity, in line with this Strategic Plan.

Carol Cox
Mayor

The Strategic Plan

The *Local Government Act 1993* Section 66 directs that a council is to prepare a Strategic Plan for the municipal area. A Strategic Plan is to be in respect of at least a 10 year period. The Strategic Plan guides the decision making of Council, resource allocations, and work plans of Council staff and is a means of communicating how Council will work to contribute to community ambitions, meet its governance obligations, provide leadership and set priorities.

Each year, the directions agreed by Council within the Strategic Plan are actioned through a clear implementation process outlined in the Annual Plan and associated Budget Estimates. This Annual Plan provides a detailed description of key service area actions that seek to deliver on the long term vision for the Flinders Municipality, as agreed by the elected members of the Council. It is the Annual Plan that also provides structure for staff in the delivery of services. The agreed services are reported on by staff to the Council and the Community on a quarterly basis and annually through the preparation and delivery of an Annual Report.

The performance of Flinders Council against the agreed Strategic Plan and associated Annual Plan(s) is measured through the delivery of annual actions, annual reporting and a series of key performance indicators.

The Strategic Plan has been informed by detailed background research and a series of engagement workshops with Councillors, staff and the Community. It seeks to align identified strategic directions in community and economic development, health and wellbeing initiatives, emerging land use policy, recently completed asset and financial management plans and broader shifts in State and Federal policy into a local context relevant to the Flinders Municipality and the Community.

Establishing a long term Vision and aligned Strategic and Annual Plans provides an opportunity for the Flinders Council to further enhance processes and community engagement to directly inform development of an achievable and realistic set of targets.

Fundamentally there are five areas through which Council can actively implement the Strategic and Annual Plans:

1. Deliver services (directly fund activity);
2. Establish by-laws, policies and guide the local planning scheme;
3. Undertake advocacy / lobbying;
4. Partner with organisations / community; and
5. Value-add or deliver something different – new services / investment.

These tools can be used singularly or jointly to achieve the best return. For Flinders Council, with its limited resource base, ensuring that strategic thinking drives decisions and that the best mix of tools is used is critical to the future viability of Council and its services to the Community.

Your Councillors



Cr Gerald Willis

Cr Chris Rhodes

Cr David Williams

Mayor Carol Cox

Cr Ken Stockton

Deputy Mayor Marc Cobham

Cr Peter Rhodes

The Organisation



Role of Council

Council is required to prepare a Strategic Plan for the municipal area. This is required to be for a 10 year period. With the changes to all in all out elections, Council is of the view that the Strategic Plan should be at least updated after each election cycle. To that end the Strategic Plan is based on a 4 year period but the financial and asset management assumptions, forecasts and associated strategies are based on the required 10 year timeframe.

Council sets the strategic direction and policy for the Flinders Council area and delivers:

- ▶ A Strategic Plan that outlines strategic areas of focus and what Council aims to achieve through implementing their vision;
- ▶ A supporting Annual Plan is developed each year that clearly articulates objectives, actions and resources required for a 12 month period aligned with the Strategic Plan.

Role of Staff

The General Manager leads the organisation and group of Council staff. The organisation is responsible for delivering the agreed plan of works set by the Council in the Annual Plan. The staff do this through:

- ▶ Delivery of services
- ▶ Establishing by-laws, policies and guide the local planning scheme;
- ▶ Undertaking advocacy / lobbying;
- ▶ Partnering with organisations / community; and
- ▶ Value adding or delivering something different



Strategic Focus Area 1: Population Growth

Focusing on strategies, projects and policy initiatives that support the community, economic development, innovation and investment attraction.

Council has outlined a clear desire to grow the population to levels that will support greater sustainability, access to a greater range of choice for local services and goods; and increase ongoing service delivery for essential activities associated with health, education, employment and enterprise.

Underpinning an ambition to support population growth is a Council determination to assist in diversifying economic activity, building on the strengths of the Islands' primary resources and agriculture so that Island residents have opportunities for employment and to create their own economic futures. Opportunities to grow the tourism base are expected to contribute to the future of the Furneaux Islands' economy. To support business development there is a need for a targeted and strategic approach to overcome the limitations to innovation and broader entrepreneurial activity (e.g. remoteness) on the Furneaux Islands.

Council's role in supporting innovation and enterprise on the Islands must be clear and realistic. There is a need to undertake activities that support marketing, investment attraction and broader community economic development objectives in a coordinated manner. Council can play a leadership role in developing innovation on the Island and helping to establish a culture that is conducive to innovation. The most suitable and appropriate method to achieve this outcome will require investment and further investigation during the term of this Strategic Plan.

Supporting key industries, capturing and fostering innovation, maintaining community resilience and developing a diverse range of activities to derive income are key economic development challenges for Council. Ensuring access and connections (physical and digital) to markets for local firms is also considered a vital economic development activity.

Council has identified a need for strategies to support access to affordable and secure housing that enables population growth and promotes community and employment participation locally. Further assessment is required to identify priority housing needs and overcome development constraints to ensure new residents can securely relocate to the Islands.

Council recognises that our existing community, lifestyle and values are key attractors to new residents and need to be supported and valued if population growth is to be achieved.

Increased visitation to the Islands also provides significant local benefit. Tourism, business investment and seasonal visitors all provide opportunities for increased prosperity on the Islands.

Rationale

- ▶ While there has been a recent increase in 'working age' families and births during the current Census period, existing modelling and long term population forecasts suggest that ongoing reduction in population is likely to continue unless interventions are made. This brings into question the sustainability of the Council, as there is a correlation between the Islands' population and the financial sustainability of Council.
- ▶ It is clear that the Flinders Municipality benefits from strength of social, cultural and human capital, and it is these core assets that are impacted the most through population decline. The population is also ageing – the median age for the Furneaux Group is 52, compared to 41 across regional Tasmania.
- ▶ Continued investment in community engagement to identify partnerships and delivery models that enable shared responsibility across Council, community partners and other agencies/organisations should be central to future project delivery.
- ▶ Housing and subdivision are key contributors to local land use planning, however, anecdotally housing supply, affordability and rental availability are all constraints for new residents to the Island. There is an inherent cost impost associated with building on the Island that drives up prices – and the general decline in population size is not driving centralised housing supply in existing settlements.
- ▶ Overcoming limitations to on-island financing and ensuring a co-ordinated environment to support local investment and small business is critical. Access to finance for personal and business investment is recognised as a significant constraint. While local businesses currently support existing banking structures, opportunities to identify partnerships that enable

community development outcomes through banking and co-investment models and directly benefit the Furneaux Islands' population should be explored.

- ▶ The combination of production and value adding as a combined land use presents an economic development opportunity that supports diverse revenue streams for households, enables diverse primary production and enables increased rural living. A Planning Scheme that supports niche products and activities and rural living will facilitate and underpin the potential for economic development.
- ▶ Improving access to services (health services, waste management) presents a challenge to Council. Pressure to provide greater access and improved standards will increase with population growth.
- ▶ The reduction of population, coupled with an ageing population places pressure on the existing levels of volunteerism, results in reduced sporting groups and lower numbers of people who actively contribute to life on the Islands through a range of diverse activities. There is an opportunity to focus on 'regional returners' who are often within a working age of 25 – 44. This cohort value lifestyle, proximity to friends and family and access to schools, childcare and health services, housing affordability and reducing the overall cost of living. By providing a range of affordable allotment sizes, the Planning Scheme can support choices for this cohort.
- ▶ Industry development, economic development and associated enterprise activity is constrained by the cost of access to goods, markets and customers that is inherit to an island community.
- ▶ Flinders Island businesses are unlikely to ever develop sufficient scale to be able to compete on the basis of cost. Therefore, encouraging innovation and entrepreneurship that focuses on other avenues to developing sustainable enterprises, such as quality, security, brand, location and remoteness of production and experience is needed. A range of industry approaches including: niche marketing; cooperative business structures and branding; capability building; and process improvement should underpin regional innovation strategies and the future growth of the Islands.
- ▶ The agriculture and fishing sectors remain the largest employers in the Furneaux Island Group, representing 25% of the total workforce.
- ▶ Tourism, agriculture and agricultural value-added production and processing represents significant opportunities for economic development. Opportunities to embed innovation with existing economic activity on the Island should inform Council's economic and land use strategy.
- ▶ Tourism sector generates \$4.3m in annual economic output and is estimated to support 24 jobs. This presents a low base to build upon in terms of overall economic contribution. Preliminary assessment of the local tourism industry indicates a disparate approach to the market. Broader assessment of the sport and recreation market and nature based market as a source of tourism should be considered as part of the broader development of the Island's tourism offer.
- ▶ Recent analysis and spatial modelling of enterprise suitability mapping for the western coastal areas of Flinders Island indicate strong pre-conditions to support barley, blueberry, rye-grass and white wine production;
- ▶ The need to strengthen existing economic drivers through provision of suitable land use approval and associated infrastructure is important locally, in particular to support key growing employers including Flinders Island Meats and Markana Park;
- ▶ While strategies to arrest population decline will be important over the longer term, 'on-island' fluctuations in population from increased visitors provides an opportunity to access increased connections and create opportunities for investment, as well as providing the context around which further strategies can be developed.

Strategies

The strategies for achieving this policy outcome are:

- ▶ Increase the supply of affordable housing;
- ▶ Increase "the working age" population;
- ▶ Value-add to local commodities;
- ▶ Foster and support entrepreneurial activity; and
- ▶ A Planning Scheme that facilitates all of the above.

Strategic implementation

Strategic direction	Output	Primary driver (why)	Council Role	Lead responsibility
Increase the supply of affordable housing.	Land use planning policy that provides an enabling environment for housing and investments.	Growth & development	DS	Development Services
	A strategy and action plan that identifies affordable housing options.	Growth and development	DS	Development Services
Increase "the working age" population.	Services and activities for young people that also aim to attract and retain young families to the Islands.	Growth and development	V & DS	Community & Economic Development
	An islands specific population growth strategy.	Growth and development	DS, P & V	Community & Economic Development
	Study the existing constraints to increasing the level of the locally based population.	Growth and development	DS,P & V	Community & Economic Development
	A banking model that supports community aspirations.	Growth and development	P & V	Corporate Services
Value-add to local commodities.	Opportunities for value-adding of local commodities are identified and promoted.	Growth and development	V	Community & Economic Development
	Support the growth of local sustainable fishing and aquaculture enterprises.	Growth and development	V	Community & Economic Development
	Promote Flinders Island as a high quality food producing region with a clean, green image.	Growth and development	V	Community & Economic Development
	Productive and sustainable agricultural sector.	Growth and development	V & DS	Community & Economic Development
	A strong Flinders Island Brand that underpins growth and development of local value-added commodities.	Growth and development	V & P	Community & Economic Development
Foster and support entrepreneurial activity.	Streamlined and customer focused development application and assessment processes, including pre-lodgement information and advisory services.	Growth and development	DS	Development Services
	Build local entrepreneurial capability.	Growth and development	V & P	Community & Economic Development
	Promotion of the region's natural and cultural environment.	Growth and development	V	Community & Economic Development
	Employment opportunities are enhanced through development of projects and initiatives with education service providers and employers.	Growth and development	P, VA & A	Community & Economic Development
	Tourism and development is promoted through a focus on high quality food production, niche enterprises and clean, green image and sustainable farming practices associated with Flinders Island.	Growth and development	DS, P & V	Community & Economic Development

Strategic direction	Output	Primary driver (why)	Council Role	Lead responsibility
	A place-based strategy developed around housing, living and niche non grazing types of primary production and lifestyle development.	Growth and development	V & A	Development Services
A Planning Scheme that facilitates all of the above.	Planning scheme provides facilitating environment for population growth.			

Note. DS = Deliver Services; R = Regulate; A = Advocate; P = Partner; V = Value Add.

Strategic Focus Area 2: Infrastructure and Services

An Islands' specific approach to planning and delivery to ensure community and environmental values are maintained.

Council continues to actively pursue a strategy of infrastructure improvements and upgrades for the Islands in recognition of the critical importance modern place-based and fit for purpose infrastructure has in the ongoing sustainability, economic development and future growth of the Islands.

During the period of the previous Council Strategic Plan the Federal, State and Local Governments' made a number of major investments into the Islands' infrastructure needs. Upgrades to the Multi-Purpose Centre, Whitemark Airport, Lady Barron Port, Flinders Island energy system, Furneaux Arts and Entertainment Centre, Emita Hall, Killiecrankie and Whitemark BBQ areas and the finalisation of the bridge replacement program all provided stimulus to the Island's economy and much needed asset renewal.

In the period ahead Council and other key funding and service delivery partners will continue to focus on rebuilding the infrastructure "backbone" of the Islands.

Investment in social and community infrastructure that supports social gatherings, improved accessibility and increased liveability are a priority for Council and underpin island life. During the term of this Strategic Plan the Lady Barron Hall will be renovated, all public toilets on the Island will be rebuilt and new facilities installed at Yellow Beach and Killiecrankie. The Whitemark Show Ground will also receive funding for maintenance and repairs. Council plans to rebuild the Whitemark boat ramp and seek funding for other recreational and commercial boating facilities upgrades in the years ahead.

With the Crown owning and managing a large percentage of the Islands' land masses; partnership approaches to manage these important assets will be required in the years ahead. Funding from the State to improve amenity and safety, walking trails, camp grounds and public facilities is required if projected visitation increases and usage occurs to mitigate environmental risk and asset degradation.

Building on the need to modernise our infrastructure, Council continues to be required to invest in solid waste management improvements. The dispersed population and small scale of operations are problematic in delivering an efficient and environmentally compliant service. A structured transition to a sustainable Solid Waste Management model is required in the years ahead and Council will undertake detailed assessments and studies of the most cost effective and environmentally sustainable options for the future of this service on the Islands.

The need to actively manage storm water and waste water is also a priority for Council. With no reticulate sewerage systems on the Island and no plans by TasWater to build any, Council needs to consider how storm water, septic systems and effluent from commercial and government assets can be treated and negative environmental impacts avoided.

Flinders Council is directly responsible for the provision and maintenance of local roads, bridges, culverts and verge management.

Of the road network of 385kms on Flinders, only the road from Whitemark to Lady Barron is classified as a State Road, the remaining 359kms are classified as local roads for which the Flinders Council has responsibility - of the 385kms, 73kms is sealed, the remaining 312 kms gravel surfaced. The road network consumes on average 18% of the Council's operational budget and requires an allowance of approximately \$1 million for depreciation per annum.

Given the ongoing debate in relation to Council sustainability, the fact that King Island has a 90km State road network and Flinders has just 26km, puts Flinders at a material disadvantage to its fellow Bass Strait Island neighbour and requires Council to divert funds that could otherwise be utilised in serving the community and its needs into the road network's ongoing maintenance. Council is committed to seeking the State Government's support in creating parity in this area between the Islands and in turn assisting in the sustainability of Council's level of service to the community.

The efficient and cost effective delivery of maintenance to our road network is a critical aspect in the financial sustainability of Council operations. During the previous strategic plan period, Council made the calculated decision to purchase a new gravel quarry in the centre of the island and invest in new bitumen sealing equipment and aggregates. This has secured supplies and capacity for the Island's gravel and sealed road network for many years to come.

The reliability and place-based characteristics of infrastructure provision are critical for a remote location and to generating a positive future. Flinders Council faces even greater challenges than local authorities of a similar size and rate base because of our island status and the broad dispersal of people across the Furneaux Group. There are elements of the infrastructure mix where

Council is making strategic investment with an eye to the future during the period of this Strategic Plan. These investments are targeted at supporting an increase in the attractiveness and functionality of the Islands to the existing community but also to new residents and investors. Increasing the scale of the ratepayer base is fundamental to ensuring that the cost of providing infrastructure is sustainable in the medium to long term.

Rationale

- ▶ Detailed audits and assessments previously undertaken by Council of community facilities and infrastructure have identified short/medium and long term requirements for maintenance, renewal and upgrade of these important assets.
- ▶ Informal foreshore activities that are focussed on 'getting together' have been found to significantly improve social capital. Appropriate coastal responses that support these activities (most recently achieved with the Whitemark foreshore renewal project) should be generally supported and facilitated by land use planning.
- ▶ TasWater will soon build two new water treatment plants for Whitemark and Lady Barron bringing potable and contaminant free water to these townships.
- ▶ Hydro Tasmania has secured Federal Government funding through ARENA to invest into a new renewable energy based power system for Flinders Island. This major investment of an estimated \$16 million will provide economic stimulus and see the Island predominately supplied by renewable energy further adding to our clean, green brand.
- ▶ Considerable strategic assessment and recent funding across State and Federal levels will support the Flinders Island Renewable Energy Project. There is a need for Council to work proactively in partnership with Hydro Tasmania to ensure successful implementation of the significant local energy project.
- ▶ Utilising and adhering to long term Asset and Financial Management Plans and Strategies are crucial if Council is to meet forecast capital expenditure requirements. There is a need to ensure that revenue inputs reach the required levels to fund forecast capital expenditure levels.
- ▶ Road assets renewal forecast has identified significant capital expenditure demand (\$1,000,000 per annum) to enable acceptable levels of standard. Given the disparity in the length of State road on King Island and Flinders Island there is a clear need to work with the State Government and seek parity between the two Islands' State road networks.
- ▶ Securing assets and capacity to deliver on island gravel and bitumen sealing works is important to ensure a cost effective delivery of these services.
- ▶ The island nature of the Flinders economy offers the opportunity to develop an end to end model of business infrastructure provision, providing low costs and reliable business inputs (such as power and water) sourced from the Island's own resources and infrastructure.
- ▶ There are no reticulated waste water management systems on the Islands. All waste water is managed through on-site wastewater systems. During peak periods and/or storm events the capacity of these systems in the larger centres (particularly Lady Barron) can increase public health risks. In addition, the limitations of current systems inhibit investment as well as increase some environmental risks. Council must explore options to address these issues.
- ▶ The direct connection between management of onsite waste water and stormwater management are key issues for the main centres of Whitemark and Lady Barron. Strategies to ensure ongoing and active management of stormwater that mitigates health and environmental risk and potentially provide quality open space remain priorities for Council.
- ▶ The need to address out of date waste management practices goes directly to key values of sustainability on Furneaux Islands. Upgrades of waste management facilities are required on both Flinders and Cape Barren Island.
- ▶ There simply are not sufficient resources available for Council to deliver all services and capability required to support the long term prosperity of Flinders Island. Partnerships that are supported by principles of regional innovation strategies that switch thinking from service delivery, compensation and redistributive approaches to empowering approaches that capitalise and leverage human and social capital of community, business and other assets have been recognised as important tools for the future.
- ▶ A large proportion of the Furneaux Islands are managed by Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service (PWS).

- ▶ Given the land management responsibilities of both Council and PWS, there is a need for a strong partnership agreement and approach to support operational and maintenance requirements for key public areas including camp grounds and picnic areas.
- ▶ Accessibility on the Island to key tourism assets, including coastal areas, walking trails and other destinations is critical to building the local tourism industry and improving the visitor experience.
- ▶ Assessment of the feasibility and potential economic benefit that could be derived from the development of the Flinders Trail is a key priority.

Strategies

The strategies for achieving this policy outcome are:

- ▶ Plan, deliver and operate community infrastructure to provide levels of service that align with community needs and demand;
- ▶ Explore alternative investment and operating models for core and critical Island infrastructures and services.
- ▶ Minimise environmental and health risks from waste collection and disposal and maximise opportunities to reduce, reuse or recycle resources;
- ▶ Develop and implement solutions that mitigate environmental and health risks from wastewater treatment and disposal;
- ▶ Work proactively with other infrastructure service providers; and
- ▶ Protect and enhance high quality natural values and environmental assets.

Strategic implementation

Strategic direction	Output	Primary driver (why)	Council Role	Lead responsibility
Plan, deliver and operate infrastructure to provide levels of service that align with community needs and demand.	Recreational and community facilities upgraded as recommended by the Recreational and Community Facilities Assessment and Infrastructure Plan.	Level of service Growth & development	DS P & V	Community and Economic Development
	An efficient and sustainable source of resource materials to support public and private works.	Growth and development	DS	Works and Services
	Public open space fund to support community recreation and access opportunities.	Level of service	DS	Development Services
	Asset Management Plan implemented.	Level of service	DS	Works and Services Airport
	Crown owned land is obtained for Council/Community need.	Level of service	DS	Development Services
	Stormwater Management Plan developed.	Level of service	DS	Development Services
	Lagoon Road Recreational Facility and stormwater management area established.	Level of service	DS	Development Services
Explore alternative investment and operating models for core and critical Island infrastructures and services.	Alternate operational structures for the delivery of infrastructure based services are explored.	Level of service	V	Governance
Minimise environmental and health risks from waste collection and disposal and maximise opportunities to reduce, reuse or recycle resources.	Waste Management Strategy Implemented.	Level of service	DS	Works and Services
Develop and implement solutions that mitigate environmental and health risks from wastewater treatment and disposal.	A "pump out" based wastewater collection, transport, treatment and disposal system.	Compliance	DS	Works and Services
Work proactively with other infrastructure service providers.	Infrastructure services that are appropriate for island conditions, sustainable and are accepted and valued by the local community.	Growth and development	A & P	Works & Services
	Increased penetration of renewable energy into the Island's energy systems.	Growth and development	A	Community & Economic Development Governance

Strategic direction	Output	Primary driver (why)	Council Role	Lead responsibility
Protect and enhance high quality natural values and environmental assets.	Parks and Wildlife Services (PWS) and Council cooperatively operate and maintain relevant facilities (toilets, camp grounds, picnic areas etc.).	Efficiency	P & V	Development Services Infrastructure
	A plan for the expansion of the walking trails network on Flinders Island.	Growth and development	A & V	Development Services
	Advocacy for higher levels of maintenance and funding for walking trails and associated assets.	Level of service	A & V	Governance
	Planning scheme supports visual amenity and open space, contributing to recreation and tourism experiences.	Growth and development		

Note. DS = Deliver Services; R = Regulate; A = Advocate; P = Partner; V = Value Add.

Strategic Focus Area 3: Access and Connectivity

Work with service providers and other relevant stakeholders to improve security, reliability and cost effectiveness.

Connecting communities, business and markets while also ensuring essential goods and services are available is central to the ongoing viability of the Flinders Municipality. Arguably sea and air access and a competitive (bandwidth and price) broadband/mobile service are the most critical connectivity links for the long term sustainability of the region. Increasingly the role of telecommunications to support services, business and meet expectations of visitors shoulders an essential role. The significance of telecommunications to the Islands' ability to compete and engage with non-island markets and opportunities is vital, in the near and longer terms.

The need to ensure secure sea and air transport links that instil confidence for investment as well as meeting basic community requirements is essential. Despite this core need, the assets need to be able to be maintained and operated in a cost effective and efficient manner.

The opportunity to expand communication networks to support ubiquitous telecommunications presents a transformative opportunity for Flinders Island and will be a key priority of this Strategic Plan.

Rationale

- ▶ Access to the Islands for goods, services, people and investment are of critical importance, indeed for Flinders, they represent an essential service – maintaining secure air and sea transport connections at a fair and equitable level is central to long term sustainability.
- ▶ The challenges of distance and access both constrain, and enable economic development on the Islands.
- ▶ There is a need to support secure sea freighting services. Unreliability in these services would directly impact exports (mainly livestock) and access to the Islands by sea. There is a need to ensure that the key objectives of the *Furneaux Island Shipping Policy Statement* are achieved to provide a base level of fair and equitable access.
- ▶ Council has a central role in the provision of services as owner and operator of the Whitemark Airport. There has been a marked increase in Regional Passenger Transport (RPT) movements both inbound and outbound at Whitemark Airport. Despite this, the level of RPT traffic still lags the levels of 15 years ago. Long term planning and infrastructure investment planning is currently underway to support projected RPT forecast increases and general aviation services.
- ▶ The runways at the airport require significant investment in pavement strengthening. Assessing the most cost effective and sustainable approach to undertake these works is an important consideration for Council.
- ▶ The vulnerability of transport linkages to shocks in service provision either through sharp increases in prices, reduced operational levels or at worst failure, presents a significant challenge to meeting public safety and essential services requirements.
- ▶ The airport continues to run at an operational loss. This asset supports an essential service. A review of business strategy may assist in reducing the current operational loss and identify areas for expansion.
- ▶ Current telecommunications are limited to provision by Telstra and mobile phone and Internet usage is at full capacity. No plans are in place at this time to link the rollout of the NBN in the Furneaux Islands' to overall improved telecommunications systems. High speed telecommunications, with ubiquitous access, have been identified as a transformative infrastructure for regional communities. The opportunity to expand communication networks by Telstra and NBN Co working in partnership to support ubiquitous telecommunications presents a transformative opportunity for the Furneaux Islands.
- ▶ Economic value is created through the sale of goods and services to customers outside Flinders, that is the goods and services are exported. Innovation is fostered through interactions amongst people on and off the island. Therefore maintaining and enhancing linkages through which export sales can be developed and people can interact and socialise is critical to the creation of economic value on Flinders as well as providing for increased innovation.

Strategies

The strategies for achieving this policy outcome are:

- ▶ Maintain or better the standard of sea access to the Islands;
- ▶ Maintain air access to the Island and improve performance of the airport;
- ▶ Improved telecommunications for the benefit of local community and economy; and

Strategic implementation

Strategic direction	Output	Primary driver (why)	Council Role	Lead responsibility
Maintain or better the standard of sea access to the Islands.	Advocacy for improved port and freighting operations.	Level of service	A, DS, P & V	Governance
	Economic viability of developing an all-weather recreational and leisure vessel harbour investigated.			
Maintain air access to the Island and improve performance of the airport.	Improved operation and financial performance of airport.	Level of service Growth and development Business efficiency	DS	Airport
Improved telecommunications for the benefit of local community and economy.	Improved communications with telecommunication service providers in order to encourage new investment and improved services.	Level of service	A	Governance
	Major upgrades to telecommunication infrastructure and services on the Islands.	Level of service	V	Governance

Note. DS = Deliver Services; R = Regulate; A = Advocate; P = Partner; V = Value Add.

Strategic Focus Area 4: Strategic, Efficient and Effective Organisation

Responding to risks and opportunities.

The role of the Flinders Council is arguably an expanded and broader brief than a traditional mainland Local Government. There is therefore a need for Council to strategically target its activities to support a broad range of services. The costs for delivering these services are higher on island due to our small population and rate base and dispersed communities. This, together with a declining population, places pressure on Council's ability to increase its own revenue. The need for an organisation that is strategic in its actions and investment and efficient and effective in its delivery becomes clearly evident. Furthermore the reliance and need to proactively work with funding partners to deliver outcomes for the community is critical. The context of Flinders Council is paralleled in the remote centre of mainland Australian.

Council recognises the support delivered by subsidised government assistance as a key benefit for the Island. That said, Council is mindful of the need to ensure that broader policy decisions made at National and State levels do not deliver 'unintended consequences' for the community's desired lifestyles on the Furneaux Islands.

There is a strong desire to protect the existing lifestyle on the Islands through achieving greater autonomy in local planning, budget control and more flexible funding arrangements. The extent to which this is possible will require careful examination.

Approaches to support an effective local organisation and regional innovation include a desire to:

- ▶ Contribute to policy direction and decision making that impacts local communities;
- ▶ Recognise the need for equitable & sustainable financial resources for remote communities;
- ▶ Support local decision making and accountability;
- ▶ Actively seek innovative service, delivery and infrastructure funding and financing models; and
- ▶ Ensure investment matches strategic direction.

Broader analysis of the Local Government sector across Tasmania demands Flinders clearly articulates the need for a strategic, efficient and effective organisation that can adequately respond to local needs.

Rationale

- ▶ There is a need for localised policy and implementation solutions that support the intent of broader State level policy but is suitably applied within the local context of the remote islands of the Bass Strait. Increasingly, Local Government is required to deliver a range of services that have moved beyond traditional 'rates, rubbish and roads'. This demand on service provision is amplified within the Flinders context where Council has demonstrated capability and is drawn into issues including, but not limited to: project management, negotiation, business case development, advocacy and lobbying, community development, expanded service provision, land use planning and integrated asset management.
- ▶ Local Governments are increasingly being asked to develop and support new place-based activities and services, such as innovation and business development as the importance of 'place' to improvements in these areas becomes better understood. In many ways, Local Government is the best placed institution to guide and facilitate these elements of regional character, yet resource support to develop these capabilities that deliver state and national level outcomes and benefits is not yet forthcoming. These changing dynamics require new and adaptive governance approaches.
- ▶ Given the scale of Flinders Council and the diverse 'communities of interest' on the Islands there is a requirement to ensure that effective partnerships are encouraged to deliver 'joined-up' interagency and interdepartmental delivery of services. Partnership approaches between peak organisations on the Island are particularly important within the context of decreasing State and National Government funding allocations.
- ▶ At a regional and State level, Council has an important role as community leader and advocate for the Islands' communities. Ongoing contribution through the leadership of Council to support policy, regional strategy and emerging direction for the Local Government sector will be pivotal for future service delivery within the current Local Government area.
- ▶ As the debate for Local Government amalgamations continues at Tasmanian State Government level, Council needs to consider the implications and opportunities for financial management and service provision improvements the reform agenda may offer.

- ▶ There is a requirement for integrated strategies that are collectively delivered by Government, Council, community and business. Council cannot be viewed as the sole driver of long term positive change on the Islands. Developing this level of collective engagement over the longer term is a critical element of place-based strategy development and implementation.
- ▶ There has been significant investment by Council in corporate and asset management planning. Ongoing commitment to ensure transparency through processes, reporting and project delivery will guide Council's annual work program and statutory reporting requirements.
- ▶ New and innovative models for service delivery and infrastructure funding and finance can improve the efficiency and effectiveness of Local Governments.
- ▶ While Council's role is broader and more strategic than ever, the organisation has considerable statutory obligations to support implementation of State legislation. In particular there is a significant resource demand for Council to meet and prosecute their responsibilities under the *Local Government Act 1993*; *Land Use Planning & Approvals Act 1993*; *Public Health Act 1997*; *Building Control Act 2000* and other relevant corporate governance requirements around probity and ensuring workplace safety. This role continues to grow and add costs to Local Government. Council sees value in clearly articulating to the community via the Strategic Plan and Annual Plan the breadth of the work required in this area and its associated cost to the community.
- ▶ Engagement and analysis has indicated the need to recognise the support achieved through subsidised State and Federal funding as a key benefit for the Island. Ongoing remote area assistance is required with increased autonomy for local service delivery.
- ▶ Long range financial planning and decision making around investment strategies that underpin community benefit are required. The focus on development of a 20 year financial assessment and devising a strategic investment strategy will underpin the long term resilience of Council.

Strategies

The strategies for achieving this policy outcome are:

- ▶ Remain actively engaged with internal and external stakeholders providing regional leadership;
- ▶ Support processes, accountability and project delivery through transparent reporting;
- ▶ Ensure Council meets its statutory obligations and manages corporate and community risk;
- ▶ Drive continuous improvement through a focus on customer service, community engagement, efficient systems and processes, innovation, capacity building and workforce development;
- ▶ Build financial and organisational resilience and maximise returns from Council's capital resources; and
- ▶ Actively investigate innovative service, delivery and infrastructure funding and financing models that meet the core needs of the Council and the future needs of the Island and its residents.

Strategic implementation

Strategic direction	Output	Primary driver (why)	Council Role	Lead responsibility
Remain actively engaged with internal and external stakeholders providing regional leadership.	The Furneaux Islands' unique circumstances, isolated community and specific financial needs are understood by key external stakeholders.	Level of service	A	Governance
	Cooperative and coordinated delivery of Indigenous community services.	Level of service	V	Governance
Support processes, reporting and project delivery through transparent reporting.	Priorities, actions and achievements are planned and reported through an integrated governance and management framework.	Compliance	R & DS	Governance
	Efficient and coordinated delivery of projects across the organisation.	Business efficiency	DS	Governance
	Administrative support provided to Council.	Compliance Level of service	DS & R	Governance
	Accurate advice and excellent customer service provided to facilitate development applications, approvals and inspection processes.	Level of service Business efficiency	DS & R	Development Services
Ensure Council meets its statutory obligations and manages corporate and community risk.	All legislative and regulatory compliance related to Council activities met.	Compliance	R & DS	Governance
	Development undertaken in accordance with relevant development standards and legislative requirements.	Compliance	R & DS	Development Services
	Regulatory building processes comply with Department of Justice requirements.	Compliance	R	Development Services
	Annual Plans and Reports prepared in accordance with the Local Government Act 1993.	Compliance	R	Governance
	Code of Conduct reviewed as per S28 2 (c) of the Local Government Act 1993.	Compliance	R	Governance
	Requirements of the Archives Act 1983 substantially complied with through improved records management processes.	Compliance	R	Governance
	Register of Interests for staff and Elected members maintained as required under the Local Government Act 1993.	Compliance	R	Governance
	General Manager's Roll maintained for election purposes as required under the Local Government Act 1993.	Compliance	R	Governance
	Municipal Revaluation and valuation adjustment factors.	Compliance	R	Corporate Services
	Maintain Council's Policy Manual and Instrument of Delegation.	Compliance	R	Governance Corporate Services Airport Development Services Works & Services Community & Economic Development
Requirements of the Public Interest Disclosure Act 2002 complied with by responding to disclosures.	Compliance	R	Governance	

Strategic direction	Output	Primary driver (why)	Council Role	Lead responsibility
	Requirements of the <i>Right to Information Act 2009</i> complied with by responding to applications for information disclosure.	Compliance	R	Governance
	Annual budget estimates and reviews.	Compliance	R	Corporate Services
	Financial management processes comply with Tasmanian Audit Office requirements.	Compliance	R	Corporate Services
	Input into the State Government "Sustainability Indicators" project provided.	Compliance	R	Corporate Services
	Flinders Council Audit Panel functions effectively and efficiently.	Compliance	R	Corporate Services
	Enterprise Agreement 2016-2019 that complies with <i>Fair Work Act 2009</i> .	Compliance	R	Governance
	Public officers educated and trained in ethical conduct to comply with Section 32 of the <i>Integrity Commission Act 2009</i>.	Compliance	R	Governance
	Furneaux Fire Area Management Committee functions efficiently and effectively.	Compliance	R & P	Governance
	Appropriate plans and available resources in place to where possible mitigate and respond to identified risks and incidents.	Compliance	R & P	Community and Economic Development
	Compliance of airport operations with requirements of CASA and other regulators.	Compliance	R	Airport
	An integrated and strategic approach to financial and asset management.	Compliance Business efficiency	R & DS	Corporate Services
	Financial Statements include Financial and Asset Management Sustainability Indicators in accordance with the <i>Local Government Act 1993</i>.	Compliance	R	Corporate Services
	Create annual rates invoice, supplementary valuations and annual adjustment factors processed.	Compliance	R	Corporate Services
	Roads to Recovery reporting requirements met.	Compliance	R	Corporate Services
	Mineral Resource returns to Mineral Resource Tasmania.	Compliance	R	Corporate Services
	Superannuation and Taxation obligations met.	Compliance	R	Corporate Services
	Annual Fire Levy returns submitted to the State Fire Commission.	Compliance	R	Corporate Services
	Requirements of the <i>Public Health Act 1997</i> are met.	Compliance	R & P	Development Services
	Requirements of the <i>Dog Control Act 2000</i> are met.	Compliance	R	Development Services
	Requirements of the <i>Building Control Act 2000</i> are met.	Compliance	R	Environmental Health
	Requirements of the Environment Protection Agency (EPA) regulations are met.	Compliance	R	Environmental Health
Drive continuous improvement through a focus on customer service,	A healthy and safe place to work.	Compliance	DS	Corporate Services
	Continuous improvement program.	Business efficiency	DS	Governance Corporate Services
	A skilled workforce that provides core strategic, planning and operational capability.	Business efficiency	DS	Governance

Strategic direction	Output	Primary driver (why)	Council Role	Lead responsibility
community engagement, efficient systems and processes, innovation, capacity building and workforce development.	Compliance with the requirements of the <i>Work Health and Safety Act 2012</i> . A safe working environment where staff, volunteers and contractors understand safety issues, are supported and take individual responsibility for safety.	Compliance	L	Corporate Services
	An effective and dynamic online presence (Council website).	Level of service	A	Corporate Services
	A central source of information for tourists and visitors to the Island.	Level of service	DS	Corporate Services
	New Residents Kits.	Level of service	DS	Corporate Services
Build financial and organisational resilience and maximise returns from Council's capital resources.	Resources utilised to maximise financial and community returns.	Business efficiency	DS, V & R	Corporate Services
	Sustainable organisation.	Business efficiency	DS, V & R	Corporate Services

Note. DS = Deliver Services; R = Regulate; A = Advocate; P = Partner; V = Value Add.

Strategic Focus Area 5: Liveability

Protect, improve and promote the safety, creativity, health and wellbeing of the Islands' communities.

Council has outlined a clear desire to grow the population to levels that will not directly impact lifestyle but will enable greater sustainability, access to a greater range of choices, and improve ongoing service delivery for essential activities associated with health, the arts, education and employment.

Maintaining the current high levels of social capital and strengthening human capital on the Islands is an important objective for Council. Investment that improves community safety, creativity, health and wellbeing should be prioritised as it has a strong link to the Island's long term prosperity.

Improving the overall liveability of the community is critical to sustainability and growth. This can be achieved through influence, leadership and coordination, encouraging creative endeavour, protecting, promoting, and maintaining health and wellbeing and by preventing disease, disability, and improving health and wellbeing through targeted initiatives, education and health services and assisting where possible to maintain and foster a safe and supportive community. Land use planning can assist in achieving cost effective well located and efficient use of community facilities by locating complementary development in areas with access to infrastructure and services and by protecting existing or known planned infrastructure from development that could compromise safe operation or service delivery in the future.

Integrated approaches to land use and infrastructure planning improve the community's access to services and maximise the benefits of infrastructure investment. To enhance liveability, the Planning Scheme, should provide for quality design that reflects local character and community identity, promotes innovations in energy efficiency and is compatible with natural values and local context. The scheme should provide attractive and accessible natural environments and public open space by maintaining or enhancing areas of high scenic amenity and important vistas that contribute to natural and visual amenity. The scheme should also maintain and enhance opportunities for public access and the use of natural areas, including the coast. The coastal environment including offshore islands is important for its natural processes and resources and economic, social and aesthetic values. Coastal dependent development such as tourism represents a potential component of the island economy and should be appropriately located. Land use planning should protect and enhance the coastal environment while supporting opportunities for coastal development, compatible urban form and safe public access along the coast.

The biodiverse environment provides a range of services on which we rely for food, recreation, materials and energy. The natural environment also contributes to character and identity and thus to the health and well-being of islanders as well as their social and economic futures. Safeguarding biodiversity and building ecological resilience is essential both now and for future generations. Planning and development decisions can maintain, enhance and build resilience of biodiversity by protecting ecosystems and their ecological processes. It is also important to manage and protect the areas that provide the links between natural areas where habitat fragmentation has occurred.

To protect environmental services and their contribution to social and economic wellbeing, the Planning Scheme must manage risk from natural hazards, ensure that development does not require public expenditure for works to protect either the development or the environment, encourage energy efficiency and maintain or enhance the resilience of natural systems.

Rationale

- ▶ Changing demographic structure of the Islands' population drives demand for changing service needs. This includes a combination of an ageing population and recent increases in births.
- ▶ Liveability is one of the key strengths of the Islands and Council should continue to foster key programs and initiatives that seek to improve liveability.
- ▶ The scale of the ageing population is creating increased emphasis on health-related services.
- ▶ Health and wellbeing is an important consideration for the Island community. It is linked to social connections, levels of volunteerism, feelings of safety, prosperity, accessibility and access to services. The combination of these assets builds social and cultural capital.
- ▶ Seasonal fluctuations in population and the social capital of visitors and regular return tourists are an important group for continued engagement. These 'off-Island' residents may enhance social connections and access to human capital.

- ▶ The *Flinders Island Recreational and Community Facilities Assessment and Infrastructure Plan* identified that most residents consider their health and wellbeing to be good, however concerns exist around ageing, anxiety, depression and lack of exercise. 'Cost of fuel' and 'isolation' are indicated as the main difficulties when accessing services. 'Travel costs, 'financial costs' and 'isolation' are the least positive things about living on the Island. 'Population' and 'travel' have been identified as key issues for the Island over the next 5-10 years.
 - ▶ Support for improved health and wellbeing of the community through education, health and aged care services via the Multi-Purpose Centre, Flinders Island Aboriginal Association Incorporated (FIAAI), Cape Barren Island Aboriginal Association Incorporated (CBIAAI) and Council presents as an ongoing opportunity. Exploration of shared models of service that enable coordinated delivery of health services and minimise duplication of effort should be undertaken as a priority. With limited access to capital and operational funds in this critical area, alignment of effort and services is a key focus.
 - ▶ There has been a move away from participation in conventional organised sport. New strategies to support strong national and state level policy for health prevention are required. The *Flinders Island Recreational and Community Facilities Assessment and Infrastructure Plan* and other strategic planning have identified needs including: facilities, public transport and behaviour change support.
 - ▶ Cultural activities foster social engagement and emotional wellbeing and they provide opportunities for creative expression. The creative arts build a sense of ownership; simply engaging in arts-based activities can be healing, and promotes pride, identity, cultural continuity and renewal for the benefit of all.
 - ▶ Liveability can also be measured by scenic amenity and environmental services, building form and scale, principles of sustainable design, and access to open spaces,
 - ▶ Planning and development decision-making should employ risk management approaches that consider coastal erosion, storm tide inundation and projected impacts of a variable climate such as increased runoff during storm events. Land use planning will also be responsible for maintaining and enhancing opportunities for public access and use of the foreshore.
- Climate variability not only presents as an environmental challenge but as a social and economic challenge. Apart from the potential to alter the ecosystems of the Furneaux Islands, some hazards associated with more variable climate are longer periods between rainfall, more intense rain events, flooding, erosion, increased potential for disease vectors and increased bushfire hazard.

Strategies

The strategies for achieving this policy outcome are:

- ▶ Improve the health and wellbeing of the Island communities through leadership and co-ordination;
- ▶ Support cultural activities that foster social engagement and emotional wellbeing and provide opportunities for creative expression; and
- ▶ Land use planning conserves natural and cultural values and addresses natural hazards and climate adaption.

Strategic implementation

Strategic direction	Output	Primary driver (why)	Council Role	Lead responsibility
Improve the health and wellbeing of the Island communities through leadership and co-ordination.	Integrated delivery of health promotion activities.	Level of service	P, DS & V	Community & Economic Development
	Rural Primary Health Service program funding is administered for delivery of health services to the community.	Level of service Compliance	P, DS & V	Community & Economic Development
	Improved health and wellbeing of the community supported through education and health services.	Level of service Growth & Development	DS, P & V	Community & Economic Development
	Water supply free from contaminants.	Compliance	R	Environmental Health
Support cultural activities and events that foster social engagement, inclusion and emotional wellbeing and provide opportunities for creative expression.	Arts and cultural activities are encouraged and supported.	Level of service	DS, P & V	Community & Economic Development
	Community events and activities are supported, encouraged and delivered.	Level of service	DS, P & V	Community & Economic Development
Land use planning conserves natural and cultural values and addresses natural hazards and climate adaption	Municipal climate change strategy			
	Hazard management and climate adaption integrated into specific area plans.			
	Biosecurity risks identified and a program to address those risks developed.			
	Planning scheme enhances liveability and protects distinctive local characteristics.			

Note. DS = Deliver Services; R = Regulate; A = Advocate; P = Partner; V = Value Add.

Glossary of Terms

Term	Definition
Annual Budget	A statutory requirement outlining the financial estimates to deliver the Corporate Strategic Plan.
Asset Management	The combination of management, financial, economic, engineering and other practices applied to physical assets with the objective of providing the required level of service in the most cost-effective manner.
Asset Management Plan	A plan developed for one or more assets that combines technical and financial management processes to provide a specified level of service.
Annual Plan	A local government's business planning tool that translates Council priorities into operations within the resources available. In its entirety, it details the services, operations and projects that a local government will deliver over a defined period, the processes for delivering them and the associated costs.
Capital Expenditure	Expenditure used to create new assets or to increase the capacity of existing assets beyond their original design capacity or service potential.
Community	A group of people living in the same locality and under the same government. Can be extended to include those who visit, work or recreate within the locality.
Compliance	A requirement under law. Risks or penalties if activity not undertaken
Council	The group of individuals elected to the office of Councillor for the local government by members of the community from within defined local government area districts or wards.
Councillors	An elected member of a local government council, who has the following functions: (a) to represent the community; (b) to act in the best interests of the community; (c) to facilitate communication by the council with the community; (d) to participate in the activities of the council; (e) to undertake duties and responsibilities as authorised by the council.
Efficiency	Generates more revenue or reduces the costs of doing an activity.
Expenditure	The spending of money on goods and services.
Growth and development	An increase in community or economic activity.
Level of Service	The defined service quality for a particular activity (i.e. roading) or service area (i.e. environmental health) against which service performance can be measured. Service levels usually relate to quality, quantity, reliability, responsiveness, environmental, acceptability and cost.
Local Government	A general term for a body corporate constituted under the <i>Local Government Act 1993</i> which is governed by a Council of elected members and administered by employed staff, which has responsibility for certain governing functions within territorial areas smaller than the State.
Maintenance	All actions necessary for retaining an asset as near as practicable to its original condition, but excluding rehabilitation or renewal.
Objective	Statements that describe what a local government wants to achieve.
Outcome	What will be achieved as a result of doing something.
Renewal	Works to upgrade, refurbish or replace existing facilities with facilities of equivalent capacity or performance capability.
Replacement	The complete replacement of an asset that has reached the end of its life, so as to provide a similar or agreed alternative level of service.
Reporting	Relaying information about how a local government has performed against what it said it would deliver.
Resourcing	The level of resources that a local government can afford in order to meet objectives – including assets, time, cost and people.
Strategy	Describes how a local government will achieve its objectives.

