



# **BETWEEN A ROCK AND A HARD PLACE**

**NORTH BURNETT REGIONAL COUNCIL  
INFORMATION SESSIONS**



# Goals

- 1 You will leave with an understanding why we've named the tour "Between a Rock and Hard Place"
- 2 You will be inspired to help us (council), help us (community).



# Doing what we said we would do

## Where to from here?

### January 2021

Councillors review Service Delivery Report and community engagement findings.

### February 2021

Budget deliberations using data from service delivery review and community engagement findings.

### March 2021

Councillors undertake prioritisation workshops and start drafting Corporate Plan.

### April to May 2021

Release draft budget for community comment.

### June 2021

Endorse:

- Corporate Plan
- Operational Plan 2021-2022
- Budget 2021-2022





# 5 Principles of Local Government

- 1 Transparent and effective processes, and decision-making in the public interest
- 2 Sustainable development and management of assets and infrastructure, and delivery of effective services
- 3 Democratic representations, social inclusion and meaningful community engagement
- 4 Good governance of, and by, local government
- 5 Ethical and legal behaviour of councillors, local government employees and councillor advisors



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# How do we gauge public interest?

What you told us: **Top 10 Important Topics**



Servicing of  
Facilities



Water  
Security



Roads and  
Bridges



Supporting  
Seniors



Disaster  
Management



Industry



All Abilities  
Access



Parks and  
Playgrounds



Tourism



Customer  
Service

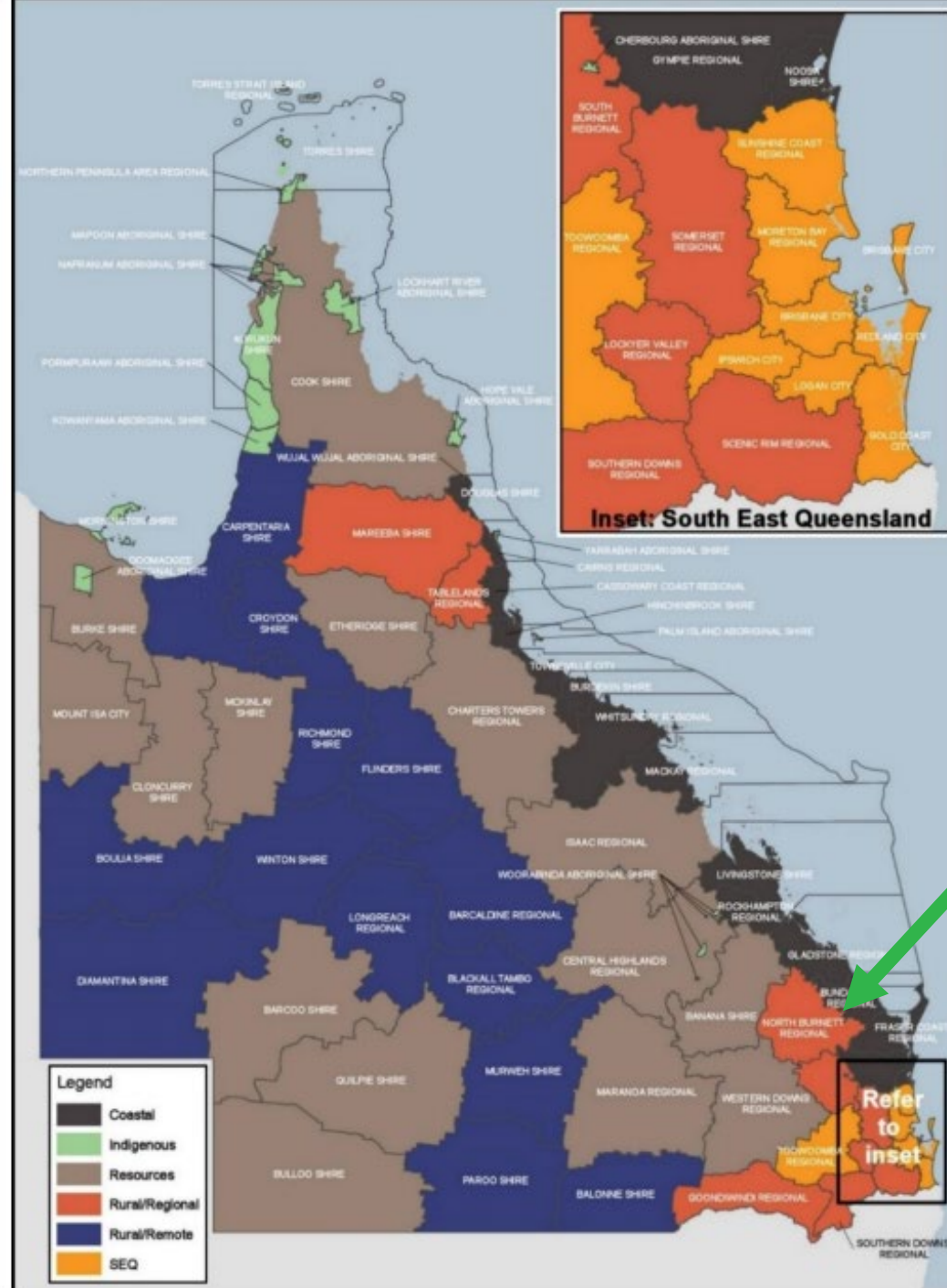


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**Manage  
costs within  
the revenue  
you can earn.**

The same rules apply to all councils, but each council has different earning capacity and needs.



1/3 are at a high risk of being financial unsustainable



# Example: Variation in capacity to earn rates

Mt Isa	Compared with	North Burnett
6500 ratepayers		6287 ratepayers
\$43.4m Rates & Levies		\$17.9M Rates & Levies
476m Assets		1.1 B Assets
10.8m Grants from State and Federal		13.4m Grants from State and Federal
Resource council		Regional/Rural council



# Grant Funding

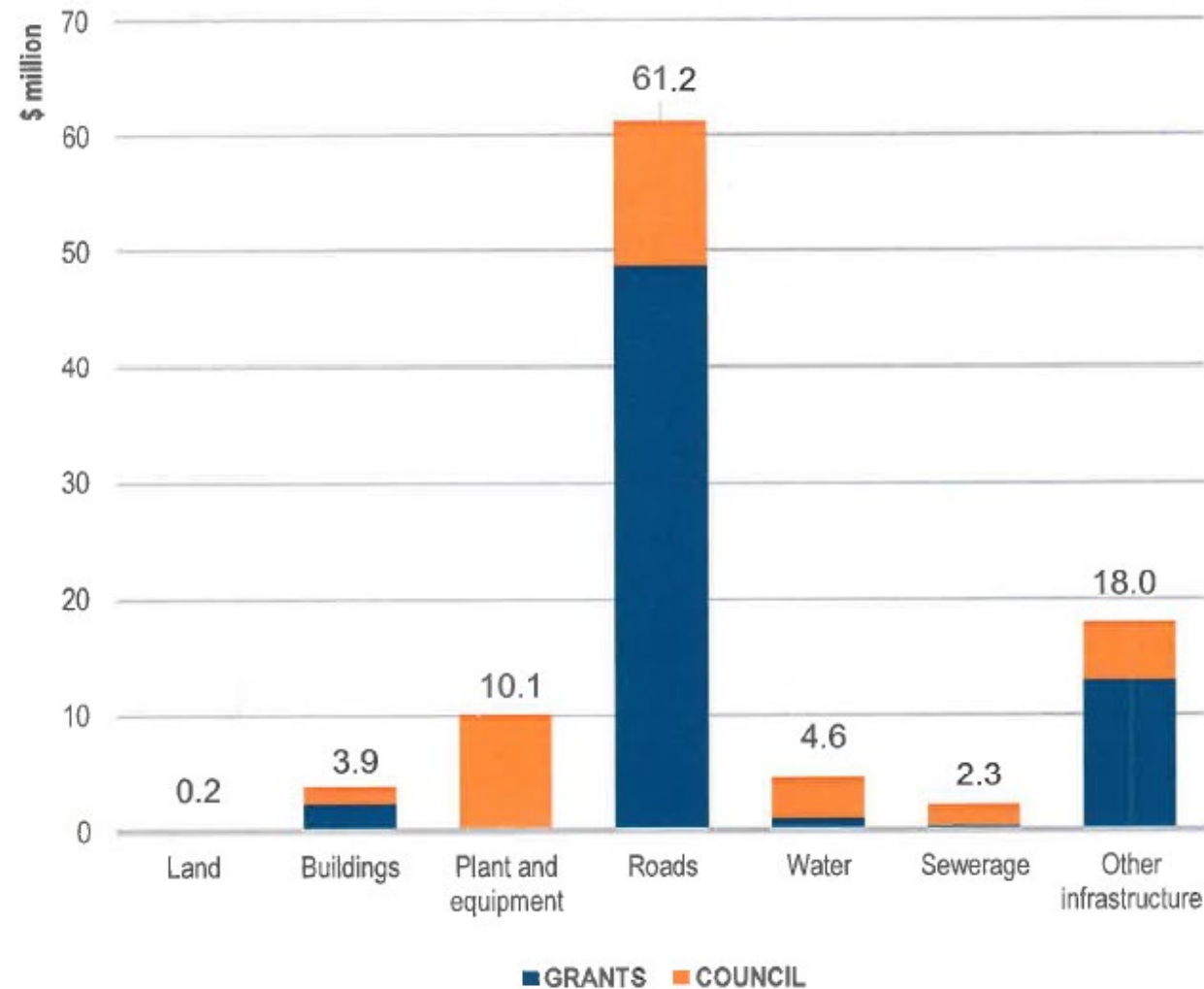


## **Money from State and Federal Governments:**

- Can only be spent on what they stipulate;
- Usually comes with a 50/50 funding requirement;
- Needs to have a business case which can cost \$50-\$100k;
- Not guaranteed you will be a winner (77 QLD/537 Aust); and
- Not guaranteed year on year (so you can't budget for it)

**Grant funding is significant for us!**

# Capital Spend 2016-2019





# Our annual revenue (what we earn)

## Income 19/20

Rates, Levies and Charges

Fees and Charges

Sales Revenue

Grants, Subsidies & Contributions

Interest & Other Income

## Amount

\$18 million

\$1 million

\$4 million

\$13 million

\$ 2 million

**\$38 million**

**1% rate rise =  
\$95,000 in  
extra revenue**

**“Common”  
“Wealth”  
0.45% to 1%  
Federal Assistance  
Grants = \$9m**





# Our annual revenue (what we spend)

<b>Expenses 19/20</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Employee Costs	\$15 million
Materials & Services	\$14 million
Finance Costs	\$ 1 million
Depreciation	\$14 million
	<b>\$44 million</b>

**33% is  
Depreciation**

**Meaning we  
have a lot of  
assets to  
replace!**



# All the services we currently deliver to the community

**Aerodromes**



**Caravan Parks**

**Cemeteries**



**Community  
Development**

**Arts and Culture**

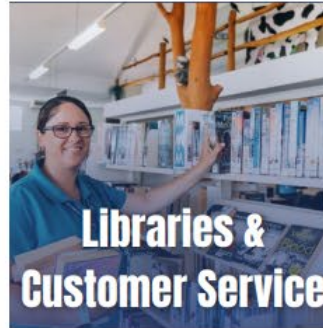


**Museums,  
Historical  
Societies and  
Art Galleries**

**Community Bus**  
North Burnett Transport  
Service



**Council  
Housing**



**Libraries &  
Customer Service**

**Media and  
Communication**



**Building and  
Planning**



**Economic  
Development**

**Elected  
Members**

**Governance**



**Information  
Communication  
& Technology**

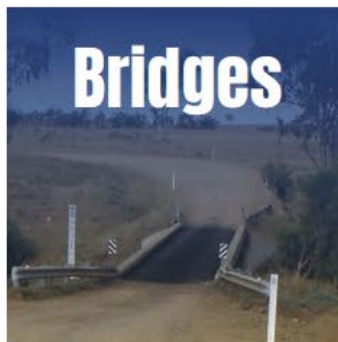
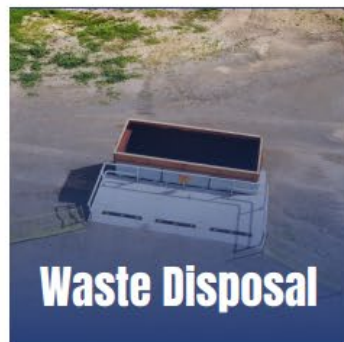
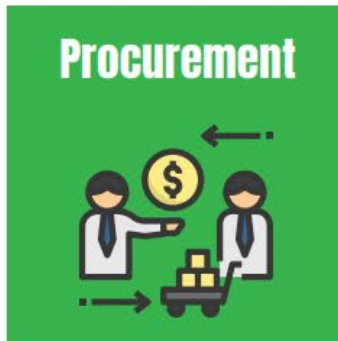
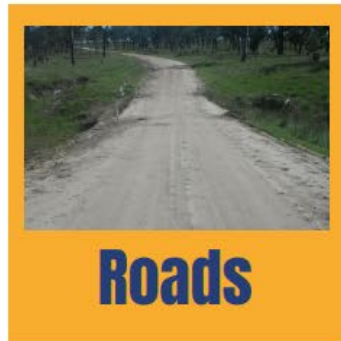
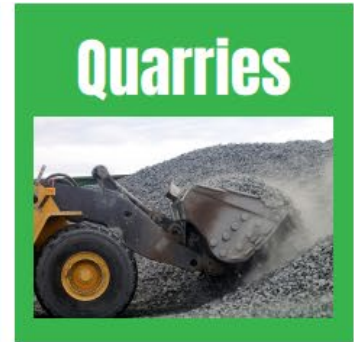
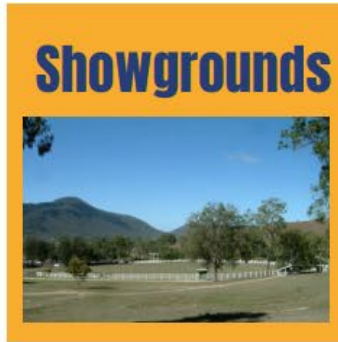
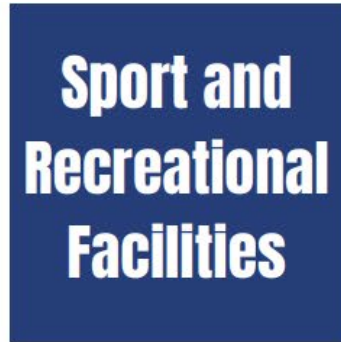
**Environmental  
Services**



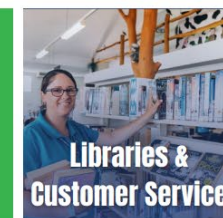
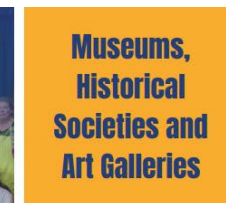
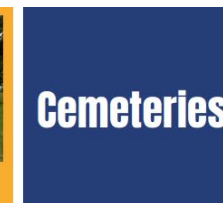
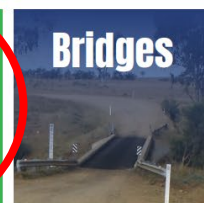
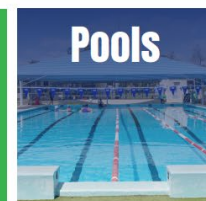
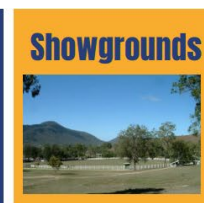
**Financial  
Services**

**Compliance &  
Public Safety**

# And there's more...





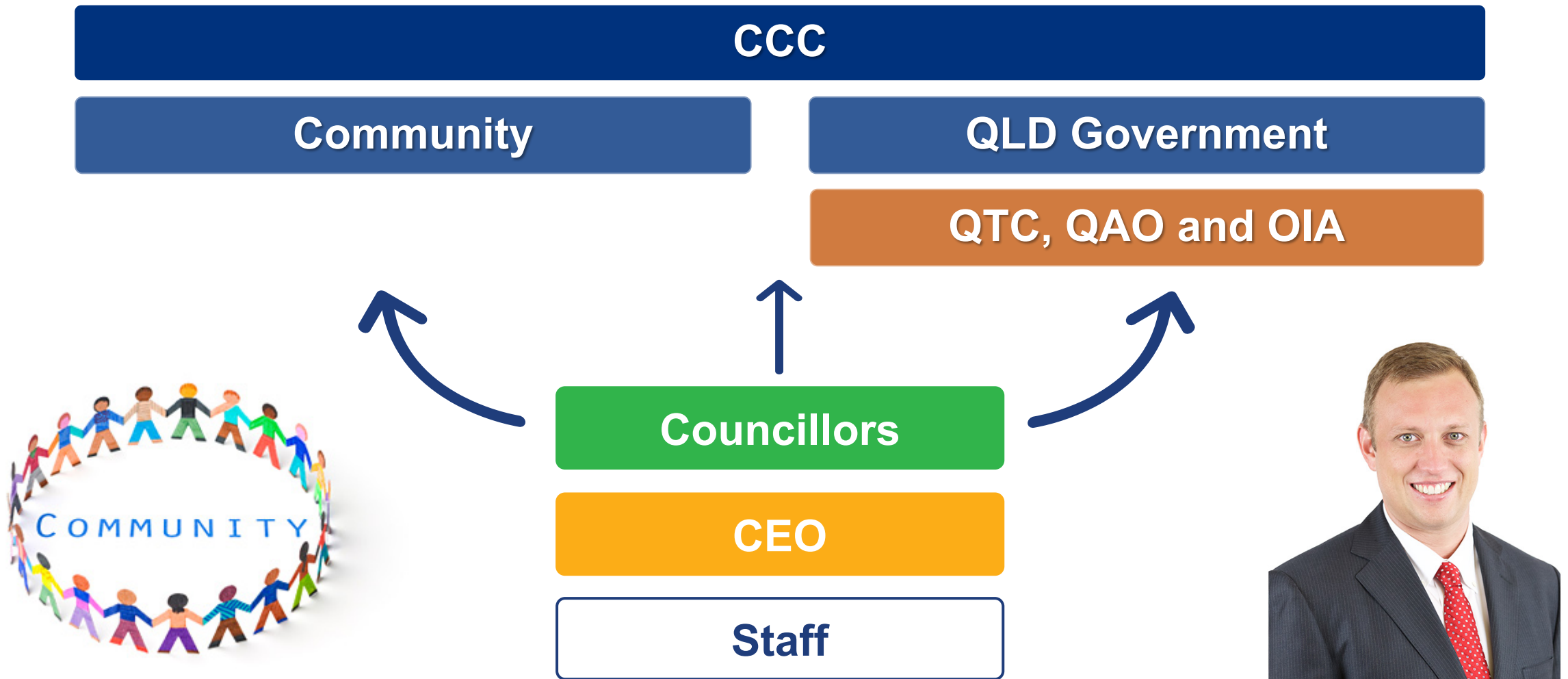




# Questions for the State & Federal Gov

As a Queenslander and an Australian taxpayer, should the ability to deliver services be reliant on the number of ratepayers within a geographic area?

# Who is the boss?





# Goals

- 1 You will leave with an understanding why we've named the tour "Between a Rock and Hard Place"
- 2 You will be inspired to help us (council), help us (community).



# The Rock and the Hard Place



**We are stuck  
between two  
equally important  
principles which  
oppose each  
other.**

**Which one wins?**





# I know what you're thinking...

- There goes ten minutes of my life I won't get back.
- It used to be so much better/easier when we were individual councils.
- What on earth have these clowns been doing?
- Why did I agree to come tonight?





# The Journey So Far

**Amalgamation**

**Budget Cuts (by State & Federal)**

**Cyclones (and Camels)**



# The Journey So Far

**Amalgamation**

**Budget Cuts (by State & Federal)**

**Cyclones (and Camels)**

# We had financial issues before amalgamating

## 4. Financial sustainability

Each local government is rated in the Financial Sustainability Review by Queensland Treasury Corporation as follows:

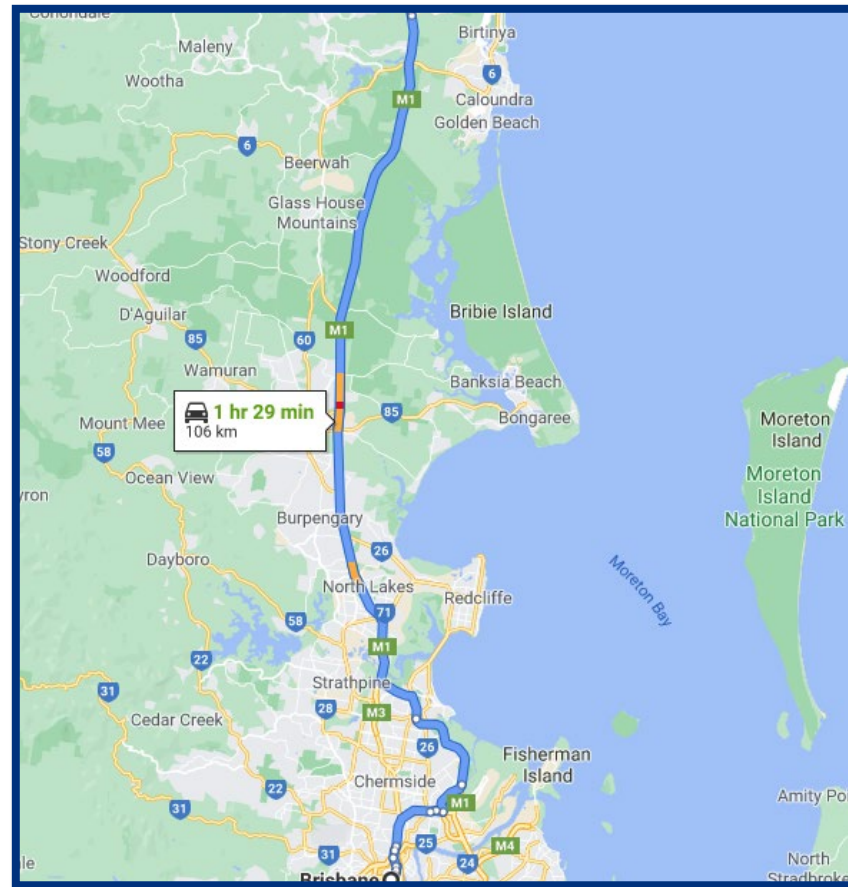
- Biggenden Shire Council – moderate (neutral);
- Eidsvold Shire Council – weak (developing);
- Gayndah Shire Council – weak (developing);
- Monto Shire Council – weak (developing);
- Mundubbera Shire Council – very weak (negative); and
- Perry Shire Council – moderate (neutral).

Local Government Reform Commission

NEW LOCAL GOVERNMENT		PREVIOUS LOCAL GOVERNMENTS					
Name	North Burnett Regional Council	Biggenden Shire Council	Eidsvold Shire Council	Gayndah Shire Council	Monto Shire Council	Mundubbera Shire Council	Perry Shire Council
Class	Regional	Shire	Shire	Shire	Shire	Shire	Shire
Size	19,708 sq km	1,316 sq km	4,809 sq km	2,709 sq km	4,322 sq km	4,193 sq km	2,359 sq km
Population 2006	10,668	1,589	917	2,906	2,480	2,330	446
Population 2026	10,656	1,635	848	2,861	2,366	2,448	498
Electors 2007	7,079	1,115	619	1,918	1,761	1,364	302
Electoral arrangements	Undivided 6 councillors plus mayor	Undivided 6 councillors plus mayor	Undivided 4 councillors plus mayor	Undivided 6 councillors plus mayor	Divided 7 councillors plus mayor	Undivided 8 councillors plus mayor	Undivided 4 councillors plus mayor
Electors per councillor excluding mayor	1,179	185	154	319	251	170	75
Total operating revenue financial year 2006	\$32 million	\$4 million	\$7 million	\$7 million	\$6 million	\$5 million	\$3 million
Annual capital expenditure financial year 2007 - 2015	\$8 million	\$2 million	\$1 million	\$1 million	\$2 million	\$1 million	\$1 million
Total assets at 30 June 2006	\$427 million	\$70 million	\$44 million	\$59 million	\$173 million	\$54 million	\$27 million
Debt at 30 June 2006	\$1 million	Nil	Nil	minor	\$1 million	Nil	Nil
Community equity at 30 June 2006	\$423 million	\$70 million	\$44 million	\$57 million	\$171 million	\$54 million	\$27 million



# Fairness? Equality?





# B is for

Amalgamation

**Budget Cuts (by State & Federal)**

Cyclones





# Timeline of Budget Cuts

- |             |  |
|-------------|--|
| <b>2008</b> | Baseline funding of Federal Grants removed costing the amalgamated Council \$1 million |
| <b>2008</b> | Loss of water and waste water funding (up to 75% subsidised previously)                |
| <b>2013</b> | Loss of Road Contracts   |
| <b>2014</b> | Loss from Federal Gov (freezes Federal Assistance Grant)                               |
| <b>2019</b> | Lost ability to borrow   |



# C is for

Amalgamation

Budget Cuts (by State & Federal)

**Cyclones (and Camels)**



# Cyclones

<b>2011</b>	Cyclone Tasha & Anthony. Disaster declared flooding event.
<b>2013</b>	Cyclone Oswald. Disaster declared flooding event.
<b>2015</b>	Cyclone Marcia. Disaster declared flooding event
<b>2016</b>	Central QLD Surface Trough. Disaster declared flooding event.
<b>2017</b>	Cyclone Debbie. Disaster declared flooding event.
<b>2017</b>	Central Coast QLD Severe Weather event.

**\$166 million in Disaster Funding**





# Budget Cuts + Cyclones

- 2008** Baseline funding of Federal Grants removed costing the amalgamated Council \$1 million
- 2008** Loss of water and waste water funding (up to 75% subsidised previously).
- 2011** Cyclone Tasha & Anthony. Disaster declared flooding event.
- 2013** Loss of Road Contracts
- 2013** Cyclone Oswald. Disaster declared flooding event.
- 2014** Loss from Federal Gov (freezes Federal Assistance Grant).
- 2015** Cyclone Marcia. Disaster declared flooding event.
- 2016** Central QLD Surface Trough. Disaster declared flooding event.
- 2017** Cyclone Debbie. Disaster declared flooding event.
- 2017** Central Coast QLD Severe Weather event.
- 2019** Lost ability to borrow and end of flood money.

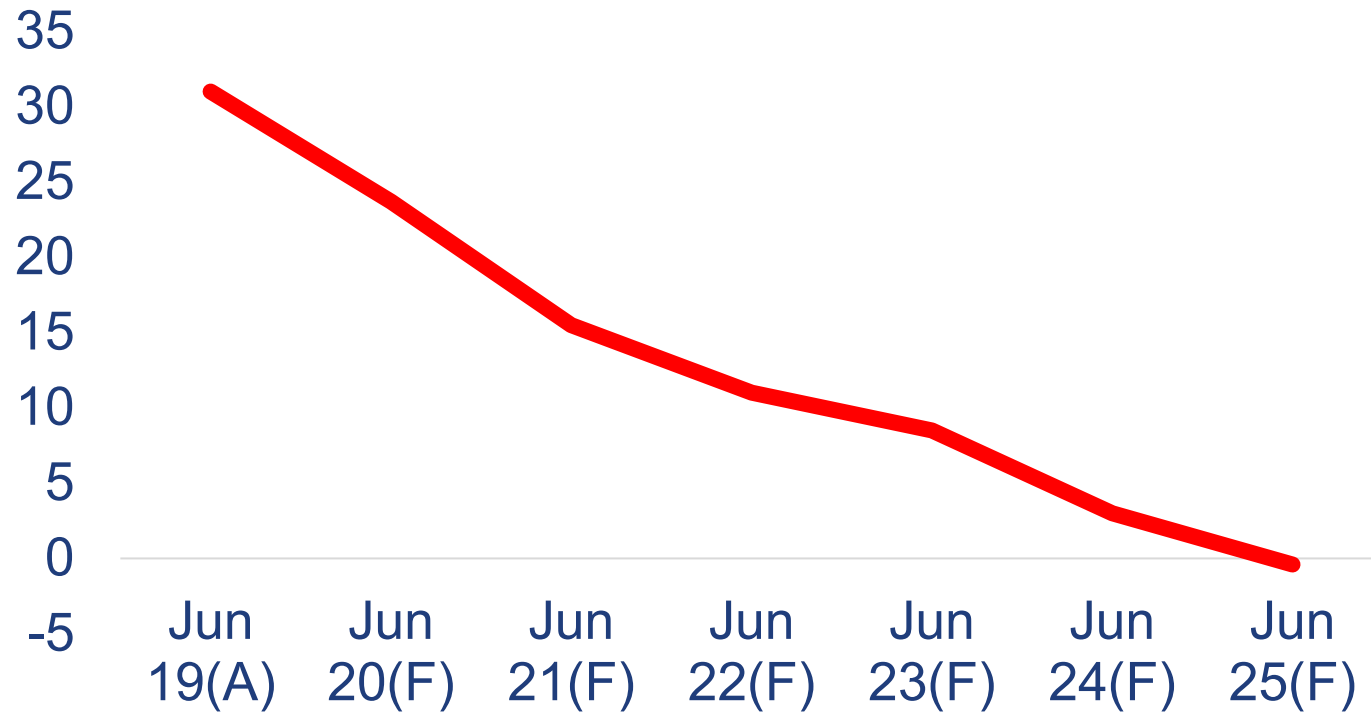
# Camels – 2019 no more borrowings

- 1 Increasing operating deficits
- 2 Heavy reliance on grants
- 3 Stagnant, ageing rate payer base
- 4 Limited ability to generate additional revenue
- 5 Lack of reliability in Asset Management Frameworks
- 6 Natural Disasters

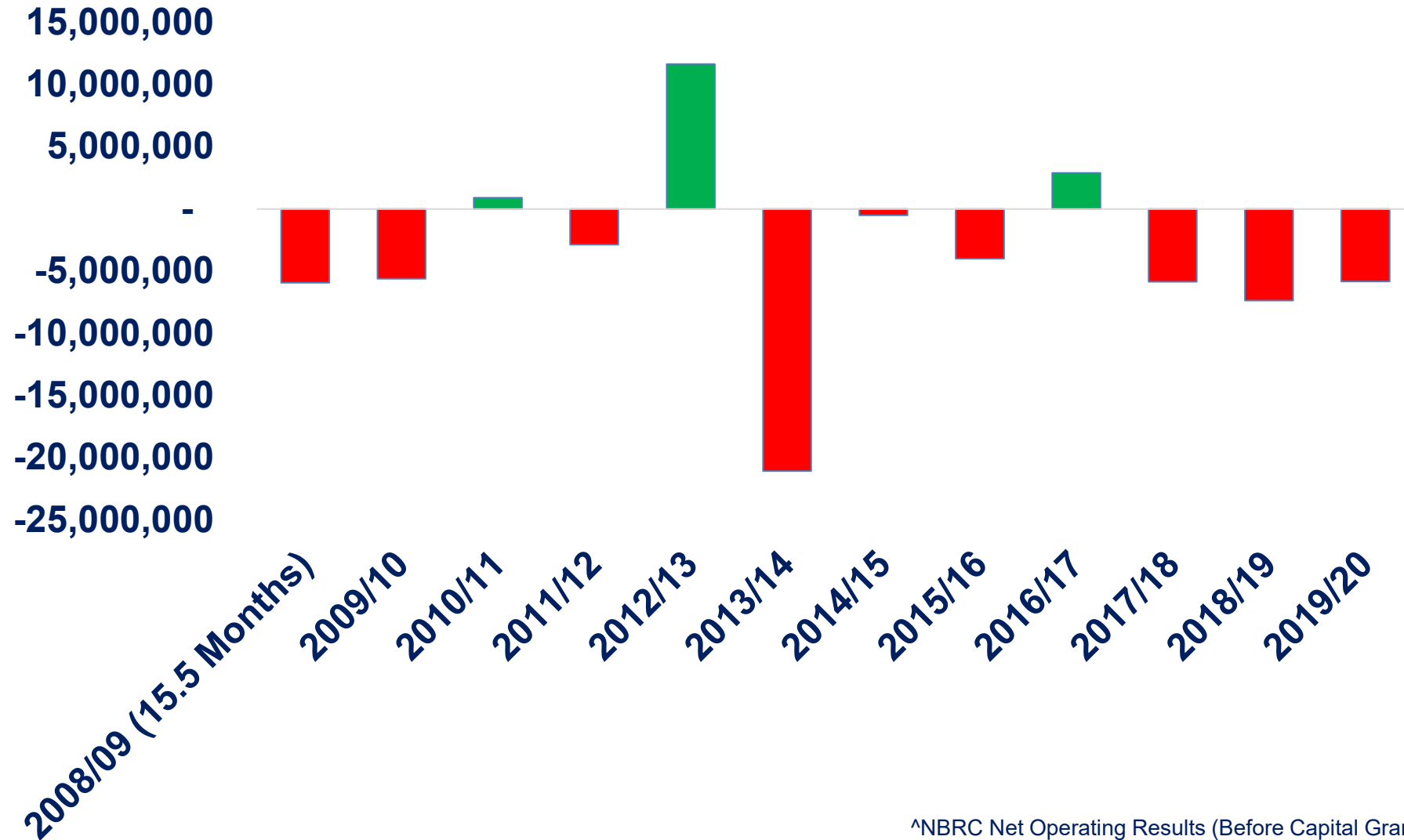


# 2019 Projections

## 2019 NBRC Cash Projections (\$ million)



# How long have we been in deficit?



- Borrow – we can't
- Dip into cash
- Rates rise (78% to break even)
- Decrease expenses

<sup>^</sup>NBRC Net Operating Results (Before Capital Grants and Contributions) For the Years 2008-09 to 2019/20

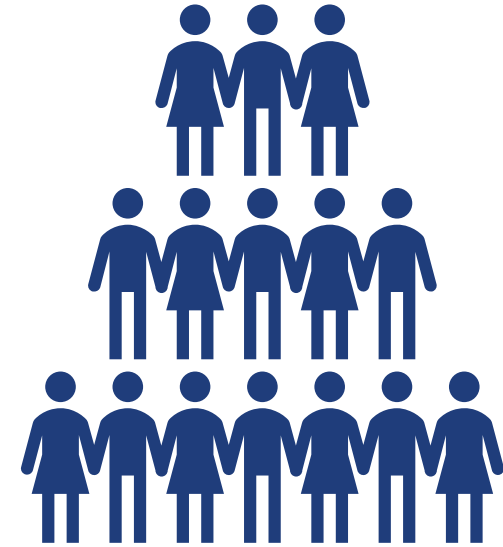
# Keep in mind...

We need to be efficient.

We need to engage with staff.

We need to consider our legal and  
moral obligations.

*Council is the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest employer in  
the region.*

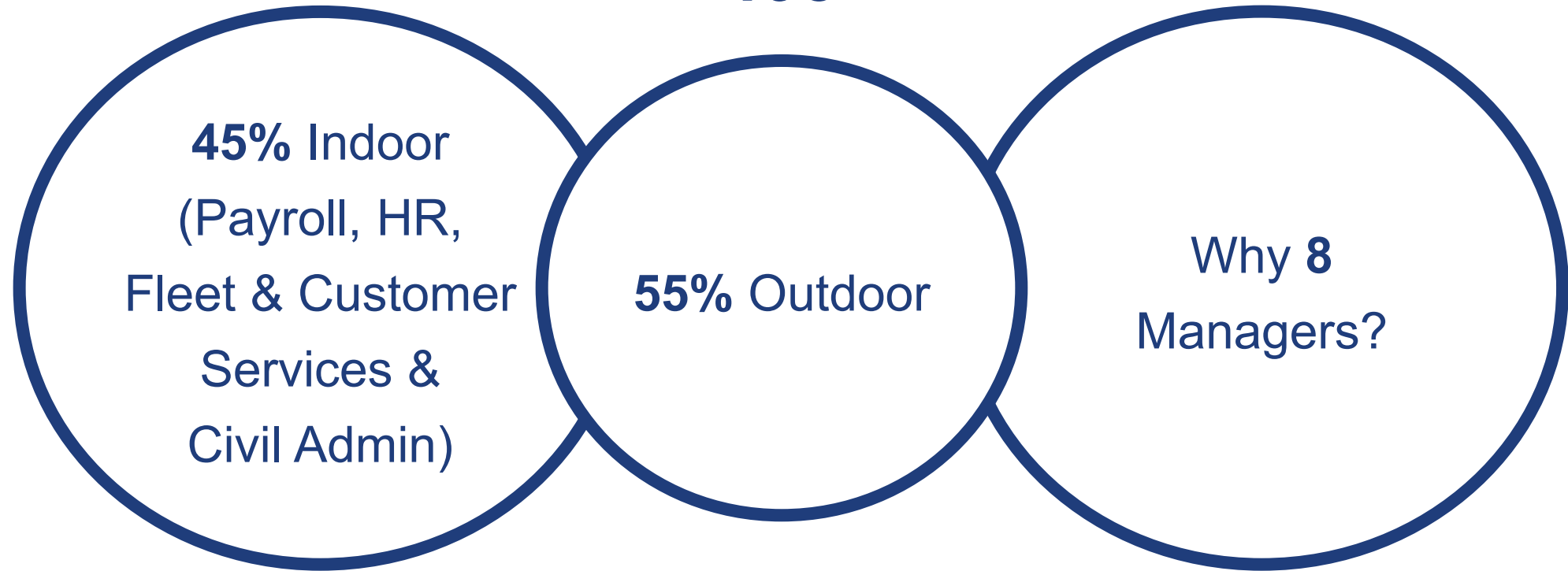






# Bust a Myth

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# How do we create a region for generations?

**Challenging the Status Quo/Civic Duty**

**Business Improvement**

**Advocacy**

# How do we create a region for generations?

**Challenging the Status Quo/Civic Duty**

Business Improvement

Advocacy

# Challenging the Status Quo

We don't have a choice but to consider all our options.





# Key Service Change Proposals

- 1 Pools
- 2 Waste
- 3 Customer Service & Libraries
- 4 Civil Works Grading of Roads/Road Maintenance
- 5 What do we mow?
- 6 A consistent model for Showgrounds





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# The Status Quo

## Status Quo

- All pools will need to be replaced in the next 10 years at a cost of more \$8 million
- 3 need replacing in next 5 years
- 2 in the next 10 years
- We operate 5 pools with no revenue to Council
- Community consultation ranked in bottom 10 of importance
- 5 pools cost us more than \$650,000 each year just to operate

## Interesting info

- State has a commitment - every primary school child will have access to swimming lessons.
  - Gayndah and Eidsvold pools are both in the best condition
- 



# What can we do?

Options	Consequence to Community	Consequence to Council
1. Continue to run the 5 pools across the region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No change to service.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We need \$650K each year just to run them until they need to be replaced.</li></ul>
2. Maintain 2 pools in Gayndah and Eidsvold (which are in best condition) run other 3 pools until they need to be replaced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Travel to access closest pool</li><li>• Public transport issues</li><li>• Swimming clubs impacted</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Savings</li><li>• We need more than \$4m to maintain 3 pools (Biggenden, Monto, Mundubbera) within the next 5 years.</li><li>• We need more than \$4m to maintain 2 further pools (Gayndah &amp; Eidsvold) within the next 10 years.</li></ul>
2. Only operate 2 pools in the region (Gayndah and Eidsvold)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Travel to access closest pool</li><li>• Public transport issues</li><li>• Swimming clubs impacted</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• As above</li></ul>

# Engage your civic duty

## 1. Provide feedback:

- What does this service currently mean to you, your family and/or your business?
- What can you suggest to help us plan for future generations?

## 2. How do you share?

- Write to your State Member and State Minister
- Support our petition

We even have templates for you!





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# The Status Quo

## Status Quo

- State Government is now committed to a zero waste future. As a result, we must pay the State \$80 per tonne to bury our waste – without any financial support from 2022.
- This will cost our community \$480,000 each year

## Interesting Info

- Inconsistent hours of operation across the region
- Averaging only 4 vehicles an hour across all our sites. The optimum is 10!



# What can we do?

Options	Consequence to Community	Consequence to Council
1. Continue to run waste facilities at current hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increased rates and charges</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Operating costs continue to rise</li></ul>
2. Increased efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consistent hours at Waste Transfer Stations</li><li>• Mundubbera as regional landfill</li><li>• More planning for trips</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Savings</li></ul>



# Waste Proposal

	Current Hours	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	Proposed Hours
Mundubbera	32	8	4	4	4	4	8	Closed	32
Mount Perry	16	Closed	4	Closed	4	Closed	4	Closed	12
Eidsvold	32	Closed	4	Closed	4	Closed	4	Closed	12
Gayndah	32.5	Closed	4	Closed	4	Closed	Closed	4	12
Monto	37	Closed	Closed	4	Closed	4	Closed	4	12
Biggenden	20	Closed	Closed	4	Closed	4	Closed	4	12

**\$150,000 per year in savings**

# Call to Action!

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# The Status Quo

## Status Quo

- Not all centres are busy all the time

## Interesting Info

- Over \$70,000 per year to have 4 centres open for half a day on a Saturday.
- Staffing our 6 customer service centres and libraries full-time costs more than \$1.3 million a year in wages.

# What can we do?

Options	Consequence to Community	Consequence to Council
1. Continue to run 6 customer service and library centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No change to service.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Staffing costs of more than \$1.3 million annually which continues to grow</li></ul>
2. Increased efficiency (change opening days)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Regular level of service</li><li>• Will need to plan their visits</li><li>• Still full days open</li><li>• Can access a service daily within an hour</li><li>• Ability to continue to offer community programs</li><li>• Extra staff in contact centre to field more calls</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Savings of \$377,000 in wages annually</li><li>• Full-time employment opportunities maintained</li></ul>
3. Change Services we Offer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• QGAP possibly delivered by someone else, not Council</li></ul>	

# Proposal to change opening days

	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
Gayndah	7 hrs		7 hrs		7 hrs
Biggenden		7 hrs		7 hrs	

Mundubbera	7 hrs	7 hrs			7 hrs
Eidsvold			7 hrs	7 hrs	

Monto	7 hrs		7 hrs		7 hrs
Mount Perry		7 hrs		7 hrs	

Call Centre	8 hrs	8 hrs	8 hrs	8 hrs	8 hrs
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**Open 8.30am – 11.30am and 12.30pm – 4.30pm**

# Call to Action!

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# The Status Quo

## Status Quo

- We are currently maintaining only 33% of road network every year.
- We have 6,285 rate payers and 12th longest road network in Australia.
- We cannot deliver on expectations from community.

## Interesting Facts

- It costs \$10 million to grade each of our roads once every year.
- That's 2.5 times the budget.
- We use a wet grade method which is ideal but costly and slow, and requires lots of water.



# Some Options

Options	Consequence to Community	Consequence to Council
1. Continue to maintain roads with current equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No change to service and 66% roads left unmaintained</li><li>• Water, roll and grade standard</li><li>• Access to water an ongoing challenge</li><li>• Road network deterioration</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Unable to meet State Government requirements</li><li>• Needs to maintain and replace current equipment</li></ul>
2. Dry Grading (where practical)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• More frequent maintenance across region</li><li>• Everyone sees a grader at least once a year</li><li>• Quicker response time to road defects</li><li>• Ability for staff to attend to other maintenance issues e.g. drainage</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increase in km graded from 1,122km to 6,254km</li><li>• A more mobile workforce</li><li>• Plant savings to Council</li><li>• Lower cost per kilometre</li></ul>



# Call to Action!

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# The Status Quo

## Status Quo

- We currently mow land not owned by us.

## Interesting info

- This doesn't make sense.
- Just the tip of the iceberg.



# Some Options

Options	Consequence to Community	Consequence to Council
1. Continue current mowing schedule	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No change to service and unable to meet community expectations across the region</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Costs continue to blow out during good seasons and workers are stretched</li></ul>
2. Stop mowing for free, land we don't own.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Grass grows and falls back to owner to manage</li><li>• Unsightly grass</li><li>• Vermin</li><li>• Fire risk</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Savings of more than \$300,000 per year and ability for staff to properly maintain key service areas.</li></ul>

**Any transition would require discussions with affected stakeholders.**

# Call to Action!

## 1. Provide feedback:

- Do we have your support to investigate better ways of managing our landscape?





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# The Status Quo

## Status Quo

- We have 3 models across the region and inconsistent levels of service

## Interesting info

Town	Details	Cost to NBRC
Eidsvold	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Council – Rates, water, electricity (shared with Show Society), mowing, gas &amp; repairs.</li></ul>	<b>Over \$65,000 March YTD in costs (mowing limited during drought)</b>
Gayndah	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lease in place until March 2040</li><li>• Council – Rates</li><li>• Show Society - Pay water &amp; state levy and all other upkeep.</li></ul>	
Monto	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lease</li><li>• Council – Rates, water, 1 toilet block and pest control.</li><li>• Show Society - Insure buildings and pay electricity.</li></ul>	
Mt Perry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Council – Rates, water, electricity, mowing, gas and repairs.</li></ul>	
Biggenden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Private – They pay own rates and water</li></ul>	<b>No Cost to Council</b>
Mundubbera	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Private – pay own rates and water</li></ul>	



# Some Options

Needs further investigation and a conversation with  
State Lands Department.

Will require input from all user groups of the facilities.

# Call to Action!

## 1. Provide feedback:

- Do we have your support to investigate better ways of managing our showgrounds?





# Goals

- 1 You will leave with an understanding why we've named the tour "Between a Rock and Hard Place"
- 2 You will be inspired to help us (council), help us (community).



# Civic Duty

1. Sign Petition
2. Send a letter to the State or Federal Government

**We need your help!**

# How did we get there?

Challenging the Status Quo

Business Improvement

Advocacy

# Getting our house in order

- Asset rationalisation – end of life
- Asset revaluation
  - a) Water
  - b) Sewer
  - c) Road infrastructure
- Aerodromes
- Caravan Parks
- Cemeteries
- Community Development & Support
  - a) Community Development Planning and Support
  - b) Community Buildings & Facilities
- Civil
- Cultural Development
  - a) Museums & Historical Societies/Art Galleries
  - b) Community Bus
  - c) Libraries
  - d) RM Williams Centre
- Council Housing
- Customer Service
  - a) Administration
  - b) Media & Comms
- Decrease cap works - small halls
- Development Services
  - a) Development Assessment & Compliance
  - b) Building & Pool Compliance
  - c) Plumbing Services
- Disaster & Emergency Management
- Economic Development
- Elected Members
- Financial Services
- Fleet
  - a) Tyres
  - b) Fuel
- Governance
- ICT
- Land & Habitat Conservation
  - a) Bushland Reserve Management
  - b) Pest Management
  - c) Environment Management
- Local Laws & Public Safety
  - a) Local Laws Education & Compliance
  - b) Public Security – CCTV
  - c) Permits – use of land for commercial and community activities
- Parks & Open Spaces
- People & Culture
  - a) HR Management
  - b) Payroll
  - c) WHS
- Private Certification
- Process Review – needs resourcing
- Procurement
- Public Amenities
- Public Health
- Public Lighting
- Quarries
- Roads
  - a) Local Managed
  - b) RMPC
  - c) RPC
  - d) Bridges
  - e) Car parks
  - f) Road slashing/landscaping
  - g) Drainage (stormwater?)
- Sealed Roads
- Showgrounds
- Sport & Recreational Services
  - a) Gyms
  - b) Pools
  - c) Ovals etc
  - d) Recreational pathways
  - e) Planning, programs & support
- TV Rebroadcasting
- Washdown Bays
- Waste
  - a) Waste collections
  - b) Waste disposals
  - c) Waste Transfer Stations
  - d) Resource recover (including education)
- Water delivery



# How do we get there?

Challenging the Status Quo

Business Improvement

**Advocacy**

(Public support for a particular cause)





# Is this the end of this?

- Absolutely not!
- If we adopted every proposed change here tonight we would still be in deficit by \$5.5 million.



# Engage your Civic Duty



Sign our petition



Hard copy feedback form



Online feedback form



Resource library on our website

[northburnett.qld.gov.au/budget21](http://northburnett.qld.gov.au/budget21)

# Provide your feedback



North Burnett Regional Council  
PO Box 390 / 34 - 36 Capper Street, Gayndah, QLD, 4625



[admin@northburnett.qld.gov.au](mailto:admin@northburnett.qld.gov.au)



1300 MY NBRC (1300 696 272)



Mayor Rachel Chambers / Cr Robbie Radel / Cr Melinda Jones /  
Cr Les Hotz / Cr Susan Payne / Cr Dael Giddins / Cr Michael Dingle



[northburnett.qld.gov.au](http://northburnett.qld.gov.au)