

# **‘Our Island, Our Responsibility’**

## **Shire of Christmas Island Strategic Community Plan 2023-2033**



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## Shire President's Foreward

The Shire of Christmas Island is proud to present the statutory 10 Year Strategic Community Plan '*Our Island, Our Responsibility.*' More than just the provider of municipal services, the local governments in the non self-governing external territories exist in a governance framework that does not include state level representation that Islanders can vote for. In line with this governance arrangements, the local government, serving as the exclusive elected body representing the interests of Christmas Islanders, plays a pivotal role in soliciting feedback concerning state-level service provision and subsequently advocates accordingly on behalf of Christmas Islanders to the Commonwealth for the effective delivery of these services.

With this reality in mind, the local government embarked on a community consultation process with Islanders to have them inform the municipal infrastructure, economic, social, cultural and environmental management goals for Council which are set out in this document.

In addition, the Shire of Christmas Island has joined many other local governments and institutions in Australia in adopting the *United Nations Sustainable Development Goals* in our planning for the future. The 17 UN SDGs align with the modern thinking of governments to ensure our footprint on the world is managed as well as possible, and that our work towards economic and social progress simultaneously addresses things like structural inequality, gender discrimination and poverty reduction.

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We believe in the resilience of Christmas Islanders. We have addressed structural inequality, discrimination and achieved a fair go for all Islanders in the past and now it is time to build on that foundation with prosperity for all with the help of partners near and far. We will determine the fate of the territory and not the territory the fate of the people. As we tread this path, we invite every resident, every stakeholder, and every agency to actively participate in shaping our future.

Your engagement is the lifeblood of our progress.

Together, we can overcome challenges, seize opportunities, and build a resilient, sustainable, and inclusive Christmas Island as we enter a future where for the first time, mining of phosphate may not be a staple of the economy.

Thus every word in this document is a call to action. More than that, it is a promise to leave no one behind, to uphold our responsibilities as caretakers of Christmas Island.

In closing, 'Our Island, Our Responsibility' bears the signature of the Shire of Christmas Island, but it represents the commitment of every individual, family, business, and



community that calls Christmas Island home. It is our collective pledge to honour our past, enrich our present, and secure our future.

As we progress the 10 year plan together, we must remember that our island's future is not a burden; it is a privilege. This is '*Our Island, Our Responsibility,*' and together, Christmas Islanders will shape its destiny.

With warm regards,

Gordon Thomson

President

Shire of Christmas Island



# Introduction to the Strategic Community Plan – *‘Our Island, Our Responsibility.’*

This Shire of Christmas Island (SOCI) *Strategic Community Plan 2023–2033 ‘Our Island, Our Responsibility’* (the SCP) sets out our vision, aspirations and objectives for our Island over the next 10 years and is our principal strategic document for our local government.

This means it will govern all of the work that SOCI undertakes either through

- Direct service delivery
- Partnership arrangements
- Advocacy on behalf of the Island

The direction set through the SCP ensures Council plays its role in advocacy, municipal works, municipal infrastructure and service provision that the community has identified as what it needs for the next decade.

The Shire’s decisions and actions will so work directly towards the achievement of community identified goals and priorities.

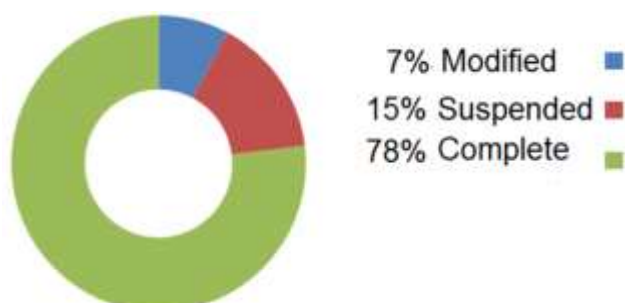
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In the context of its available resources, the SOCI is expected to consider the means of giving effect to community’s aspirations as far as they are realistic, practical, achievable and sustainable.

## 2.0 An Overview of Christmas Island

### 2.1 ‘Plan for the Future – CI 2021 Strategic Community Plan’

The Shire of Christmas Island completed its first 10 Year Strategic Community Plan “*CI 2021: Our Future in Our Hands*” with the following completion rate:





There were 78 Action Items in “*Our Future in Our Hands.*” Council has completed all except 12. Some of these 12 were large scale infrastructure goals for Christmas Island beyond the municipal sphere.

## 2.2 Remoteness

Christmas Island is the summit of a submerged volcanic mountain, rising steeply from the abyssal plains of the Indian Ocean to a central plateau peaking at 361 meters above sea level and covers a total area of 135 km<sup>2</sup>. It is located 350 km south of Java and around 1550 km northwest of the closest point on the Western Australian coast.

It lies 986 km east of the Cocos (Keeling) Islands, 1,327 km south of Singapore, 2,608 km from Perth and 5,184 km from Canberra.

## 2.3 Population

The 2001 Census conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) recorded a population of 1,446. It peaked at the 2011 Census with 2,072 and came down to 1,692 at the 2021 Census mainly due to a decline in local mining jobs and a sharp reduction in immigration activities. The decline trend is on-going with the up-coming generation progressively migrating to the mainland for employment prospects. At the end of 2022 the resident population was estimated at around 1,250 thus bringing it lower than two decades ago.

## 2.4 Cultural Diversity

The cultural diversity of Christmas Island originates from the late nineteenth and early twentieth century with the import of thousands of indentured Chinese, Malays and Sikhs workers to service the phosphate mine. In the 1950’s, whilst the island was administered by the Colony of Singapore, the population further diversified with new mine labourers sourced from Singapore, Malaya, Cocos and mine supervisors from Australia.

In 1958 the sovereignty over the island was transferred from the United Kingdom to Australia and that year Christmas Island became an Australian Territory.

The unique historic ethnic diversity of the island has somewhat perdured and remains a noticeable component of the overall cultural fabric of the island



population. As a measure of cultural diversity, the 2021 Census top responses for language used at home other than English was 18.4% Malay, 13.9% Mandarin, 3.7% Cantonese, 2.1% Min Nan or Hokkien and 1.1% Indonesian.

The 2021 ancestry multiple response variable (country of birth for individuals, mothers and fathers) indicates that the ancestry top responses were 22.2% Chinese, 17% Australian, 16.1% Malay, 12.5% English and 3.8% Indonesian.

The Census also revealed that 46.4% of the respondents had not stated a religious affiliation, 22.1% were affiliated to Islam, 15.2% were affiliated to Buddhism and 7.3% were affiliated to Catholicism. There is no choice in the ABS form for Taoism being the prevailing faith of the Chinese diaspora. This could suggest that the “not stated a religious affiliation” box could include some followers of Taoism on the island.

## 2.5 Work occupation

The 2021 census record for the “employed” in the 15 and over age group in the “place of usual residence” can be broken down in two groups as follow:

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### Group one

Technicians & trade workers 143;

Labourers 105 and

Machinery operators & drivers 80

Total 328 or 42.5% (Australia 28.2%)

### Group two

Managers 100; Professionals 97; Clerical & administrative workers 92;

Community & personal service workers 123 and Sales workers 14.

Total 426 or 55.3% (Australia 70.1%)





## 2.6 Housing

The main tenure of occupied private dwellings excluding visitors at the 2021 Census was:

107 (25.4%) owned outright, 63 (14.9%) owned with mortgage and 204 (48%) rented. The rental market was by far the dominant segment set well above Western Australia at 27.3% and 30.6% Australia wide.

The Commonwealth owns a total of 119 public housing dwellings. Approximately 100 of these are occupied by eligible tenants at any given time whilst the balance is under maintenance/renovation and or re-assigned to public servants.

As is the case on the mainland, the island is also experiencing some challenges in terms of housing affordability in particular with the low-income earners in the 18 to 45 age group.

In March 2022 the Shire initiated a Housing Stress Survey utilising the ABS definition of housing stress i.e. “households that spend more than 30% of their gross income on housing costs”

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The survey comprised a questionnaire (81 respondents) and the facilitation of a workshop (38 attendees).

Overall 55% or 27 out of the 49 people who were rent payers in the survey were experiencing housing stress.

## 2.7 Major Industries

Phosphate mining and Immigration detention are the main drivers of the island economy and are experiencing a measurable contraction of their respective employment base. Notwithstanding the benefit of attracters of international significance, tourism remains peripheral in terms of economic contribution.

### Phosphate mining

Phosphate mining has been the historic mainstay of the island’s economy. In the 1950s, at the peak of steam locomotion, the mine operation involved a



workforce estimated at several thousand representing the overwhelming majority of the island workforce.

In 1987 when the Commonwealth operated mine closed the population declined significantly with people having to leave the Island to access redundancy payments. However, after a two- and half-year campaign by the Union of Christmas Island Workers and the community Phosphate Resources Limited (PRL) was created and has been successfully operating the mine for over 32 years.

Since that time the mine's production has grown from 56,480 MT in 1991 to a peak of 750,000 MT in 2008. Recent production is averaging around 500,000 MT.

In November 2018, the Indian Ocean Territories Regional Development Organisation's '*Our Christmas Island 2030*' Strategic Plan stated: "CIP operations are only likely to continue into the late 2020s. Currently, the main operations of CIP employ around 130 personnel and PRL's subsidiaries around 43."

In March 2023, according to PRL, the employment breakdown of PRL and subsidiaries companies is 130 and 60 respectively.

PRL was seeking the granting of additional mining areas to be assessed under the Christmas Island Strategic Assessment (CISA) in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999. However the CISA was put on pause in June 2023 by the Minister for Territories the Hon. Kristy McBain MP<sup>1</sup>.

#### Detention Services

According to the Immigration Department the Immigration Detention Centre (IDC) had experienced its peak of activity in June 2013 with 2950 "irregular maritime arrivals" being held. Around that time the activities associated with the IDC provided up to 500 jobs, both directly and indirectly for residents, short term contracts (12 months to 2 years) and fly- in-fly out positions.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://minister.infrastructure.gov.au/mcbain/media-release/update-christmas-island-strategic-assessment>



The 2016 Census indicated 108 respondents on the island having jobs associated with the Detention industry.

By October 2018, following a change in Commonwealth policy, the IDC was put in 'hot contingency' where the asset was no longer holding any detainee and kept in operating mode by a local workforce of around 30 to respond effectively to future unforeseeable Commonwealth need.

In August 2020, the Australian Government lifted the hot contingency and the IDC re-opened to relieve capacity pressure experienced across the detention network on the mainland due to required Covid-19 distancing measures.

The ease of the pandemic restrictions did not translate into a relaxation of the IDC operation. In January 2023 non- Australian detainees who had failed the "character test" requirement of s501 of the Immigration Act were still detained there with some 250 personnel deployed to run the operation. The s501 procedures are being reviewed by the Australian government. During the COVID19 Pandemic the Christmas Island IDC was re-opened to reduce pressure on the mainland detention facilities. Since the abatement of the pandemic the number of detainees has steadily declined. Given the extremely high cost of running the Christmas Island IDC, the Commonwealth could possibly put the IDC operation into hot contingency once again in the future. In this scenario only 30 or so local jobs would be maintained.

### Tourism/visitors

Christmas Island offers exceptional tourism attractions in the environmental as well as the cultural and heritage spheres.

This said, the tourism economic output is relatively modest due to low visitation levels caused mainly by high cost of air access and relatively limited accommodation capacity competing at times with the business sector.

The regular air access to the island is from Perth. In early 2023 a Perth to London discounted return ticket could match a Perth to CI return ticket and a Perth to Bali return would be half of a Perth to CI return. This disadvantages considerably the option of holidaying on the island.



The island visitor's accommodation capacity is modest and declining. In 2018 The island was offering tourists and working visitors alike 156 rooms capable of accommodating 312 guests.

With the recent change of ownership, the CI Lodge no longer operates as a registered hotel. This has reduced the island capacity in 2023 to a total of 92 rooms and 248 guests. A couple of high-end eco-cabins within the National Park can 10 further accommodate up to 6 patrons.

The Christmas Island Tourism Association (CITA) Annual Report 2020/2021 shows the Border Force arrival statistics for the Virgin Australia service for leisure and visiting friends and relatives only as follow:

- 2017: 1162
- 2018: 2050
- 2019: 2101
- 2020: 1538 (IOT access restrictions due to Covid 19)
- 2021: 2923 (data to 31/10/21 - IOT access restrictions lifted whilst international travel restrictions still in place)

The extrapolation of the 2021 arrivals from 10 to 12 months would realistically adjust the arrivals for 2021 to 3507.



### 3. The Integrated Planning Framework

SOCI is required to produce a Strategic Community Plan for the future of the island under the Local Government Act 1995 (WA)(CI) Section 5.56 (1).

The WA Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996 provide a brief outline of the requirements to meet this obligation, which includes the development of a Strategic Community Plan and a Corporate Business Plan.

These plans do not stand alone, they are situated within an Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework (the IPRF) inclusive of a suite of planning and reporting documents.

The WA Department of Local Government Sports and Cultural Industries oversees and advises on the operation of the IPRF that provides the basis for improving the practice of strategic planning in local government.

The IPRF comprises five key elements:

1. **Strategic Community Plan** (ten years) – outlines the strategic priorities to address the community’s long-term vision. The priorities and goals of the Strategic Community Plan are driven by community engagement and take a ‘whole of Shire’ approach. The Plan is not static. A full review is required every four years with a desktop review every two years.
2. **Corporate Business Plan** (five years) – represents the internal business planning tool that translates council priorities into operations within the resources available. It defines the actions that the Shire will undertake to contribute to the achievement of the community goals and strategies outlined in the Strategic Community Plan.
3. **Informing Strategies** – inform the local government of how capable it is to deliver the services and assets required by the community. The key informing strategies are financial, asset management and workforce. Through the integration of these three strategies the Shire also develops



and implements a range of other strategic plans to guide its actions and priorities within important service areas such as town planning, roads, sport & recreation, infrastructure, age-friendly community and waste recycling.

Other strategic plans vetted by the community also fall under this category. The Shire of Christmas Island presently has several such plans including –

- a) Christmas Island – Singapore Strategy 2018
- b) SOCI Land and Economic Futures Charter 2018
- c) Settlement Sports Hall Refurbishment Plan 2023

The Shire also conducts research into local matters with a view to address problems from a municipal position.

- a) 2022 Housing Stress Survey and Workshop
- b) 2022 Decarbonisation Strategy (still in conceptualization)

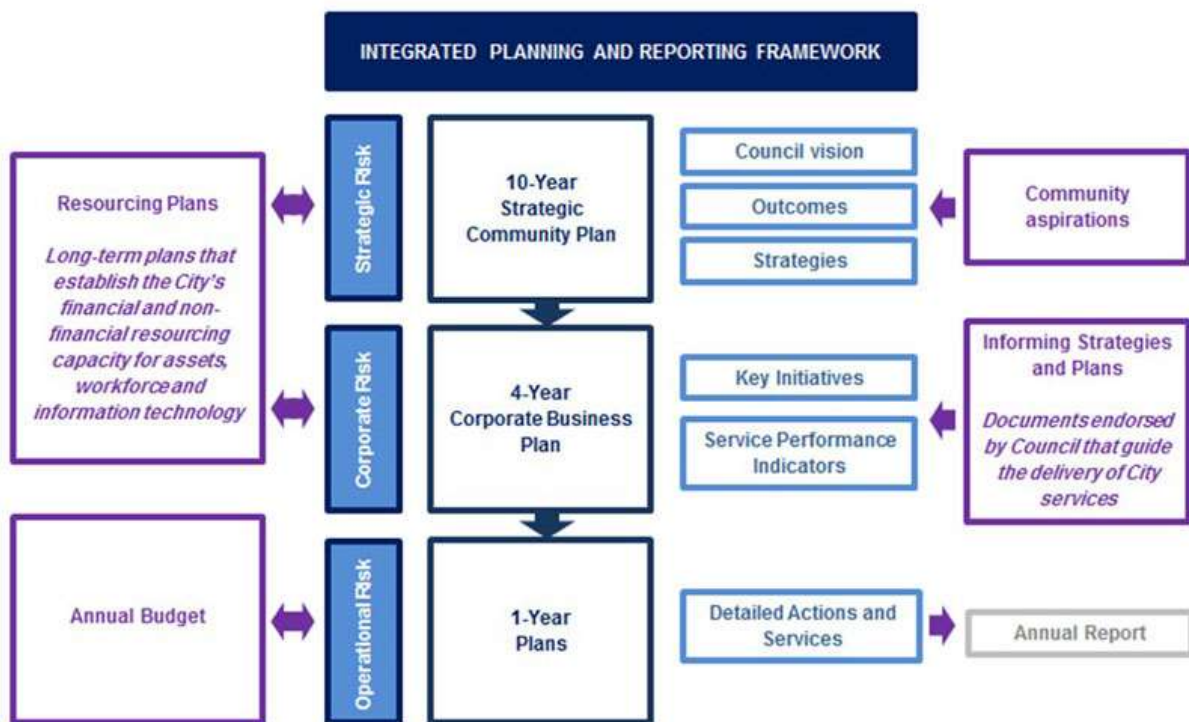
4. **Annual Budget** – provides the fine detail of the resources the Shire will be committing to its Corporate Business Plan and in support of the Strategic Community Plan in any given year.
5. **Annual Report** – provides feedback to the community on the Shire’s progress against the Corporate Business Plan and provides a snapshot of how the community is progressing towards its goals contained in the Strategic Community Plan.

In this way the IPRF:

- recognises that planning for a local government is holistic in nature and driven by the community;
- builds organisational and resource capability to meet community need;
- optimises success by understanding the integration and interdependencies between the components;
- emphasises performance monitoring so that local governments can adapt and



- keeps metrics of community satisfaction on goal completion through measurement and reporting



*Integrated Planning Framework Diagram*



## 4.0 Community Vision

### 4.1 *"Our Island, Our Responsibility."*

"*Our Island, Our Responsibility*" is a poignant community vision that encapsulates the profound commitment of the people of Christmas Island to the stewardship and guardianship of our home. This statement expresses a powerful sense of collective ownership and responsibility for the Island's well-being and sustainability, emphasizing the indispensable role of its inhabitants in shaping its future. It recognises that it was only through historical collective action that we have created the modern Christmas Island that we value so much today. As Christmas Islanders did once before, it is time to take responsibility for the direction of the Island to create a future for our society here.

The following principles are key to delivering on the vision '*Our Island, Our Responsibility.*'

1. **Collective Ownership:** "Our Island" refers to the shared sense of belonging and community among the diversity of people of Christmas Island. It underscores that every resident, organization, and community member holds a stake in the Island's fate and prosperity.
2. **Stewardship and Care:** "Our Responsibility" highlights the solemn duty and obligation to care for and protect Christmas Island's unique environment, diverse flora, fauna, and cultural heritage. It promotes sustainable practices and responsible management to safeguard the Island's ecological balance whilst allowing human society to flourish.
3. **Sustainability:** The Vision Statement implicitly advocates for sustainability, encouraging decisions and actions that consider the long-term impact on Christmas Island's natural resources and cultural identity. It emphasizes the need to preserve the Island's nature for future generations.
4. **Unity and Collaboration:** The use of "Our" fosters a sense of unity among the residents of Christmas Island. It inspires collaboration and cooperation among diverse stakeholders to collectively address challenges and work towards shared goals.





Overall, "Our Island, Our Responsibility" represents a powerful and evocative call to action for the people of Christmas Island. It urges them to unite, take pride in their home, and assume the shared responsibility of preserving its natural beauty, cultural richness, and sustainable future for generations to come.

#### **4.2 Council's Vision on Sustainability in the Strategic Community Plan**

***"Many small people, in small places, doing small things can change the world."*** – Eduardo Galeano, Uruguayan novelist

The following is an extract from the Australian Local Government Association on the implementation of the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals and their implementation at the local government level in Australia.

*The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set out a groundbreaking framework of 17 transformational goals to tackle our social, economic, and environmental challenges. Local government not only has a role to play when it comes to the achievement and delivery of the SDGs, it also has opportunities to reap.*

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#### ***Globally, Mayors are leading the way***

*Mayors and municipal governments have shown unprecedented leadership in addressing global development challenges. In September 2015, at the SDG Summit, Mayors from 40 countries met and declared their support and intention to drive the SDGs, in a declaration of cities<sup>2</sup>.*

*As well as calling for the localisation of the 2030 agenda, the Mayors particularly welcomed the inclusion of SDG 11, Sustainable Cities as a 'powerful driver of transformation'.*

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.unsdsn.org/app/uploads/2015/09/Declaration-Signed-as-of-26th-September-2015.pdf>



## **Australia's leaders on the SDGs**

*The City of Sydney was one of the first councils in Australia to build the Sustainable Development Goals into their Community Strategic Plan. Their Sustainable Sydney 2030 plan is aligned to the SDGs, and their new 2050 strategy currently being developed will also be heavily aligned.*

*The City of Melbourne looked at how its plans were delivering on the SDGs. Their assessment revealed opportunities in their interconnectedness and integration across 9 key SDGs and Plan directions.*

*Another leading organisation that spotted the integration and impact potential of the SDGs was Eastern Metropolitan Regional Council (EMRC) in Perth. The EMRC and its member councils were one of the first organisations in Australia to incorporate the SDGs into their Regional Environment Strategy 2016-2020.*

## **The role of local government**

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*Local government will have devolved responsibility for SDG achievement. In the Australian Voluntary National Review<sup>3</sup> published in June 2018, the federal government stated that:*

*“many targets in the SDGs are in the purview of sub-national levels of government” and “The Australian Government has adopted an approach to the SDGs that is appropriate for our national circumstances, with government policy responsibilities and priorities devolved to the relevant agency and level”.*

*Councils have an untapped opportunity to use the SDGs to:*

- *Drive transformation, particularly on SDG 11, Sustainable Cities.*
- *Integrate – use the SDGs as the integrated framework it was designed to be, and better integrate plans, strategies and reporting.*

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<sup>3</sup> [https://www.sdgdata.gov.au/sites/default/files/voluntary\\_national\\_review.pdf](https://www.sdgdata.gov.au/sites/default/files/voluntary_national_review.pdf)



- *Align a diverse set of stakeholders in this universal agenda.*
- *Engage their employees and communities to help achieve the goals<sup>4</sup>.*

The Shire of Christmas Island acknowledges the role that local government has to play to align themselves with the UN SDGs and acknowledged the Australian Government's support for local governments who have begun to do so.

The Shire is a believer that *"many small people, in small places, doing small things can change the world"* and will advocate and deliver municipal service with this in mind in the context of the 17 UN SDGs.

## **1. No Poverty**

End poverty in all its forms everywhere

Shire's role

Christmas Island residents experience a relatively low level of disadvantage compared to other remote Australian communities. The Shire recognises its role in working with other levels of Government and the not-for-profit sector to improve the economic outcomes for all on island.

Key result area

Economic Development, Social

## **2. Zero Hunger**

End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

Shire's role

The Shire works in partnership with the Commonwealth to unlock the potential of the Vacant Crown Lands and other lands on Island to promote food security and provide an economic plank.

Key result area

Economic Development, Social, Community Wellbeing

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<sup>4</sup> <https://alga.com.au/local-government-and-sustainable-development-goals-an-untapped-opportunity/>



### **3. Good Health and Well-Being**

Ensure healthy lives and promote health and well-being for all ages

Shire's role

The Shire continues to adapt its Youth and Seniors programs in particular to provide mental and social stimulation. The Shire recognises working with the not-for-profit community organisations and hospital service in this area to improve the health and well-being of Islanders. The Shire recognises as the municipal asset provider it should continue to improve public spaces to provide physical locations for leisure and recreation.

Key result area

Social, Community Wellbeing

### **4. Quality Education**

Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

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Shire's role

The Shire is a member of the Indian Ocean Group Training Association that is funded by the Commonwealth to deliver training and apprenticeship services on CKI and CI. The Shire also delivers a series of youth and seniors activities that will include going forward educational or mentally stimulating / creative programming especially for seniors. The Shire has a small scholarship program for Year 12 students going to Notre Dame University.

Key result area

Social, Community Wellbeing

### **5. Gender Equality**

Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

Shire's Role



The Shire promotes gender equality through its hiring practice, community programs and activities in partnership with especially the CI Women's Association (CIWA). The Shire will seek guidance from the peak women's group on the Island, CIWA, and other female orientated bodies to co-develop programs as needed in this area.

Key result area

Social, Governance and Economic

## **6. Clean Water and Sanitation**

Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

Shire's Role

The Shire is the municipal authority in waste management and land planning. It recognises its role to play with WA State and Commonwealth bodies in this area and will participate as needed in initiatives such as the Commonwealth's *2023 Indian Ocean Territories Waste Management Strategy* for CKI and CI and the WA State Agency Department of Water and Environmental Regulation's programs from time to time and the regulatory framework it provides in the IOTs.

Key Result Area

Natural Environment and Social

## **7. Affordable and Clean Energy**

Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.

Shire's Role

The Shire recognises the need for an orderly transition away from fossil fuels to renewables and will work with the Commonwealth to achieve this, noting the Commonwealth's own Zero net 2030 planning. The Shire will play its necessary part in supporting this transition in both energy supply and transport.



Key Result Area

Natural Environment and Social

## 8. Decent Work and Economic Growth

Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

Shire's Role

The Shire understands Christmas Island's industrial history and the struggle by the members of the Union of Christmas Island Workers to achieve what we have today.

The Shire understands its role in proper land planning to ensure the economic potential of the Island can be realised in the next 10 years and beyond. The Shire understands the need to diversify from the mining and immigration sectors into new industries that aim to fill the significant gaps they will leave behind.

Key Result Area

Economic and Social

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## 9. Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure

Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation

Shire's Role

The Shire recognises the role it plays in providing municipal infrastructure to assist industry. It also recognises the role it plays in advocating to the Commonwealth for contributions they are required to make as the 'state-government' to Christmas Island in terms of supporting new industry and fostering of innovation.

Key Result Area

Economic and Built Environment



## **10.Reduced Inequalities**

Reduce inequality within and among countries

### Shire's Role

The Shire recognises the structural barriers facing minorities in society. The development of our contemporary Christmas Island society began in 1975 with the formation of the Union of Christmas Island Workers and the promulgation of the Racial Discrimination Act of 1975. The Shire recognises the essential agency of the people in unity connecting with their rights at law to forge a just society. It will continue to develop a close working relationship with the WA Equal Opportunity Commission and other stakeholders to achieve this SDG.

### Key Result Area

Social, Economic and Governance

## **11.Sustainable Cities and Communities**

Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

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### Shire's Role

The Shire will ensure the municipal level planning and infrastructure it is responsible for will enshrine as much as possible efficient and effective ways to lessen our footprint on the Island. This may take the form of increasing solar lighting in public spaces, to designing walkable neighbourhoods and requiring solar panels or rainwater catchment facilities for new builds on Island.

### Key Result Area

Natural Environment, Built Environment and Social

## **12. Responsible Consumption and Production**

Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

### Shire's Role



The Shire understands its role as consumers and will endeavour to select options that will be waste-efficient. The Shire as the waste managers will ensure all landfills on the Island will meet all regulatory standards applicable with the assistance of guidance from DEWR. It will also continue to take guidance from DEWR in single use plastic reduction legislation and similar into the future.

### **13. Climate Action**

Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

#### Shire's Role

The Shire recognises the climatic changes in recent years and expects weather events from the Indian Ocean Dipole to El Ninyo and El Ninya will continue to impact the Island. It also recognises the existential threat of rising ocean levels. The Shire will work with the Commonwealth on initiatives needed to mitigate the impact climate change will have on the Island through the planning and execution of agreed activities.

### **14. Life Below Water**

Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development

#### Shire's Role

The Shire has significantly contributed to the efforts leading up to the declaration of the Christmas Island Marine Park in 2021. Furthermore, the Shire continues to play a crucial role in the management of marine resources by establishing the Fisheries Management Committee and developing the framework to ensure local control over fisheries. This proactive involvement underscores the Shire's continuing commitment to safeguarding and responsibly managing the marine ecosystem surrounding Christmas Island, thereby protecting its biodiversity and promoting sustainable fisheries practices.





## **15. Life on Land**

Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

### **Shire's Role**

Christmas Island is home to internationally listed Ramsar sites, endangered endemic species and a forest ecosystem unique in Australia. The Shire recognises that a collective effort with the community, Commonwealth and other stakeholders is the only way to protect life on land for mother nature as well as fundamentally our own existence on the Island.

### **Key Result Areas**

Natural Environment, Built Environment and Social

## **16. Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions**

Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

### **Shire's Role**

The Shire acknowledges that the non-self governing status of the Territory of Christmas Island creates unique circumstances that mainland residents do not have to experience. In light of this recognition, the Shire places great importance on upholding the principles of good governance which encompass transparent and participatory decision-making systems. To ensure inclusive and genuine consultation, the Shire has established effective, accountable, and transparent governance mechanisms. These mechanisms aim to promote transparency, accountability, and inclusivity in the decision-making processes that impact the community of Christmas Island. The Shire will endeavour to promote this level of accountability and inclusivity to all stakeholders it interacts with to best ensure that agreed progress is made for Islanders.



## **17. Partnerships for the Goals**

Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development.

### Shire's Role

The Shire places great importance on the significance of partnerships in attaining the Sustainable Development Goals. It will actively collaborate with various stakeholders including other levels of government, industry, businesses, not-for-profit organisations, community groups, and individuals to achieve positive outcomes. The Shire recognises its responsibility in enhancing the capacity of the community through initiatives focused on environmental, economic, social, and health and well-being aspects. In addition, the Shire operates the sole community grant program from all levels of government to further support and empower the community in realising these goals as they see fit.

### Key Result Area

Governance and Social



## 5.0 How we reviewed the Strategic Community Plan

Our commitment lies in ensuring that our planning processes are proficient in capturing the necessary information to drive the delivery of our community's needs.

This new SCP was generated between April to June 2023 in the following ways

- Research papers in the IPRF being updated with critical research to set the supporting Informing Strategies and first draft of the SCP made available for public comment in April 2023
- Community consultation undertaken via a written and online survey, available through the SOCI website, social media, six facilitated workshop sessions and the George Fam Building
- Six facilitated workshops that were attended by 150 individuals to take in sentiment and feedback on social, economic, planning, cultural and community development issues important to them.
- Members of the public presenting themselves at the George Fam Building to provide input
- Upon receiving feedback from surveys and workshops, the Shire undertook the task of categorizing the feedback into thematic groups. This process helps in identifying common themes and patterns, enabling the development of specific outcomes and objectives that align with the overall vision articulated by the community for the Island. By organising the feedback in this manner, the Shire can effectively capture the community's aspirations and translate them into tangible goals and actions that contribute to the realization of the community's vision.
- Draft SCP was updated with input from the community engagement and presented to Council for adoption



## 6.0 How the Strategic Community Plan will be Implemented and Monitored

### Implementation

WA local governments break down the 10-year Strategic Community Plan into two 5-year Corporate Business Plans to add granularity to the planning process that assists in the execution of the longer-term 10-year visions.

This allows for a more focused and targeted implementation of strategic goals and objectives. The Corporate Business Plans, which align with the Strategic Community Plan, provide a framework for allocating resources and setting priorities over a shorter time horizon.

The Annual Budgets further support the funding and implementation of the Corporate Business Plans, ensuring that the necessary resources are allocated in a synchronized manner to achieve the overarching 10-year vision of the community.

### Monitoring

The Shire will conduct a review of our Strategic Community Plan every two years, alternating between an internal executive management team review to a major review that involves community consultation. This approach allows us to continually assess and refine our plans, incorporating input from the community to ensure their priorities and aspirations are accurately reflected in our strategies.



## 7.0 Community Responses and Priorities

The material generated by the community has been organised into six thematic categories for long-term goal setting. These goals will be executed through allocation at the 5 year Corporate Business Plan level, and resourcing at the Annual Budget level/

- Community Development
- Planning
- Economy and Employment
- Natural Environment & Climate Change
- Infrastructure
- Governance

Please see the Appendix for the accompanying Local Planning Strategy Action Items and Informing Strategies that will assist to deliver on community priorities.



## Community Development

*That Christmas Island continues to be the place where everyone can feel they belong and valued.*

No.	Outcome	Description	Measure	Target
CD1	A healthy aging community	An active seniors population who feel engaged with their local government to ask for services	% of seniors who feel satisfied with the Council's role in their leisure and rec offerings	At least 80% of seniors surveyed
CD2	An engaged youth community	An engaged youth population who feel they can participate in municipal decision making that will affect them	Annual resolution of Youth Advisory Council giving Shire a 'grade' on how they feel Council has engaged with youth	Using A – F scale. Target is a B Grade average over 10 years.
CD3	A vibrant event calendar	That residents feel the civic life of Christmas Island takes advantage of the year-round warm weather and diversity of culture's celebrations.  That residents feel they have a structured engagement process to suggest new celebrations or events	% of residents who feel that the events calendar is vibrant  % of residents who respond 'yes' to knowing they can suggest ideas to Council for events	A 7 /10 on a likert scale  At least 80% of residents surveyed
CD4	A better funded arts and community development sector	Residents identified the lack of opportunity for state-level type grants. SOCI to lobby the Commonwealth and report back to arts and community development sector	Ability for SOCI to follow through and report back to arts and community sector with positive outcome	Commonwealth re-establishing funding for arts and community development sector
CD5	Substance Abuse Awareness level increase	That Christmas Island remains a place relatively free of substance abuse	% of residents who believe substance abuse is same, declining or rising  Advice from IOTHS, AFP on the same	That residents and other stakeholders do not believe Substance Abuse has increased in the four year community review periods of the SCP
CD6	An Inter-Island Connection	That Christmas Islanders feel that there is a better connection with Cocos (Keeling) Islanders for cultural and sporting exchanges	% of residents who believe this to be true	That residents and other stakeholders believe improvements in inter-island connection has increased in the 4 year community review periods of the SCP



CD7	A Tidy Township	That Christmas Islanders feel the Council is performing its municipal duties in street amenity adequately	% of residents who believe this to be true	At least 70% of residents surveyed
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## Planning

*That the Shire will continue to meaningfully engage with residents to create planning instruments to inform development in the township and outer township.*

The below SCP Outcomes are to be read in conjunction with the Local Planning Strategy document for action items in appendix

No.	Outcome	Description	Measure	Target
P1	A Community that Plans for itself	That residents feel they have had adequate opportunities to provide input into planning instruments	% of residents who feel satisfied at the opportunities they have had to provide input	At least a 7/10 on a likert scale
P2	In currency statutory Planning Instruments	That the Shire ensures the governance framework in place to review and adopt statutory Planning Instruments is clear of hurdles	Time it takes to get Council's Planning Instruments through state processes against advertised flowchart processes	Council to note timeframes and report to community for information.
P3	A Greener Island	That residents feel the municipal planning and council service delivery is as green as possible	% of residents who indicate satisfaction at the green-commitments that the Island has from all levels of Government	At least 5/10 on a likert scale



## Economy and Employment

*That our Christmas Island is thriving and diversified in a way that we want*

The below SCP Outcomes are to be read in conjunction with the Local Planning Strategy document for action items in appendix

No.	Outcome	Description	Measure	Target
E1	Sustainable business growth	Actively support and develop industrial level sites to replace outgoing industries	% of businesses that indicate they like owning a business on Christmas Island  % of businesses that indicate that it is satisfying to do business within Christmas Island	At least 60% indicating that owning a business is enjoyable  At least 50% of the surveyed believe it to be satisfying
E2	Diversified economic growth	Advocate and attract business and investment opportunities	Value of non-residential private sector investment on Island	\$1m in development application nominated values of construction every Corporate Business Plan period
E3	A Flowchart Forward	That Shire assists residents and the business community in gaining clarification into processes forward with land release and related development matters involving State and Federal stakeholders through flowcharts, graphics, diagrams and written material	% of businesses and people surveyed who indicate that they understand the path forward on land development and release matters	At least 80% of people surveyed indicate satisfactory understanding
E5	A Local Voice for Lobbying	That people utilise the Shire and its elected members as the voice for lobbying	Number of instances where Councillors and Council staff have been approached on an economic development issues (insurance, land release, logistics, post, etc)	SOCI to catalogue all requests for economic development that need to be escalated to Commonwealth / State for their input.





## Natural Environment and Climate Change

*It is our responsibility to take care of the Island's spaces for future generations.*

No.	Outcome	Description	Measure	Target
NE1	A Green Township	Enhancing the tree canopy cover in the township	Number of trees planted within the township in community identified spaces	At least ten plantings annually
NE2	Knowing our Water Resources	That Christmas Islanders feel they have adequate knowledge about water resources to be able to plan their economic and social development into the future	% of business and investors who answer satisfied in survey	100% by the end of the first Corporate Business Plan  (dependent on Cwealth participation)
NE3	Flying Fish Cove Housing Future	That Christmas Islanders in Flying Fish Cove are given adequate information about relocation plans in the event climate change makes the area unsafe for habitation	% of residents who feel that they have been given impartial, scientific information as to the reasoning why any relocation move is needed	100% of Flying Fish Cove residents by the end of the Strategic Community Plan  (dependent on Cwealth participation)
NE4	Waste Management	That the Shire develops with WA Dept. of Environment and Water Regulation the Commonwealth a new waste management site to replace the current one when needed	Completion of assessment studies to facilitate this	End of first Corporate Business Plan  (dependent on Cwealth participation)



## Infrastructure

*Our built environment should be designed and delivered to suit our conditions on Island.*

No.	Outcome	Description	Measure	Target
Infra1	Managing Municipal Built Spaces	That Christmas Islanders have confidence that the municipal built environment is managed in a satisfactory way	<p>% of residents satisfied with roads</p> <p>% of residents satisfied with community buildings and spaces</p> <p>% of residents satisfied with Shire's management of its heritage sites</p>	That 60% of residents mark satisfactory or better
Infra2	Planned and Facilitated Growth	That new municipal infrastructure programs and deliveries meet identified community need	% of community who see any new additions in municipal infrastructure improvements / construction as 'adequate' and 'necessary'	At least 60% of residents indicate positively



## Governance

*The Shire serves as a successful community advocacy partner with the Government, effectively engaging in transparent and accountable ways. The Shire's dedication to representing the community's interests and advocating for their needs has led to positive outcomes and effective collaboration with the Government. Through its accountable and transparent approach, the Shire has established itself as a trusted partner in advocating for the welfare and well-being of the community it serves.*

No.	Outcome	Description	Measure	Target
G1	Accountable and Transparent Leadership	That Council maintains public registers of information	Number of breach or improvement notices issued to Council by Dept of Local Government, Sports and Cultural Industries or Office of the Auditor General	Zero notices received annually
G2	Have a Say	That Council engage, communicate and consult adequately with our community	Number of postal drops, public information workshops, printed material provided to inform the community on have-a-say matters to be reported by Director of Policy annually	% of residents who indicate that they have had the opportunity to provide input into a have-a-say community wide matter increases between the first and second Corporate Business Plans
G3	Promote and Advocate for Islanders	That Council is believed to be advocating for the interests of all Christmas Islanders, and not only developers, investors and businesses or other groups	% of community satisfied with the Shire's advocacy on behalf of the Island to the Federal Government and other parties	Increase in % between first and second Corporate Business Plans



## Appendix

### - Informing Strategies

The Council has the following Informing Strategies. These are defined as documents endorsed by the Council that guide the delivery of corporate resources in a specific area in the endorsed manner. These are available on the Shire website and through the Shire CEO at request.

- CI Land and Economics Future Charter
- CI – Singapore Strategy
- Local Planning Strategy (statutory)
- Long Term Financial Plan (statutory)
- Workforce Development Plan (statutory)

The Council is in development of the following Informing Strategy

- Christmas Island Decarbonisation Strategy