



SHIRE OF
COCOS
KEELING ISLANDS



STRATEGIC COMMUNITY PLAN 2016 - 2026

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OUR VISION:

*‘Working together to
advance our Islands’*



Foreword

We are proud to present the Shire of Cocos (Keeling) Islands Strategic Community Plan 2016 -2026. The Plan shares our aspirations as a community over the next ten years and beyond, shaping the delivery of services and projects undertaken by the Shire.

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

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

We look forward to continuing our focus of working with the Cocos (Keeling) Islands community to advance our Islands.

Balmut Pirus
Shire President

August 2016



Contents of the Plan

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

A guiding strategic objective has been developed for each of four key areas of community interest, being: economic, social, environmental and civic leadership. The desired outcomes for each objective have also been determined. Strategies to meet the objectives were established after considering the capacity of the Shire's current resources and anticipated resource capacity along with future demographics.

For each strategic objective the following information has been provided:

- a summary of the major issues highlighted by the community;
- a selection of the community's comments;
- tables of strategies to achieve the desired outcomes; and
- key performance measures to monitor achievement of desired outcomes.

How the Plan will be used

This Plan shares the community vision and aspirations for the future and outlines how the Shire will, over the long term, work towards a brighter future for the Shire of Cocos (Keeling) Islands community.

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

The Shire of Cocos (Keeling) Islands 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 organisations, and Commonwealth Government;
- Provide a rationale to pursue grants and other resources and demonstrate how specific projects align with the aspirations of our community, and within the strategic direction outlined in this Plan;
- Inform potential investors and developers of our community's key priorities, and the ways in which we want 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 and objectives.

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

The strategies will be prioritised and actions applied, after a further assessment of available resources, through the development of a Corporate Business Plan. This Plan should be read in conjunction with the Shire's Corporate Business Plan as together they form the Shire's 'Plan for the Future'. Key performance indicators will be used to report back to the community on the Shire's performance in achieving the outcomes.

Shire of Cocos (Keeling) Islands Community

Cocos Keeling Heritage

Almost the entire population of Home Island is of Cocos Malay descent. The remaining population resides on West Island and is mainly of European descent.

Originally brought to the Islands as coconut plantation workers from 1826 onwards, isolation has seen the local population "...held together for eight generations by its very isolation, shared economic endeavor, strong family loyalty, a deepening commitment to Islam and a unique version of the old "trading Malay" language of the East Indies".

The Islands became an Australian territory in 1955 with the Cocos (Keeling) Islands Act being the legislative basis for the administrative, judicial and legislative systems.

In 1984 the Cocos Malay population voted for political, social and economic integration with Australia in a United Nations-sponsored Act of Self-Determination. Originally governed locally by a community council, a seven-member Shire Council under Western Australian legislation was formed in 1992 to provide local governance.

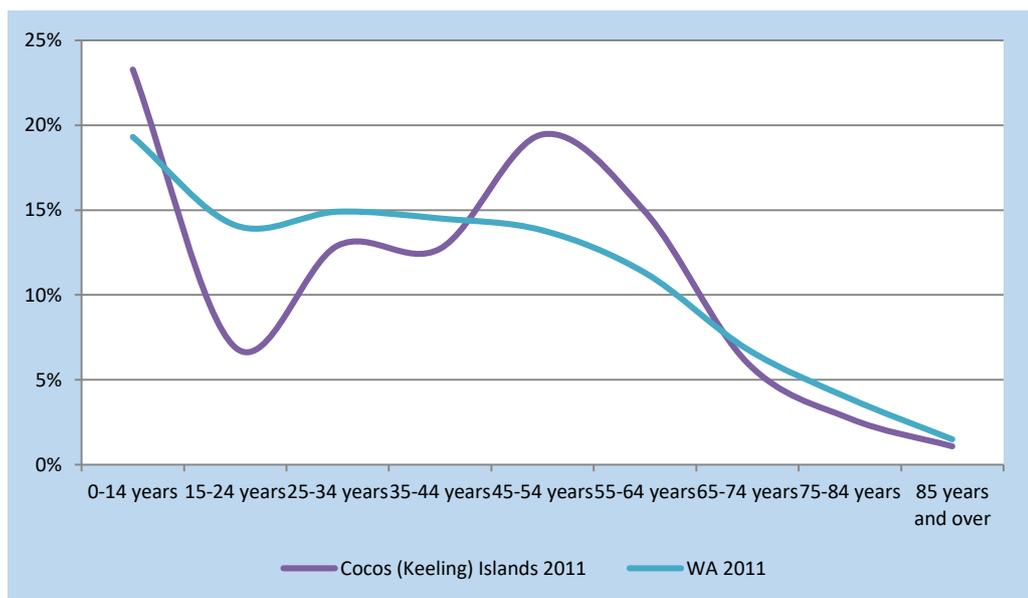
Cocos (Keeling) Islands Today

Many of the current inhabitants of the Cocos (Keeling) Islands descend from the original families who worked the plantations. The Islands were isolated during much of their habitation and a unique culture and language has developed based on original Malay traditions and the Islamic religion.

The population of Home Island is mainly comprised of the Cocos Malays. The population of West Island comprises employees of various government departments, contractors and their families. They are usually on short term postings of between one and three years. However, there is a growing number of people basing themselves permanently on West Island and operating a range of small businesses.

The Islands form a part of the external Indian Ocean Territory of the Commonwealth of Australia.

When compared the age distribution of Western Australia the population of Cocos (Keeling) Islands has a significantly lower percentage of 15-24 year olds and higher percentage of 45 to 64 year olds based on the 2011 census as represented in the chart below.¹



¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics

Cocos (Keeling) Islands Natural Environment

The Islands Landscape

The Cocos (Keeling) Islands are located in the Indian Ocean 2,768 km north-west of Perth, 3,685 km west of Darwin and about 900 km south-south-west of Christmas Island.

The group consists of 26 low lying coral atolls with an area of around 14 square kilometres and a coastline of 26 km. Home Island and West Island are the only two islands inhabited in the group. There are 26 islands in the south atoll and a single island, North Keeling Island, is 27 km to the North.

North Keeling Island, an atoll approximately 27 km north of the southern atoll is protected as a World Heritage Reserve under the control of Parks Australia, Cocos (Keeling) Islands.



Cocos (Keeling) Islands Built Environment

The Built Environment

The two inhabited islands are Home Island, the home of the Cocos Malay community and the Shire Office, with a population of around 470, and West Island on which is located the airport, Government offices, the homes of virtually all Government and contracted employees, and some private residences, with a population of around 140.



Transport on the islands

Home island has a network of cement brick paved and unsealed roads which service the community. Use of motor vehicles is restricted on the island with electric golf carts and four wheel motorbikes being the most utilised form of transport.

Sydney Highway runs from the airport to the northern end of the West island. A sealed road network services the settlement area on the Island and an unsealed road runs from the settlement to Scout Park. The maximum allowable speed on the island is 50km/h.

There is a ferry service between Home Island and West Island daily and twice weekly to Direction Island.

The only passenger transport connection with the rest of the world is by an air service to Christmas Island and Perth. Currently this service operates twice weekly.

Community Engagement

The Cocos (Keeling) Islands community were asked to share their visions and aspirations for the future, and invited to participate in the review and update of this Strategic Community Plan.

The campaign was promoted through social media, the Atoll newsletter, community email distribution list and also on the Shire of Cocos (Keeling) Islands website.

Community Surveys were made available to all residents in English and Cocos Malay seeking feedback on the Communities vision and aspirations for the future of the Islands. Survey respondents also rated their perspective of the importance and their level of satisfaction with current and anticipated Shire services. The Surveys were made available as and written surveys and electronic surveys and a link was provided on the Shire website.

Survey Masyarakat
Berikan suara dalam perancangan masa hadapan untuk Pulu Cocos (Keeling)



1. Apa yang membuat Pulu Cocos (Keeling) tempat yang spesial untuk tinggal?

2. Apa cabaran yang terbesar untuk tinggal di Pulu Cocos (Keeling)?

3. Apa keinginan kamu yang paling besar untuk Pulu Cocos (Keeling) dalam masa 10-15 tahun datang?

Community Survey
Have a say in the future planning for the Cocos (Keeling) Islands



1. What makes the Cocos (Keeling) Islands a special place to live?

2. What are the major challenges of living on the Cocos (Keeling) Islands?

3. What is your greatest desire for Cocos (Keeling) Islands over the next 10-15 years?

A community workshop and a separate stakeholder workshop were held on West Island on 25th July 2016 and on Home Island on 26th July 2016. During all workshops a SWOT analysis was undertaken using community feedback along with a money game to enable participants to provide their view of Shire Service priorities given limited resources.



Community Response

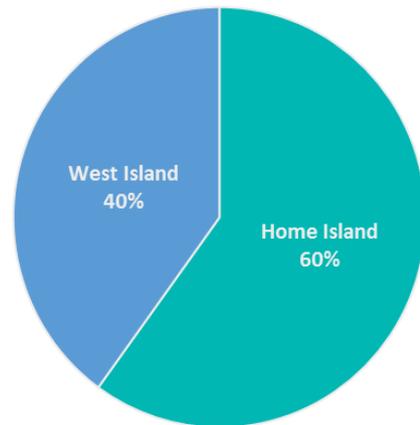
The community was asked to say what they consider most special about the Shire of Cocos (Keeling) Islands. It is evident that they highly value the natural environment, in particular the un-spoilt natural beauty and scenery, fresh air, attractive climate and clear turquoise waters. The safe and friendly community spirit is also highly regarded.

When asked about a vision for the future, the most common responses included preserving the community spirit, the environment and uniqueness of Cocos (Keeling) Islands, with the minimal crime level and beautiful beaches to be retained into the future.

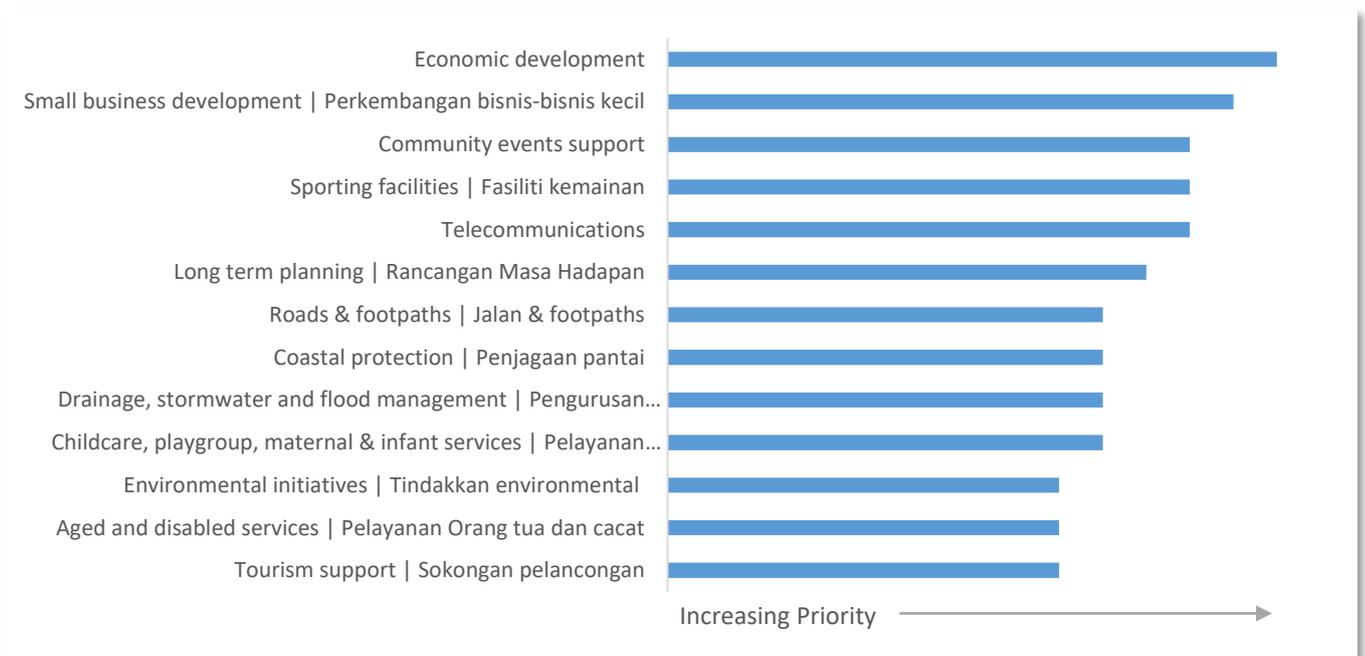
The community surveys have provided a valuable insight into the key issues and aspirations as identified by the local residents. Importantly for the Council, these views have established clear priorities and subsequently shaped the visions, values, objectives and strategies documented in this report.

Community response:

- 81 members of the community (15% of the resident population) responding by completing the survey and attending the community workshops
- The responses were from residents on both Home and West Islands, in the proportions represented in the adjacent diagram



During the community workshops, participants were asked to show how they would like the limited resources available prioritised over the 27 services listed. The following graph shows the priority services relative to other services, as viewed by the workshop participants.

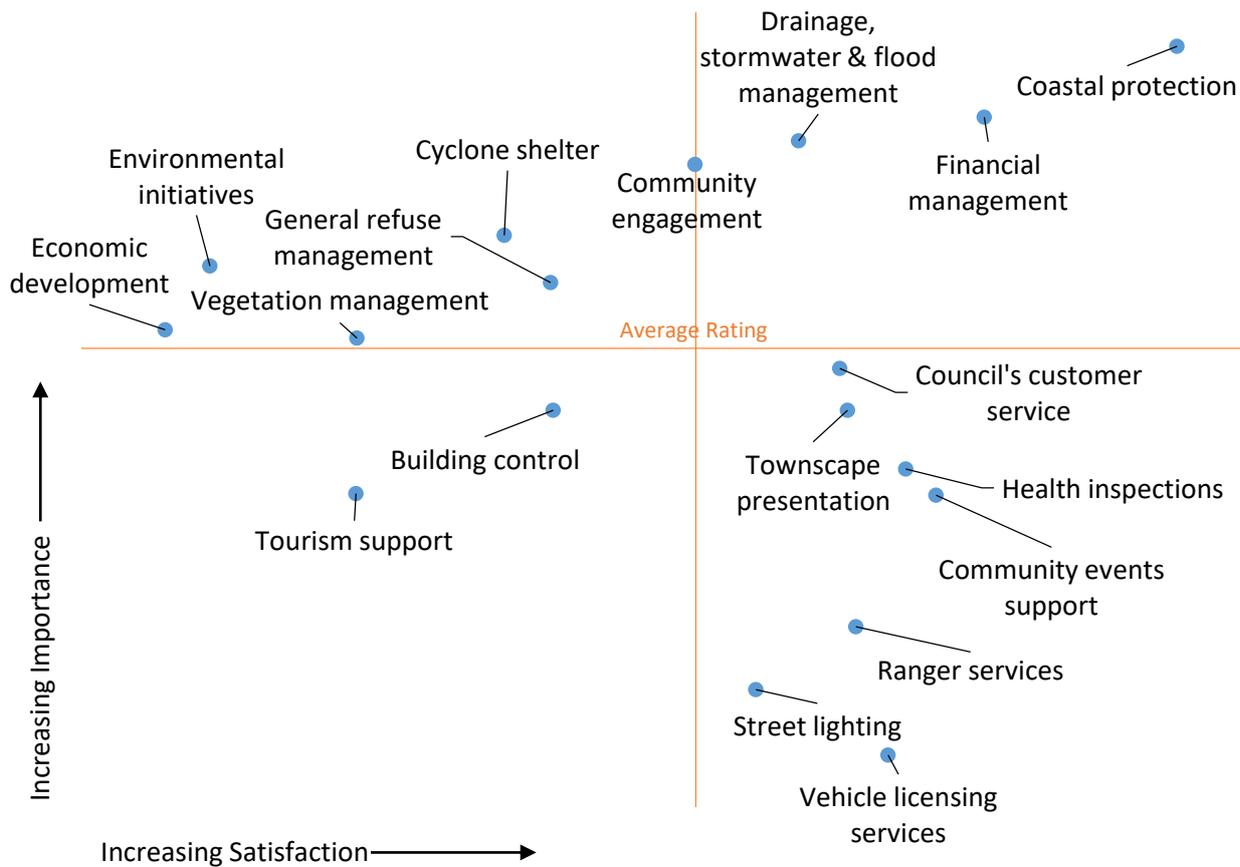


Community Response (continued)

Survey respondents rated their perspective of the importance and their level of satisfaction with current and anticipated Shire services. Based on the survey results, workshop discussions and the comments received from the community during the consultation period, an understanding of the community importance and satisfaction with services and facilities was obtained.

Shire Services

The relative importance and satisfaction of Shire services is reflected in the chart below, with the level of importance and satisfaction rating of each service plotted as a blue dot. The orange lines show the average importance (horizontal line) and average satisfaction (vertical line) of the Shire services.

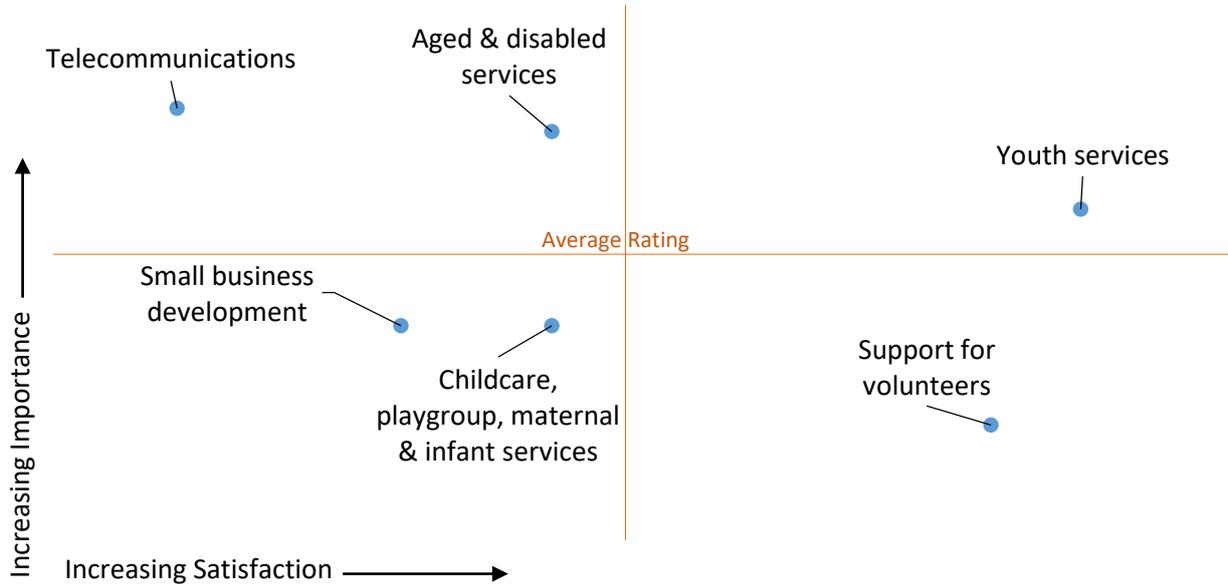


The services showing in the top left quadrant are the services with the highest community priority and lowest level of satisfaction.

Community Response (continued)

Community Services

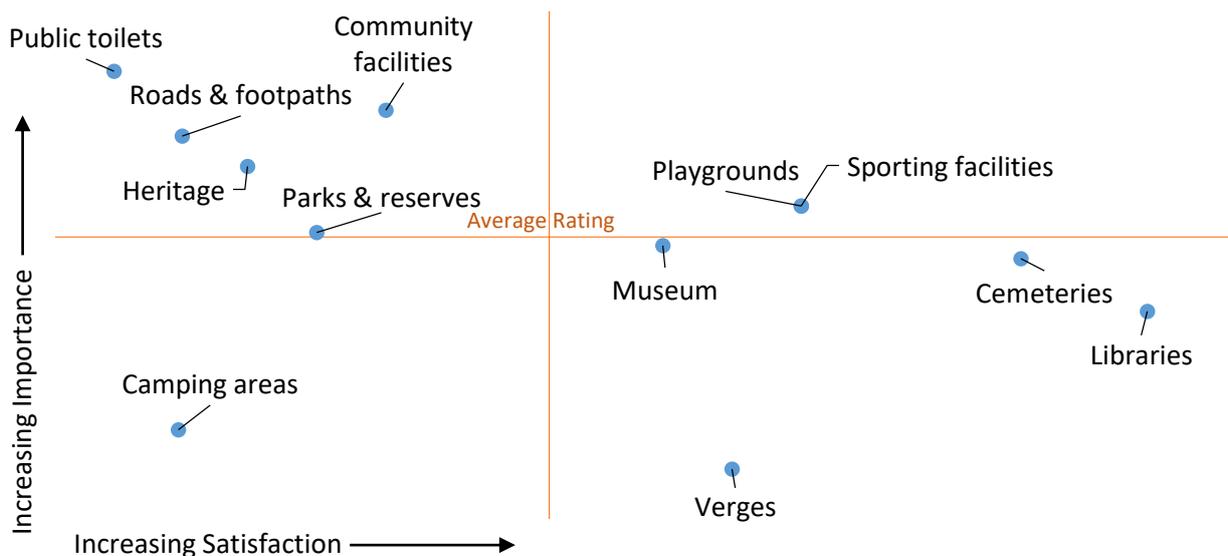
The relative importance and satisfaction of community services is reflected in the chart below, with the level of importance and satisfaction rating of each community service plotted as a blue dot. The orange lines show the average importance (horizontal line) and average satisfaction (vertical line) of the asset.



The facilities and assets showing in the top left quadrant are the services with the highest community priority and lowest level of satisfaction. The Shire is not directly responsible for a number of these services.

Community Facilities

The relative importance and satisfaction of community facilities is reflected in the chart below, with the level of importance and satisfaction rating of each asset service plotted as a blue dot. The orange lines show the average importance (horizontal line) and average satisfaction (vertical line) of the asset.



The facilities and assets showing in the top left quadrant are the asset services with the highest community priority and lowest level of satisfaction.

Aspirations & Values

Our community identified the following aspirations and values which also form the key objectives of the Shire:

- Encourage economic stability and diversity on the Islands
- Provide community facilities and promote social interaction
- Advance Cocos whilst keeping its island character
- Lead in making things happen



Summary of Objectives and Outcomes

The Shire of Cocos (Keeling) Islands delivers services to its community in line with four key objectives set out within this Plan, being: economic, social, environment and civic leadership.

Each of the four objectives has a number of desired outcomes Council is aiming to achieve over the 10+ years of this Plan.

The following table summarises the strategic objectives of achieving the vision and the desired outcomes of working toward these objectives. The tables on the following pages detail the strategies developed to achieve these desired outcomes.

	Objectives	Outcomes
ECONOMIC	<i>Encourage economic stability and diversity on the Islands</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic stability for the Islands Reduced restraints on potential for economic diversity
SOCIAL	<i>Provide community facilities and promote social interaction</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appropriate, well maintained community facilities Increased social interaction between the Islands
ENVIRONMENT	<i>Advance Cocos whilst keeping its island character</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retain the Islands environment Future development is sympathetic to the Islands environment
CIVIC LEADERSHIP	<i>Lead in making things happen</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An engaged Council leading and achieving for the Islands

Economic Objective

Encourage economic stability and diversity on the Islands

Community Feedback

The Cocos (Keeling) Islands community appreciate they live in an incredibly unique and special environment. The community aspires to balance economic growth whilst maintaining the unique built and natural environment.

Given its isolation, access is a critical issue to the Shire of Cocos (Keeling) Islands community. The frequency and cost of transport to the islands has significant impact on the local economy. This is particularly important to residents who rely on access to services, as well as visitors who are essential to support the primary industry, tourism.

Limited availability of housing was the other major restraint on the Islands economy identified by the community.



Economic Opportunities

The Shire of Cocos (Keeling) Islands has a lot to offer, an amazing environment, an attractive climate, a friendly community and a relaxed lifestyle. Maintaining infrastructure which leverages off the attributes of the district for the economic prosperity of the community is key to the Islands' future. Desire to maintain a high level of employment and reduce the level of contract workers was expressed. The unique environment also presents an opportunity to unlock a range of new industries and businesses such as eco-tourism, horticulture, cultural tourism and aquaculture.

Outcomes and Strategies

The following desired outcomes and strategies have been identified as being required to achieve this Objective.

Outcome 1.1 Encourage economic stability for the Islands

- | | |
|-------|--|
| 1.1.1 | Increase employment opportunities for local residents |
| 1.1.2 | Encourage low impact tourism |
| 1.1.3 | Lobby to remove impediments to the Islands economic growth |

Outcome 1.2 Reduced restraints on potential for economic diversity

- | | |
|-------|--|
| 1.2.1 | Increase housing stock for long term rental |
| 1.2.2 | Lobby to reduce cost of freight and air services |

Social Objective

To provide community facilities and promote social interaction

Community Feedback

Maintaining the Islands traditional culture and sense of community is viewed as highly important along with the low crime level and safe community.

Due to the Islands remote location, maintaining an adequate standard of community services requiring skilled professionals such as health is challenging.



Social Opportunities

An increase in residential housing availability was identified as a priority on Home Island to help alleviate the number of people living in each home.

An increase of interisland activities and events was identified as desirable. In aiding the preservation of the Islands cultural heritage, cultural awareness training is viewed as an opportunity for both residents and visitors to the Islands.



Outcomes and Strategies

The following desired outcomes and strategies have been identified as being required to achieve this Objective.

Outcome 2.1 Appropriate, well maintained community facilities

- | | |
|-------|---|
| 2.1.1 | Maximise usage of current facilities |
| 2.1.2 | Reduce the ongoing cost of maintaining community facilities |
| 2.1.3 | Maintain the cultural heritage |

Outcome 2.2 Increased social interaction on the Islands

- | | |
|-------|---|
| 2.1.1 | Increase inter-island social and sports interaction |
|-------|---|

Environment Objective

To advance Cocos whilst keeping its island character

Community Feedback

The community highly values its natural assets and is committed to help protect the natural environment in to the future.

The community are clearly proud of their natural environment and would like to continue to nurture a strong sense of stewardship amongst the local residents, businesses and visitors to actively engage and support future environmental initiatives and improvements.

Key services that support protection of the environment were also highlighted as ongoing issues, such as recycling and waste management.



Environmental Opportunities

The Shire has a great opportunity to attract and retain families, visitors and investment to the Islands. Planning to ensure there is adequate consideration of the social and environmental impacts of future development, is required to achieve balanced growth for the community, whilst protecting and enhancing the natural environment and community lifestyle.

Opportunities to improve the built environment exist, increasing amenities and accommodation for more small businesses.

Outcomes and Strategies

The following desired outcomes and strategies have been identified as being required to achieve this Objective.

Outcome 3.1	Retain the Islands environment
3.1.1	Increase the environmental credentials of the Islands
3.1.2	Protect the Islands environment
3.1.3	Minimise coastal erosion
Outcome 3.2	Future development is sympathetic to the Islands environment
3.2.1	Maintain and develop infrastructure in-line with community needs and the Islands environment
3.2.2	Develop and maintain infrastructure within the resource capability of the Shire

Civic Leadership Objective

Lead in making things happen

Community Feedback

The Cocos Keeling Islands community values its welcoming and friendly community, along with the low crime and safe environment. In order to retain these important traits, the community acknowledge unity is essential.

A confusing legislative environment arising from the unique legislative arrangements between the three levels of government was highlighted by the community.



Civic Leadership Opportunities

This Strategic Community Plan aims to provide the mechanism for us to ensure services delivered are aligned to our community's expectations. The Shire aims to continue to strive to be forward thinking, have strong representation and provide good leadership to the community. By proactively communicating and acknowledging local feedback the Shire aims to deliver services representative of the community's aspirations.

In addition to focusing on continually improving our quality of service, we will work to leverage partnerships and greater collaboration. We will maximise our efforts to advocate and lobby for funding, resources and better services and to attract investment.

Assisting the community by providing information to assist them to navigate the unique legislative arrangements of the Islands whilst lobbying for the rationalisation of legislative arrangements provides leadership opportunities to the Shire.

Outcomes and Strategies

The following desired outcomes and strategies have been identified as being required to achieve this Objective.

Outcome 4.1 An informed Council leading working with others to advance our Islands

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| 4.1.1 | To provide leadership to the community |
| 4.1.2 | Continue to improve organisational planning |

Services and Facilities

Services undertaken and facilities provided by the Shire are linked with the relevant strategy of the Strategic Community Plan below. The table provides a connection between the services and facilities and the strategies to achieve the desired outcomes an community vision for the Shire of Cocos (Keeling) Islands.

Shire Services	Associated Strategies
Verges Komeng jalan	3.2.1
Libraries	2.1.1
Playgrounds	2.1.1
Heritage Warisan	2.1.3
Council's customer service Pelayanan pelanggan Council	4.1.1 4.1.2
Financial management Pengurusan Keuangan	4.1.2
Vehicle licensing services Pelayanan Lesen Kereta-kereta	4.1.1
Support for volunteers Sokongan untuk voluntir	4.1.1
Cemeteries Kuburan	3.2.1
Museum	2.1.3
Community engagement Pertalian Masyarakat	4.1.1
Ranger services Serbis ranger	3.1.2
Vegetation management Pengurusan pokok-pokok	3.1.2
Townscape presentation Persembahan perkampungan	4.1.2
Cyclone shelter Rumah seklon	2.1.1
Health inspections Pemeriksaan Kesihatan	3.1.2
Youth services Pelayanan Muda-mudi	2.2.1 4.1.1
Building control Pengurusan pembangunan	3.1.3
Street lighting Lampu jalan	3.2.1
Parks & reserves Parks & tanah simpanan	2.1.1
General refuse management Pengurusan sampah umum	3.1.1
Childcare, playgroup, maternal & infant services Pelayanan childcare, playgroup, kehamilan & bayi	2.1.1
Camping areas Kawasan Camping	1.1.2 2.1.1
Public toilets Bilik ayer untuk umum	2.1.1
Community facilities Fasiliti masyarakat	2.1.1
Tourism support Sokongan pelancongan	1.1.2
Aged and disabled services Pelayanan Orang tua dan cacat	2.1.1
Economic development	1.1.1 1.1.2 1.1.3
Drainage, stormwater and flood management Pengurusan buangan ayer, ayer ribut & banjir	3.1.3
Environmental initiatives Tindakan environmental	3.1.1
Long term planning Rancangan Masa Hadapan	4.1.2
Coastal protection Penjagaan pantai	3.1.3
Telecommunications	4.1.1
Small business development Perkembangan bisnis-bisnis kecil	1.1.2
Roads & footpaths Jalan & footpaths	3.2.1 2.1.3
Sporting facilities Fasiliti permainan	2.1.1
Community events support	2.2.1 4.1.1

Resource Capacity

This Strategic Community Plan was developed with an understanding of our current resource capacity, both financial, workforce and asset resources. Whilst future resource capacity is not currently known, expectations of relative future resource capacity were considered.

Current Resource Capacity

At the 30 June 2015, the Shire had the following resource profile.²

Resource	Level
Workforce	26 FTE
Infrastructure Assets	\$5,883,139
Property, Plant and Equipment	\$25,354,196
Cash Backed Reserves	\$2,288,432
Borrowings	Nil
Annual Rates Revenue	\$336,219
Annual Revenue	\$3,990,947
Annual Expenditure	\$3,729,298

Future Resource Capacity

Future resource capacity is largely dependent on other levels of governments; however, the following long term trends are expected in each resource level.

Resource	Relative Future Level
Workforce	Stable – Increase in local temporary workers where possible
Infrastructure Assets	Stable
Property, Plant and Equipment	Stable
Cash Backed Reserves	Stable
Borrowings	Nil
Annual Rates Revenue	Stable
Annual Revenue	Stable
Annual Expenditure	Stable

² Annual Financial Report 2014-15

Measuring Success

The aim of this Plan is to align the community’s visions and aspirations for the future of Shire of Cocos (Keeling) Islands to the Shire’s objectives. These objectives will be measured by both quantifiable and non-quantifiable outcomes.

Key performance measures provide an indication of whether the Shire is meeting the objectives and will be monitored and reported. The measures for each objective are provided in the table below.

	Objectives	Key Performance Measures
ECONOMIC	<i>Encourage economic stability and diversity on the Islands</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of active job seekers on the islands
SOCIAL	<i>To provide community facilities and promote social interaction</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage spent of budget on recreation, culture and community amenities
ENVIRONMENT	<i>To advance Cocos whilst keeping its island character</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of initiatives undertaken
CIVIC LEADERSHIP	<i>Lead in making things happen</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community awareness of elected members Level of grant funding received

References and Acknowledgements

Acknowledgement and a thank you is made to the people of the Shire of Cocos (Keeling) Islands for their time and effort in being a part of our community engagement and for their invaluable input into our Strategic Community Plan.

The Shire of Cocos (Keeling) Islands Strategic Community Plan 2016-2026, 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 Plan. Much of the information contained in this 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 was made during the preparation of the Plan:

Shire of Cocos (Keeling) Islands Strategic Community Plan 2013;

Council Website: www.shirec.cc ;

Cocos (Keeling) Islands Visitors Centre Website: www.cocoskeelingislands.com.au ;

Australian Bureau of Statistics; and

Shire of Cocos (Keeling) Islands Annual Financial Report 2014-15.

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