



Council in **FOCUS**



**October-
December 2019**







Contents

PART 1

Focusing on your Council	4
Financial performance	5
Infrastructure	9
Human Resources	10
Media and Communications	11
Environment and planning	12
Council grants	15
Customer service	17
Procurement	20
Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) support	21

PART 2

Executive Leadership Team	22
Community, Economy and Innovation department	25
Lakeland and Laura Community Resiliency Blitz	29
Organisational Business Services department	30
Infrastructure department	33

Focusing on your Council

Council in Focus – Part One is presented as an informative summary of some of Council’s key performance indicators.

The following graphs and charts detail Council’s operational performance against benchmarks or targets in an accessible format.

This is the second edition of this quarterly report. It is by no means an exhaustive list of all Council’s operations, and in the coming months additional data will be added to provide greater scope reporting on topics of interest.

Part Two is largely in pictorial format to provide Council and the community with some insight into recent operational works that may not otherwise be the subject of a Council report or media release.

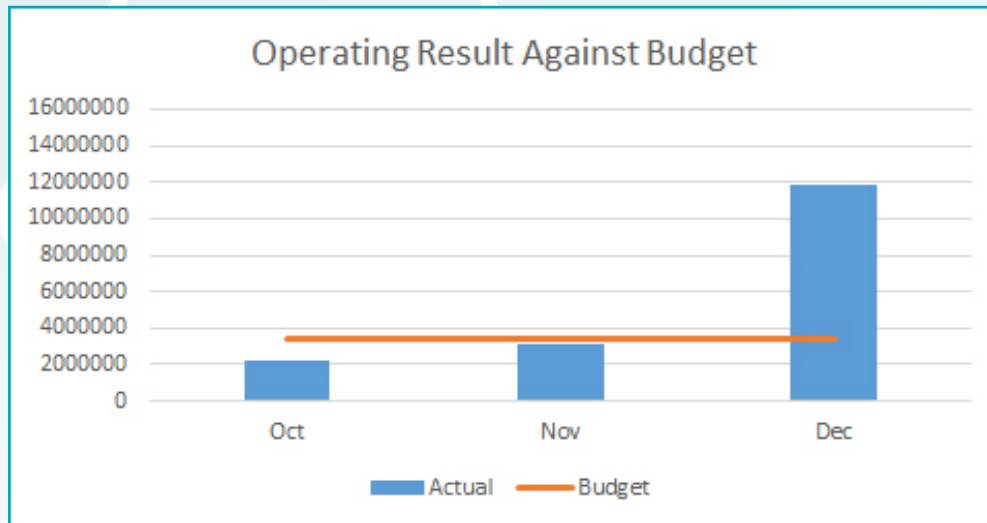
Our staff who live and work in our Cook Shire communities take immense pride in their contributions to the wellbeing of the Shire, and this report not only provides an insight into their day to day work, but also recognition of the wonderful and diverse skills our workforce brings to the Shire.



Part 1

Financial performance

Operating result - Actual vs budget

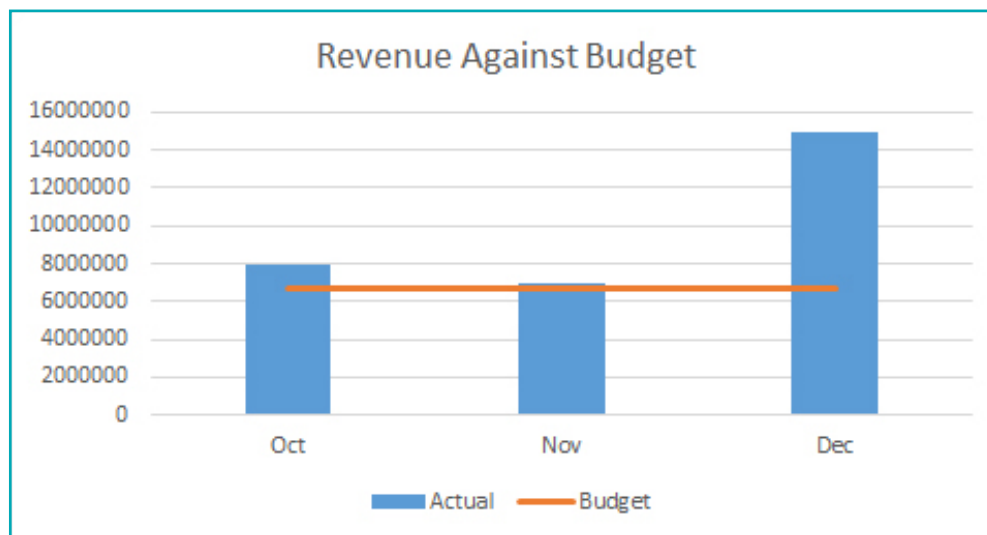


Explanatory Note: This graph displays the operating results compared to budget forecast for each month.

Interpretive Comments: The operating position for the quarter is above budget due to an advance payment in relation to flood damage works.

	October	November	December
Budget	\$3,356,738	\$3,356,738	\$3,356,738
Actual	\$2,216,747	\$3,163,037	\$11,833,946
Variance	-\$1,139,992	-\$193,701	+\$8,477,208

Revenue against budget



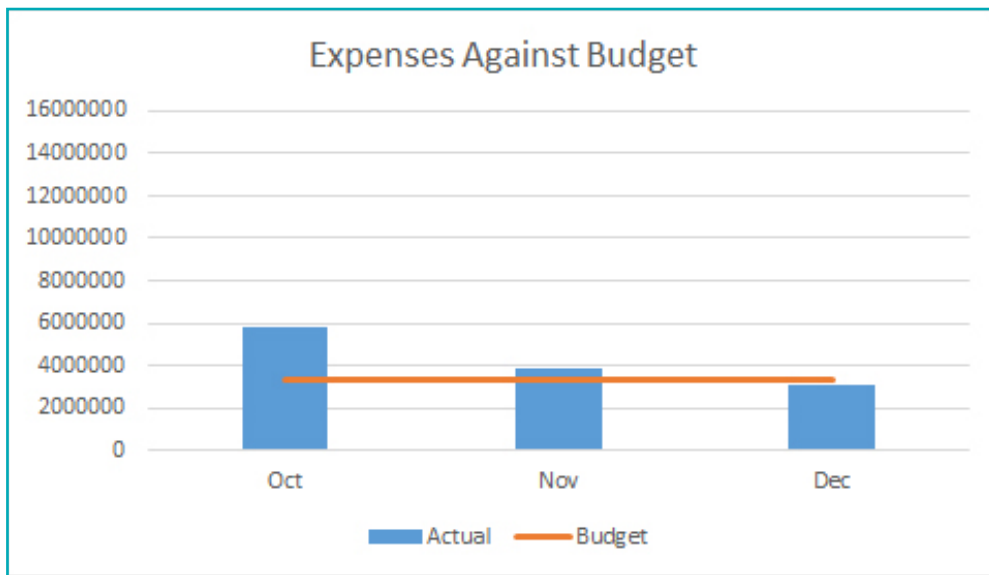
Explanatory Note: This graph displays the actual revenue compared to budget forecast for each month.

Interpretive Comments: The revenue for the quarter is tracking above budget this is due to an advance payment in relation to flood damage works.

	October	November	December
Budget	\$6,679,142	\$6,679,142	\$6,679,142
Actual	\$7,991,544	\$7,006,027	\$14,947,459
Variance	+\$1,312,402	+\$326,885	+\$8,268,317

Financial performance

Expenses against budget

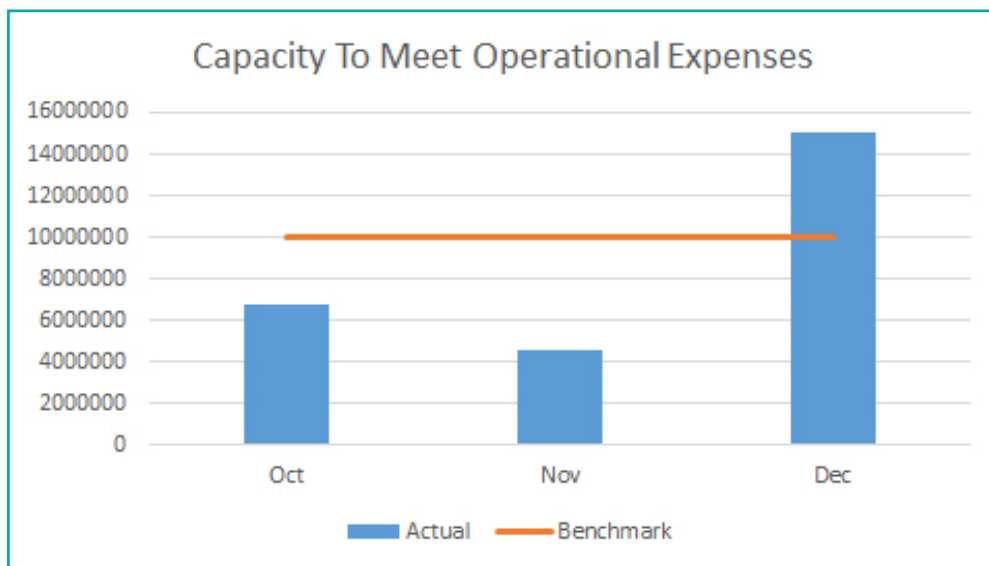


Explanatory Note: This graph displays the actual expenditure incurred compared to budget forecast for each month.

Interpretive Comments: The expenses for the quarter are tracking above budget this is due to the commencement of flood damage works. The variances are due to the budget not being phased over the year to reflect the timing of revenue and expenditure.

	October	November	December
Budget	\$3,322,404	\$3,322,404	\$3,322,404
Actual	\$5,774,798	\$3,842,991	\$3,113,513
Variance	+\$2,452,394	+\$520,587	-\$208,891

Capacity to meet operational expenses



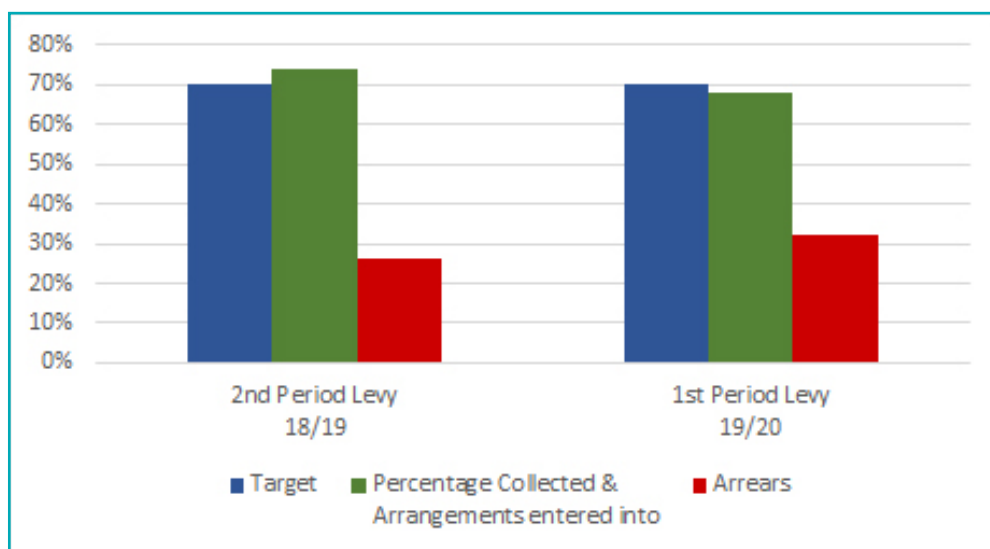
Explanatory Note: This graph displays the actual expenditure incurred compared to budget forecast for each month.

Interpretive Comments: The capacity to meet expenses for the quarter tracked below budget for October and November due to Council performing flood damage works and claiming costs subsequent to completion. Council anticipates the shortfall and has a \$5 million overdraft facility to meet operational requirements.

	October	November	December
Budget	\$9,967,087	\$9,967,087	\$9,967,087
Actual	\$6,706,676	\$4,585,735	\$15,066,854
Variance	-\$3,260,411	-\$5,381,352	+\$5,099,767

Financial performance

Rates collected



Explanatory Notes:

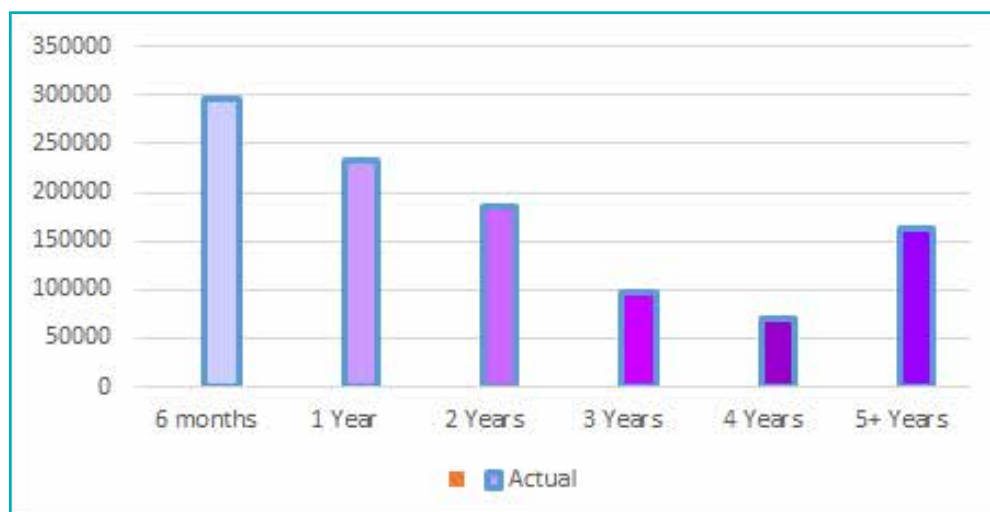
Demonstrates the collection rate of Council levies. Our target is to have less than 5% of levies outstanding at the end of each six monthly rating period. This graph excludes assessments sent for Debt Recovery Action.

Interpretive Comments:

Recovery of outstanding rates is progressing well. The Rates Officer monitors payment arrangements and implements corrective action as required.

	Second period levy 2018-19	First period levy 2019-20
Target	70%	70%
Percentage collected including those with payment arrangements entered into	74%	68%
Arrears	26%	32%

Aged debtor breakdown of rates



Explanatory Notes:

Shows the arrears that are more than 6 months overdue. Rates arrears from 30 days to 6 months totalling \$896,000 are not included in this graph.

Interpretive Comments:

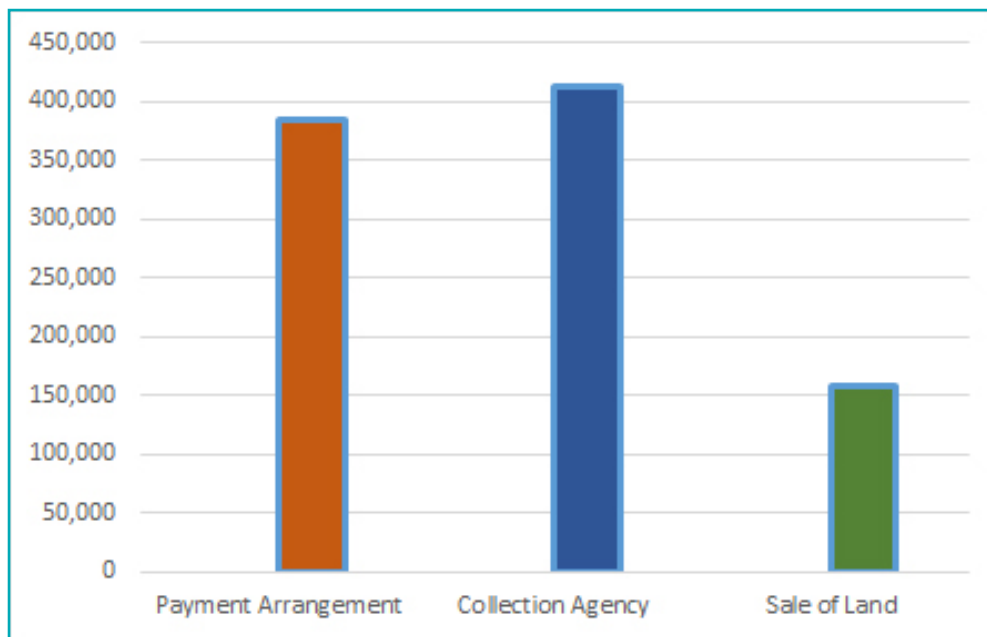
Breakdown of the five-plus years:

- 5 - Sale of Land (process is due to commence) \$85,111;
- 3 - Aboriginal Land Trust \$616,307; and
- 1 - Mining Claim with WGC Lawyers \$7,515.

	6mths	1yr	2yr	3yr	4yr	5+yr
Actual	\$295,216	\$233,895	\$150,299	\$98,269	\$71,000	\$162,313

Financial performance

Rates recovery methods

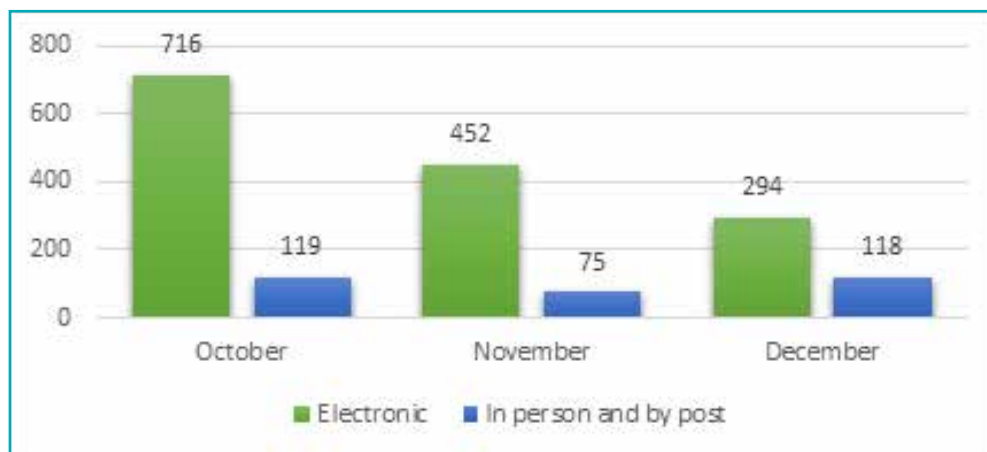


Explanatory Notes: Total of arrears that have approved payment arrangements, have been referred to a collection agency or may require sale of land.

Interpretive Comments: The totals for each category are: Payment arrangements 104; Collection agencies 103; and Potential sale of land 13.

	Payment Arrangement	Collection Agency	Potential Sale of Land
1st Rating Period	\$384,540	\$412,597	\$157,485

Rates payment methods



Explanatory Notes: Graph records the means by which rates payments are received.

Interpretive Comments: The trends continue to show a higher acceptance of electronic payments as opposed to counter and mail payments; with an average of 70.3% of payments made electronically over the past three months.

	October	November	December
Electronic (BPay)	716	452	294
In person and by post	119	75	118

Infrastructure

Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) summary to December 31, 2019



The jointly funded Commonwealth and Queensland Government DRFA program, managed by Cook Shire Council, is providing employment for more than 200 people, including Council staff and 17 contract crews across almost 2500km of remote roads. The DRFA program aims to support communities in their disaster recovery and is a major contributor to the regional economy, with the work contracted primarily to local companies and Council's works crew. The 2018-19 disaster season was particularly severe, causing widespread damage and isolating residents across Cape York during cyclones Owen, Penny, Trevor and the monsoon trough event. These events resulted in the largest DRFA-funded road reconstruction program Council has yet undertaken.

The Betterment Funding package is in addition to the DRFA and is to provide disaster resilience and mitigation to essential infrastructure and reduce the impact of future events.

Betterment treatments to be applied for include: multiple floodways and drainage upgrades across five local

roads; flood mitigation for two local roads; one raise and seal within Cooktown; flood resilience for one local road with culverts and raised formation, to increase safety and access for residents, school buses and emergency vehicles; and three rural roads that have had Expressions of Interest approved for concrete floodways and culvert upgrades.

This anticipated funding will benefit a total of 12 roads across the southern portion of Cook Shire affected by the North and Far North Queensland Monsoon Trough January 25 to February 14, with a total of 64 locations identified within the Expressions of Interest listing. Funding will be applied for over the next few months with a rollout of works extending over two years until approximately June 30, 2021. Betterment funding is at this point only approved as an Expression of Interest and is subject to final submissions, full scoping and funding arrangements.

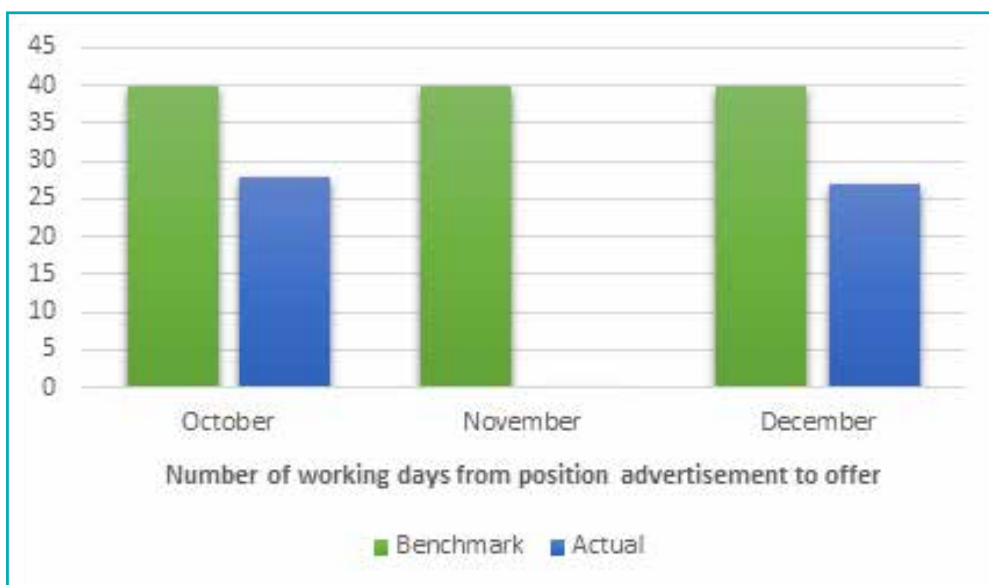
The total expenditure to be applied for under the Betterment Fund, including all indirect costs, is \$11,826,052.

DRFA works to date including committed costs

Far North Monsoon Trough - January 25 to February 14, 2019	\$25,280,185
Severe Tropical Cyclone Trevor and associated low - March 19 to 27, 2019	\$16,345,332
Project management	\$1,388,901
Total expenditure to date including committed costs	\$41,625,517

Human Resources

Efficiency of filling vacant positions



Explanatory Notes:

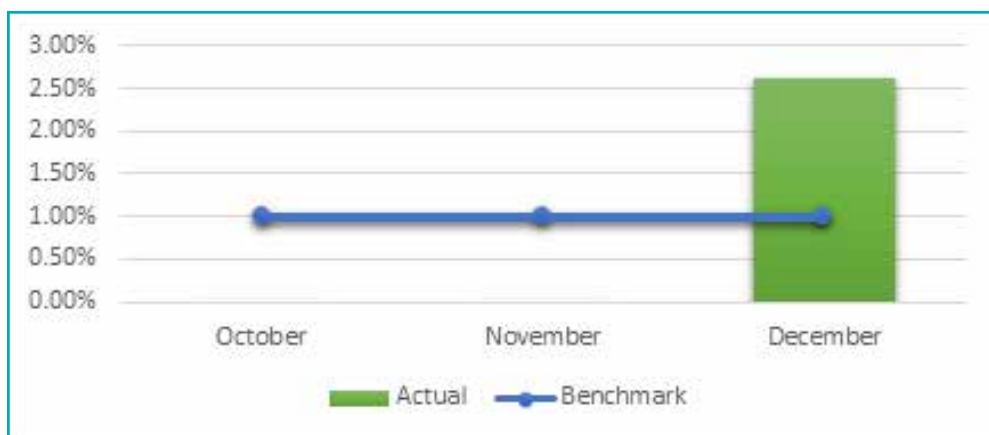
This is calculated as the number of working days from advertisement of a role to when an offer is made. Council expects roles to be filled within eight weeks (40 working days) however will extend this as needed in order to secure quality staff for our organisation.

Interpretive Comments:

Council filled 7 roles this quarter, with an average turnaround of 27.43 days.

	October	November	December
Benchmark	40	40	40
Actual	27.75	0	27
Variance	-12.25	-40	-13

Monthly staff turnover



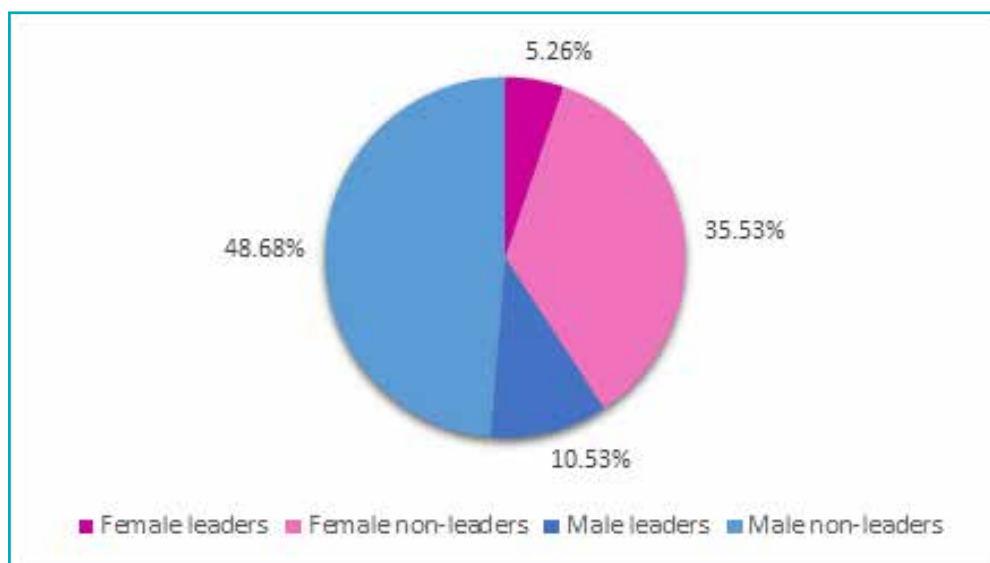
Explanatory Notes: This is the number of resignations received as a percentage of total staff. There are currently 152 full time and part time staff within Council.

Interpretive Comments: The total number of staff exiting Council this quarter was 4, which is 2.63% of total staff.

	October	November	December
Benchmark	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%
Actual	0.00%	0.00%	2.63%

Human Resources

Workplace diversity - male vs female



Explanatory Notes:

This graph shows the number of female and male staff expressed as leaders and non-leaders.

Interpretive Comments:

During this quarter Council employed an average of 152 staff - 40.7% female and 59.3% male. 5.2% of the female staff and 11% of the male staff held leadership roles.

Percentage of workforce

Female leaders	5.20%
Female non-leaders	35.70%
Male leaders	11.00%
Male non-leaders	48.10%

Media and communications

Council communication by media type

Media type	October	November	December
Facebook posts	35	45	27
Website (page) views	9356	9132	7751
Public notice advertising	19	18	11
Media releases	6	11	5
Instagram posts	17	15	3
Tweets	4	12	0

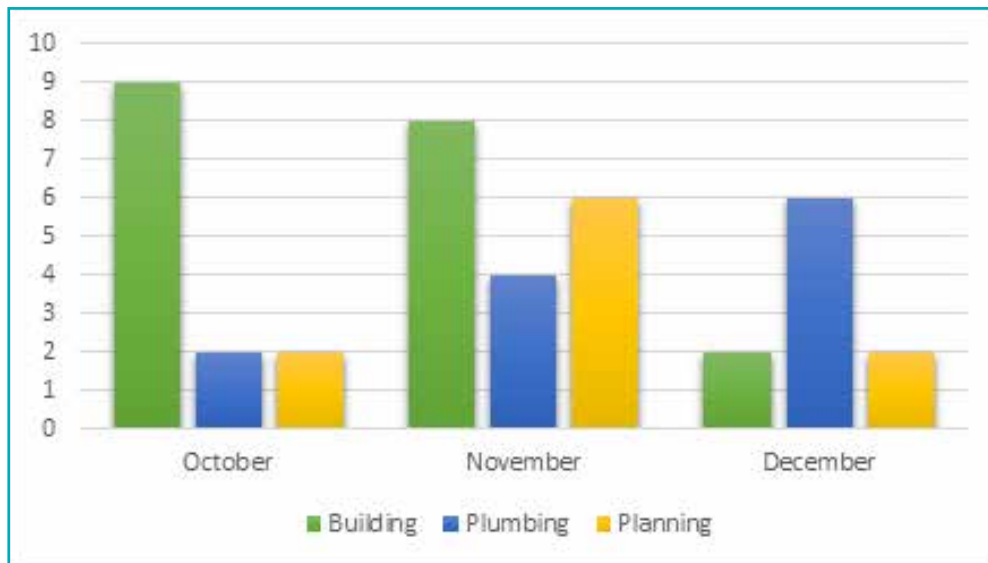
Explanatory Notes: The table details some of the different channels Council uses to communicate with our communities.

Interpretive Comments:

Due to many schools, businesses and organisations having holidays during December, website visitation for Council services was down.

Environment and planning

Development applications lodged



Explanatory Notes:

The figures reflect the number of new development applications lodged in the months indicated. It does not include other requests, assessment processes and inspections associated with existing applications.

	October	November	December
Building	9	8	2
Plumbing	2	4	6
Planning	2	6	2

Value of building approvals 2018 vs 2019



Explanatory Notes:

The figures reflect the dollar value of new building applications approved for construction in the months indicated. It does not include other requests and inspections associated with existing applications.

	October	November	December
2019	\$7,009,943	\$3,285,644	\$112,400
2018	\$1,550,544	\$691,829	\$796,626
Variance	▲\$5,459,399	▲\$2,593,815	▼\$684,226

Environment and planning

Value of building approvals by financial year



Explanatory Notes:

The figures reflect the dollar value of new building applications approved for construction by financial year indicated.

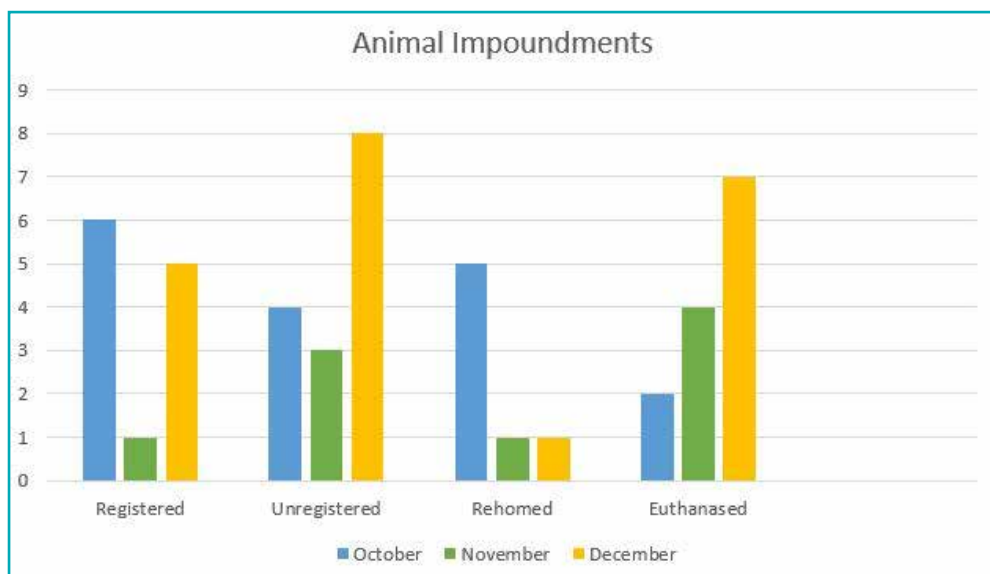
Interpretive Comments:

2013-16 saw a considerable spike in the value of building applications mainly due to Cyclone Ita damage to buildings throughout the Shire and major reconstruction works at the Lizard Island Resort > \$3 million. These years also saw growth and new construction work in Cook Shire which included \$11.5 million Residential Rehabilitation Centre; \$7.1 million Holy Spirit College; \$1.6 million Stage 3, Endeavour Christian College; \$1.2 million Cooktown waterfront kiosk, gazebo and two ablution blocks; \$1 million Weipa offices; \$2 million Coen day respite care. The figures for 2019/20 will continue to be adjusted quarterly.

Financial year	Value	Increase/decrease on previous financial year
2019-20	\$11,613,103	Current
2018-19	\$9,690,197	▼
2017-18	\$11,592,521	▼
2016-17	\$17,631,718	▼
2015-16	\$23,970,042	▲
2014-15	\$21,142,705	▲
2013-14	\$14,918,590	▲
2012-13	\$6,620,814	

Environment and planning

Animal impoundments



Explanatory Notes:

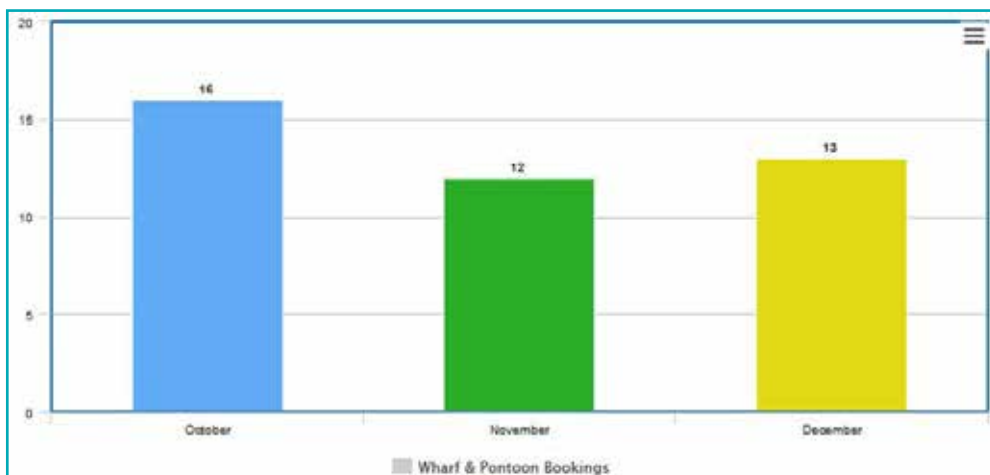
The figures represent the numbers of dogs impounded over the period and the number of animals that were not claimed or rehomed and instead were euthanased.

Interpretive Comments:

The graph shows that a much larger proportion of animals are rehomed when compared with euthanased. The high euthanasia figures for December are due to a feral cat trapping program in Cooktown, during which seven feral cats were trapped and euthanased.

	October	November	December
Registered	6	1	5
Unregistered	4	3	8
Rehomed	5	1	1
Euthanased	2	4	7

Wharf and pontoon bookings



Explanatory Notes: The figures show the number of bookings for the public wharf and pontoon at Cooktown.

	October	November	December
Wharf/pontoon bookings	16	12	13

Cook Shire Council grants

Current Cook Shire Council grants - State Government

Grant Fund	Department	Project	Funding amount
Maturing the Infrastructure Pipeline Program 2 (MIPP)	Department of State Development, Infrastructure & Planning (DSDMIP)	Charlotte and Adelaide Street design	\$530,000
Building Our Regions (BoR)	DSDMIP	Gateway to the Cape	\$998,000
Cycle Network Local Government Grants Program	Department of Transport and Main Roads (DTMR)	Charlotte Street/Two Mile Bridge	\$467,703
Get Playing Places and Spaces	Department of Housing and Public Works	John Street Oval Irrigation	\$107,042
Coastal Hazard Adaption Strategy	Local Government Association Queensland	QCoast2100 Phases 3-8	\$406,406
Works for Queensland 2019-21	DSDMIP	Waterfront shade, Shire Hall refurbishment, Borefields water resilience upgrades	\$2,370,000
National Disaster Response Force	Queensland Reconstruction Authority (QRA)	Ayton Radio Tower and VHF	\$66,175
Expo 2020 Sponsorship	Department of Premier & Cabinet	Expo 2020 Project Producer	\$150,000
Expo 2020 Sponsorship	Department of Premier & Cabinet	Expo 2020 activities	\$650,000
Regional Arts Services Network (RASN) Officer Funding	Arts Queensland	RASN Officer	\$258,533
Regional Arts Development Fund (RADF)	Arts Queensland	2019-20 RADF Program	\$30,000
Healthy Dogs Healthy Community	Department of Health	Coen Palliative Care	\$50,000
Healthy Dogs Healthy Community	Department of Health	Coen Healthy Dog Program	\$249,625
Get Ready Queensland	QRA	Get Ready Queensland 2019-20 Program	\$10,660
Communities in Transition	Department of Science	Clean Growth Choices	\$60,000
First 5 Forever Nursery Rhymes	State Library of Queensland	Under 5s Literacy	\$28,236
Tech Savvy Regional Queenslanders	State Library of Queensland	Tech Savvy Cook Shire	\$9,420
Tech Savvy Seniors	State Library of Queensland	Cooktown Savvy Seniors	\$8,640
Be Connected	Good Things Foundation	Activation Grant	\$1500
Far North Queensland and North Queensland Monsoon Trough Fund	Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors	Community Resiliency days	\$39,918
FNQ and North Queensland Monsoon Trough Fund	Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors	Community Development Officer	\$652,912
Queensland Destination and Events Program Round 14	Tourism and Events Queensland	Expo 2020 - Festival marketing	\$15,000
Deadly Digital Communities	State Library of Queensland	Deadly Digital Communities	\$3840
Total funding			\$7,095,395

Cook Shire Council grants

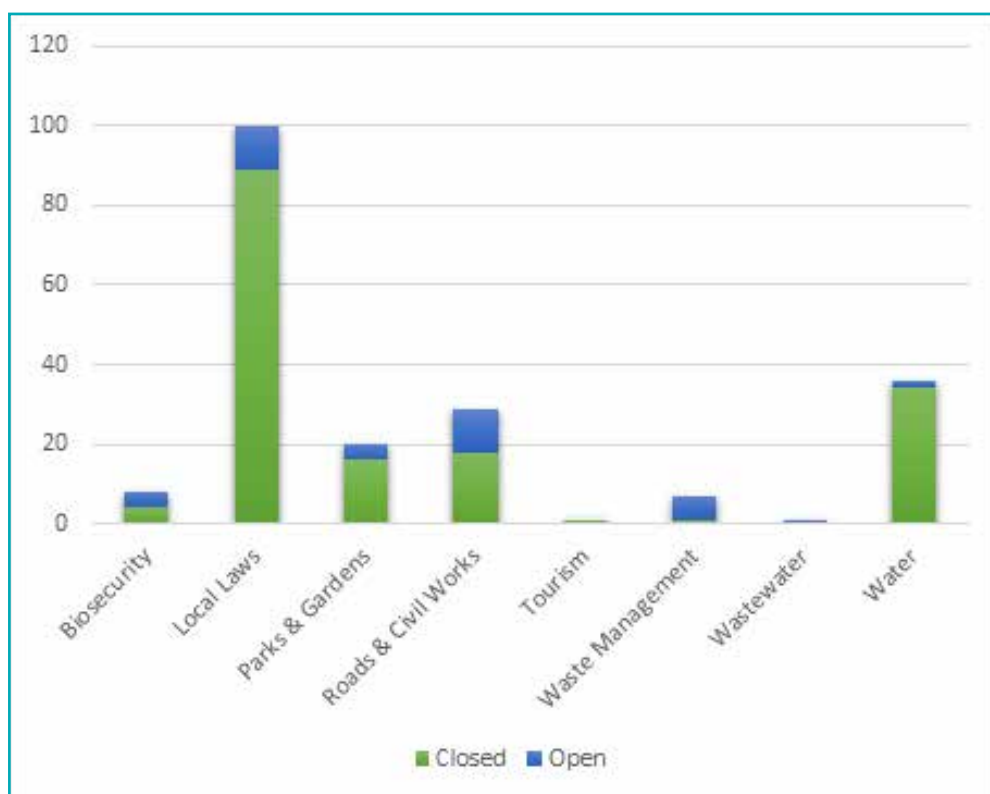
Current Cook Shire Council grants - Federal Government

Grant Fund	Department	Project	Funding amount
RAUP Round 6 (Remote Airstrip Upgrade Program)	Department Infrastructure and Regional Development and Cities	Lakeland & Laura Airstrip – RAUP000054	\$67,500
RAUP Round 7 (Remote Airstrip Upgrade Program)	Department Infrastructure and Regional Development and Cities	Cooktown Airstrip – RAUP000078	\$60,000
BBR (BUilding Better Regions)	Dept. Industry, Innovation and Science	Cooktown Airport Road	\$1,738,079
TMR (Transport Main Roads) Bridges Renewal	Dept. Infrastructure and Regional Development	Jensen's Crossing Bridge	\$662,750
Community Development Grants	Australian Government	Cooktown Expo 2020 Legacy – Boat House	\$870,000
Community Development Grants	Australian Government	Cooktown Expo 2020 Legacy – Gamaay Dreaming Track	\$1,700,000
Community Development Grants	Australian Government	Cooktown Expo 2020 Legacy – Reconciliation Rocks	\$1,200,000
Community Development Grants	Australian Government	Cooktown Expo 2020 Legacy – Botanic Gardens	\$1,980,000
National Museum	Australian Government	Indigenous Project Officer	\$209,891
BBR (Building Better Regions) Fund	Dept. Industry, Innovation and Science	Expo 2020 Main Stage	\$214,902
Total funding			\$8,703,122



Customer service

Total inbound customer requests - open vs closed



Explanatory Notes: This graph depicts the number of customer requests received by Council over the last three months, open versus closed.

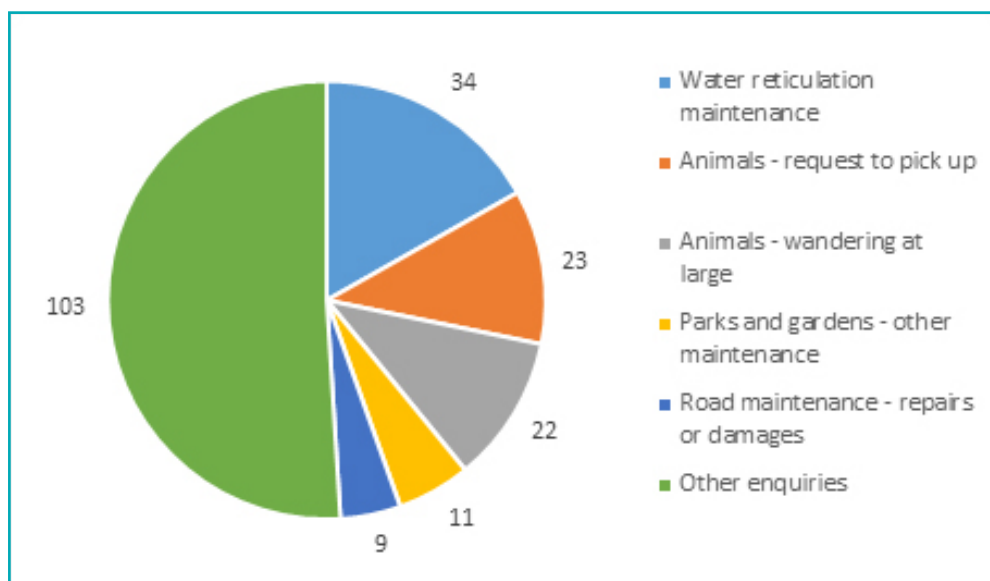
Interpretive Comments: Managers continue to work with staff to improve response and task completion rates against Council's Customer Service Standards Charter.

Total inbound customer requests - open vs closed By business function - October to December 2019

	Closed	Open	Total
Biosecurity	4	4	8
Local Laws	89	11	100
Parks and Gardens	16	4	20
Roads and Civil Works	18	11	29
Tourism	1	0	1
Waste Management	1	6	7
Wastewater	0	1	1
Water	34	2	36
Total			202

Customer service

Top five inbound customer requests



Explanatory Notes: This chart depicts the top five inbound customer requests received over the last three months, in comparison to all other requests.

Interpretive Comments: The top five inbound customer requests make up 49% of the total requests received for October to December 2019.

Top five inbound customer requests

	Number	Percentage of total requests
Water reticulation maintenance - repairs or damages	34	16.83%
Animals - request to pick up	23	11.39%
Animals - wandering at large	22	10.89%
Parks and gardens - other maintenance	11	5.45%
Road maintenance - repairs or damages	9	4.46%
Other enquiries	103	50.99%

General customer enquiries

The following table details the number of email, phone and front counter enquiries received by Council, by month.

	October	November	December
Phone calls to 4082 0500	1145	1659	1016
Front counter enquiries	339	562	296

Customer service

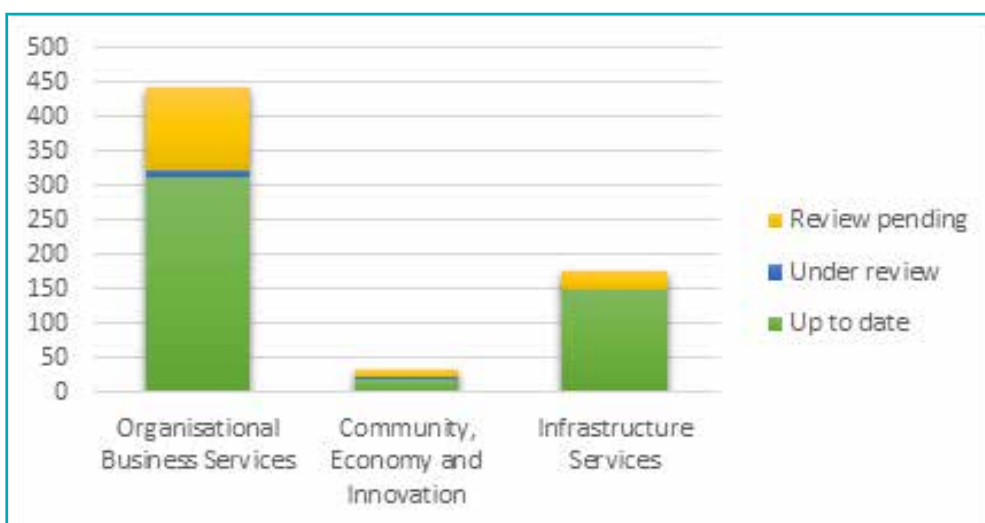
Right to Information Requests

October to December 2019

Right to Information Applications Received	1
Pages Relevant to Application Reviewed	10,000+
Pages Released	NA
Application Fees Received	\$50.80
Hours Spent Processing Application	9
Processing Costs Accrued at Rate Prescribed by Office of the Information Commissioner *	\$0.00
Processing Costs Waived	\$0.00
Estimated Actual Cost to Council	\$10,993.30

* \$7.85 per 15 Minutes

Corporate documents and records by division and status



Explanatory Notes: This table details the number of policies, procedures and documents Council uses, and how many are being reviewed. Interpretive Comments: Council is making good progress with the review of documents internally.

	Up to date	Under review	Review pending
Organisational Business Services	313	10	120
Community, Economy and Innovation	20	3	10
Infrastructure Services	148	0	27

Procurement

Summary of contracts - second quarter 2019-20 financial year

Contracts over \$15,000

Number of tender documents released	1
Number of quote documents released	18
Total value of contracts awarded	\$1,877,372.05
Total value awarded to local suppliers	\$967,396.05

Tenders

- Supply and delivery of road base.

Quotes

- Eight quotes released against Local Buy contractors.
- Four quotes released via Vendor Panel Marketplace.
- Six quotes released via email to selected contractors.

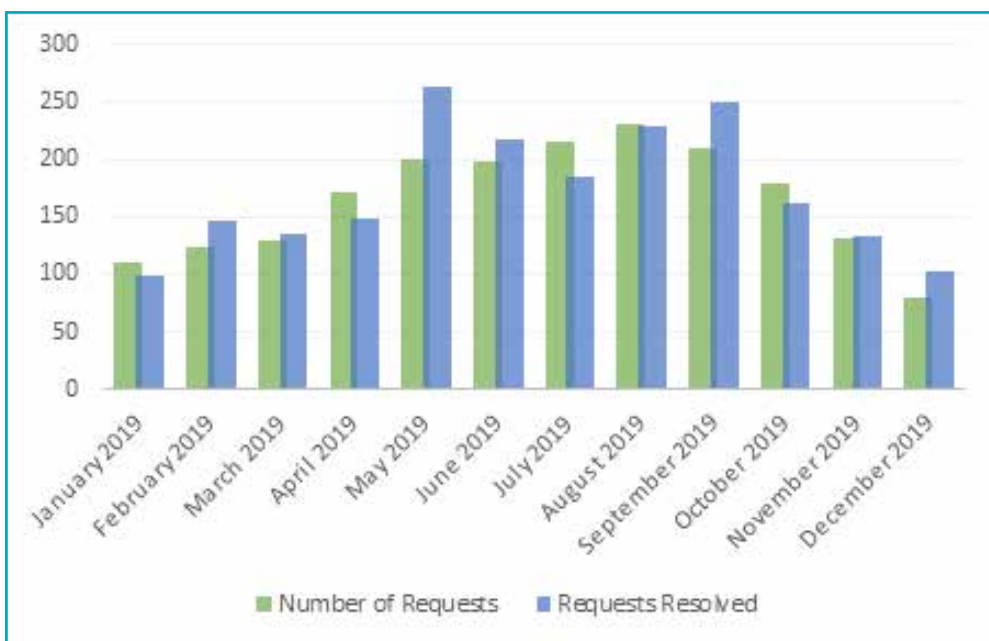


Contracts over \$200,000

Number	32
Total value	\$10,920,993
Value awarded to local suppliers delivering Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangement works	\$7,925,421

Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) support

ICT requests created across all Council facilities



Explanatory Notes: The table shows the number of requests made to Council's ICT Team by Council staff across all facilities.

Interpretive Comments: ICT requests grew steadily from April 2019 with the implementation of a direct ICT Helpdesk request service.

	New Requests	Requests resolved
January	110	99
February	123	146
March	129	135
April	171	149
May	201	263
June	199	217
July	215	185
August	231	229
September	210	249
October	180	161
November	131	134
December	79	102

Part 2

Executive Leadership Team

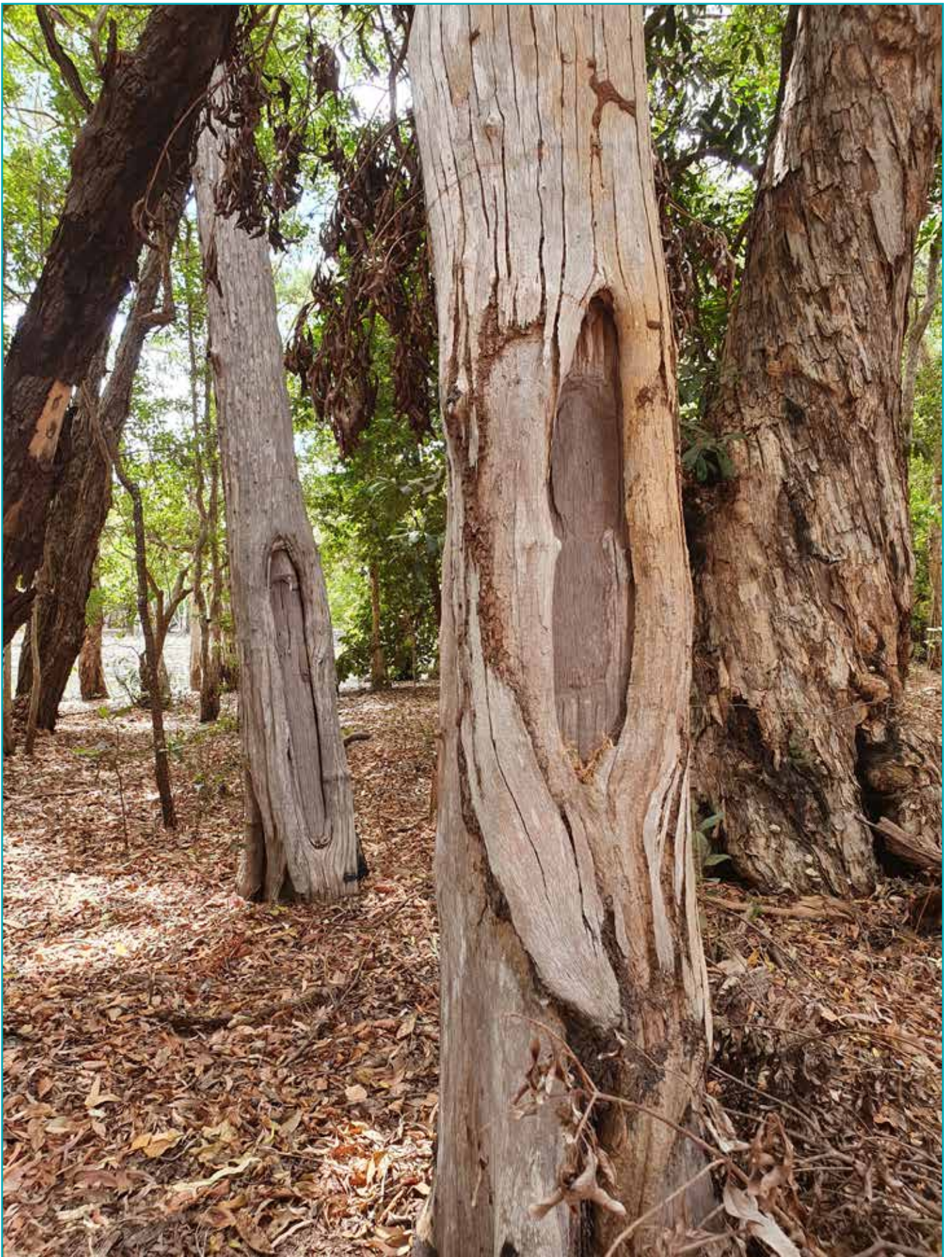
The Executive Leadership Team comprises the Chief Executive Officer and the Directors of three separate departments:

- Community Economy and Innovation, a customer focused Department charged with the responsibility of developing and maintaining social and economic capital, and to identify and implement new and innovative actions and projects;
- Organisational Business Services, managing a diverse portfolio of corporate and business responsibilities including finance, governance, facilities, land tenure, planning and environment, customer service, human resources and information technology; and the
- Infrastructure Department, responsible for all civil works, water and waste water, Parks and Gardens, fleet management, major capital projects and asset management.

Over the last three months the Executive Leadership Team has represented Cook Shire in a wide range of forums. These have included:

DATE	NAME OF EXTERNAL PARTY	NATURE OF ENGAGEMENT
1 October	Path to Treaty	Information gathering
3 October	Chamber of Commerce and Tourism	Representing Council at monthly meeting
3 October	FNQROC Technical Committee	Representing Council at bi-monthly meeting
8 October	District Disaster Management Group	Teleconference for start of cyclone season
8 October	Dept Housing and Public Works	Opportunities for collaboration
9-10 October	Torres and Cape Indigenous Council Alliance	Engagement and strategic planning with the 14 Councils of the Cape, Torres Strait and Mornington Island
13 October	LGAQ Policy Executive	Attendance representing the LGMA (QLD) Board at the LGAQ Policy Executive
14-15 October	LGAQ Annual Conference	Training and networking opportunity
14-18 October	Neighbouring Shires	Opportunities for collaboration
15 October	National Trust Australia (Queensland)	Opportunities for collaboration
18 October	TTNQ Annual General Meeting & Tourism Industry Awards	Tourism opportunities in Cooktown/Cook Shire
21 October	Skytrans	Cooktown Expo 2020 sponsorship
21 October	Dept State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning	Funding opportunities
22 October	Dept Natural Resources and Mines	Land clearing workshop
28 October	Gateway to the Cape Project Steering Group	Monthly meeting
29 October	Queensland Reconstruction Authority	Recovery planning session
30 October	Regional Arts Service Network	Steering committee meeting
30-31 October	District Disaster Management Group	Annual functional exercise
4 November	Mass Gathering Executive Committee	Inter-agency committee meeting as directed by Northern Coroner. Development of event protocols

4 November	LDMG meeting	Disaster preparation
4 November	LGIA Super	Investment in Cooktown
6 November	Destination Q 2019 Forum	Tourism opportunities in Cooktown/Cook Shire
6-7 November	Traffic Management Design	Workshop
7 November	Local Government Managers Association	Panel member – Women in Local Government
7 November	Tenure Resolution Team	Tenure and Native Title discussions
11 November	Regional Development Australia FNQTS	Opportunities for collaboration
12 November	District Disaster Management Group	Disaster preparation
13 November	Cooktown Emergency Services Cadets	Launch of program
18 November	CYRP SWG	Opportunities for collaboration
91-21 November	Australian National Airports Association	Training and networking opportunities
22 November	RRTG Technical Committee	Opportunities for collaboration
25-29 November	Lakeland and Laura Resiliency Days	Community engagement
26 November	Lakeland Recreation Sportsfield	Oval masterplan consultation
3 December	Mapoon Aboriginal Shire Council	Roundtable discussion – Bertiehaugh Road
4 December	Coen Inter-agency	Scheduled meeting
9 December	FNQROC Board	Bi-monthly meeting
9 December	FNQ RRTG	Bi-monthly technical group meeting
10 December	District Disaster Management Group	Disaster preparation
12 December	Staff recognition of service and Mayoral Awards	Recognition of staff for 2019
20 December	Courier Mail	Visit by Journalist – Cooktown Expo 2020
	Meeting with Director General, Department of Local Government, Racing and Multicultural Affairs.	Advocacy



Community, Economy and Innovation department

It's been another productive three months of activity for the Community Economy and Innovation department.

Council has secured funding from the Australian Federal Government to deliver four major infrastructure projects to create a lasting legacy from the staging of Cooktown Expo 2020 (the Expo). Funding agreements for three of the projects have been executed, with project managers appointed and planning underway. The funding agreement for the fourth project is in the final stages of negotiation.

A team member participated in a road trip across the Cape to update Council's photo library, which is used for communications, marketing and promotional purposes. The photos will also be used to support the grant acquittal process, which is an essential activity, given Council's reliance on grant funding to underpin its operations.

The team has worked to foster a strong and productive relationship with Tourism Tropical North Queensland, the Regional Tourism Organisation which represents the interests of the Cape. Given that tourism is a key industry for the region, Council is firmly committed to supporting the growth of this important sector.

Planning for the Expo is well-advanced, with a comprehensive three week program developed, together with a supporting budget. The program will be signed off by Council over the coming weeks. Staff are working closely with a sponsorship specialist to secure additional

funding for the event. Plans for the provision of temporary accommodation in the region are also well in-hand, which include provision of a scalable temporary tent city.

The CEI team is currently developing a procurement process to secure a piece of artwork for use in Council's corporate documents, which provides an opportunity for a local artist to gain good exposure for their work.

Council's library service has secured grant funding to enable several nursery rhymes to be translated into Guugu Yimidhirr and Kuku Yalanji, both Indigenous languages of the region. The Cooktown swimming pool has delivered a range of programs over the school holidays, which has resulted in increased rates of participation.

Through grant funding provided by the State Government, Council has employed an officer to develop a Community Plan for the Shire, together with a Disaster Recovery Plan. This work will be replicated in the Wujal Wujal and Douglas Shires, as the position works across all three local government areas.

The CEI team also secured funding and coordinated the Lakeland and Laura Community Resiliency Blitz, which ran over a week in November. The blitz improved resiliency and raised disaster preparedness in both communities, and resulted in the completion of numerous community-raised maintenance and repair requests.





Hundreds enjoy free Sunset with Santa event at Cooktown's William Daku Park

More than 400 people enjoyed a free Christmas event on the waterfront thanks to Council's Tourism and Events team. Santa brought presents for 182 children, and Santa arrived in true Cooktown style, in a fire truck

courtesy of the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services Cooktown Auxiliary Brigade. Special thanks to the Cooktown CWA volunteers who cooked and served up 30kg of sausages and distributed cool drinks

and ice blocks to everybody. Everyone enjoyed the entertainment, which included face painting, a magic show from Flip Ripley the clown, children's games and craft and live music.



Council cash boosts locals

Six community groups shared more than \$21,000 during the last quarter from Council's 2019-20 Regional Arts Development Fund (RADF) and Community Grants programs. Among the recipients is the Queensland Country Womens Association, Cooktown Branch which received \$4178 for purchase and installation of an air conditioner in their hall. Other recipients included Dabu Jajikal Aboriginal Corporation, the Cooktown Men's Shed, the Cooktown Kindergarten Association, Cairns and District Chinese Association Inc and Lainie Franzi from the Bloomfield Art Club.

CEI boost teamwork with leadership and team building workshop

In November, the Community, Economy and Innovation team participated in a full day leadership and team building workshop at PCYC, facilitated by John Carr of Coach Central. The team gained invaluable insight into areas of work preference, communication differences among team members, team dynamics, how to utilise each person's skills and abilities to build an effective team, and much more. The CEI team continue to be mindful of what was learned during this training and implement the work methods learnt on a day to day basis.





3000km trip to update images

Council's Media and Communications Officer roughed it in October, spending three days camping on the road and covering more than 3500km to update Council's image bank. More than 120 images ranging from scenery and facilities, to Indigenous cultural sites, wildlife and roadworks were taken in locations including Aurukun Access Road, Portland Roads, Quintell Beach, Iron Range National Park, Lakefield National Park, Laura, Coen and Lakeland. The images will be used for various Council reports and media needs.



Fun in the sun at the pool

The inflatable obstacle course at the Cooktown Pool was enjoyed by numerous youngsters during the December school holidays.



Council supports Path to Treaty

Council's Planning Officer and Senior Coordinator Economy and Community Lifestyle attended the Path to Treaty community consultation session in Coen in October, along with local traditional owners, DATSIP staff and other stakeholders.



New cubby space for children at Cooktown Library

Thanks to funding from the State Library of Queensland's First Five Forever program, children have been enjoying a new space at the Cooktown Library. A wooden cubby was installed in December last year, and has been very popular with children.



Tourism team heads to Laura

Council's Tourism and Events team travelled to Laura for a tourism famil with Indigenous tour business Jarramali Rock Art Tours. Council staff met with business owner Johnny Murison, a Western Yalanji traditional owner, and three staff from Tourism Australia. The group discussed promoting Laura and the Quinkan Rock Art sites to international visitors and also discussed Cooktown Expo 2020 and gave Tourism Australia some Expo 2020 marketing collateral.



Country star to headline Expo

Country music superstar Troy Cassar-Daley was announced in November as a headline act at the Reconciliation Rocks Music Festival, which is part of Cooktown Expo 2020. Troy will join indie rockers Busby Marou and Torres Strait rapper Mau Power to lead a stellar line up of local and regional performers at the concert, which will be held from July 17 to 19, on the first weekend of the three-week Expo.



Bush tucker to feature at Expo

Vitamin-rich bush tucker is being collected across Cook Shire and snap frozen so it can star in five-star dinners and cooking demonstrations during Cooktown Expo 2020 next year. Bush foods expert, author and documentary maker Samantha Martin last week travelled to Cooktown, Hope Vale and Wujal Wujal to share her knowledge of Indigenous bush foods and how to collect and store them for future use. Youth and organisations from Cooktown, Hope Vale and Wujal Wujal including Wujal Wujal and Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Councils, Wujal Justice Group, Wujal Wujal My Pathway and Holy Spirit College are continuing to collect and store bush tucker in the lead up to Expo 2020, which runs from July 17 to August 4.

Lakeland and Laura Community Resiliency Blitz

Council staff and community volunteers helped prepare Lakeland and Laura for the disaster season during a week-long Community Resiliency Blitz in November.

In addition to general tidying, drain clearing, maintenance and green waste removal, the team completed improvements to the community hall in Lakeland, installed new seating, cleared and installed a safe path from the school and completed a house numbering and street plan. In Laura, works included street sweeping, vegetation and drain clearing, painting and drainage repairs at the airport, refurbishing the community hall, cemetery maintenance and a house numbering and street plan. More than 30 unwanted vehicles were removed, with the assistance of the Department of Housing and Public Works, and 5.16 tonnes of rubbish was removed, as well as two truckloads of tyres and one truckload of whitegoods.

Council also coordinated the distribution of disaster preparedness bags to the community, and visited Lakeland and Laura state schools to take the Queensland Government's Get Ready message directly to the students and a new chainsaw was presented to the Laura Rural Fire Brigade as part of Council's 2018-18 Get Ready Program.







Organisational Business Services department

During the last quarter, Council's Organisational Business Services directorate has progressed a number of operational initiatives and projects whilst undertaking its core service provision to both the community and Council as a whole.

Following the adoption of Council's Customer Service Charter in the previous quarter, strengthened internal processes for handling customer requests have resulted in improved response times and high rates of resolution, supported by the upgrade of Council's Customer Request Management system.

Council's Human Resources (HR) function had a successful quarter with a key focus on local recruitment campaigns. While Council already focuses strongly on local recruitment the HR team has taken active steps through local advertisements to encourage local candidates to apply.

Planning and Environment had a busy quarter receiving a higher than average number of development applications, which indicates positive growth for the Cook Shire region. The department also welcomed a new Environmental Health Officer who brings to Council a wealth of experience and knowledge in the field and who has hit the ground running in getting out into the community to establish positive working relationships with local business owners. Council's Information and Communications Technology (ICT) function powered ahead, progressing with the upgrade of Council's main server. Coupled with the implementation of cloud-based backup technology, this has directly lead to improved capacity for ICT in the provision of ongoing services to Council as a whole, as well as enabling essential improvements and technological

advances.

Council's Governance, Risk and Records function had a productive and legislatively-compliant quarter, rolling out Council's adopted delegations, managing the up-and-coming Audit and Risk Committee meeting, Right to Information requests and reviews, and ensuring Council's insurance portfolio is up-to-date and aligns with Council's operational and project-based requirements.

Land Tenure and Native Title has been working hard across the Cape productively with Cape York Land Council relating to Native Title issues and has kicked goals during the quarter achieving positive progress made with reference to Council's management of flood damage resourcing.

Building and Facilities finalised a number of projects through the quarter and picked up another round of work with the receipt of extra grant funding for the department. Works undertaken by the department for the period include painting and renewed flooring at the Cooktown Aerodrome, painting of the waterfront amenities block and the construction of a bore shed at the Coen Aerodrome. Of particular note was the opening of the new John Street Oval change facilities, which was a big project for which the team should be commended.

Overall it was an excellent quarter for Council's Organisational Business Services directorate, topped off by the review and moderated discussion of Council's recent Staff Engagement Survey which placed Cook Shire as one of Australia's best local government employers, based on employee feedback. It was a fantastic winding up of 2019.



New changerooms for John Street Oval

Minister for Sport, Housing, Public Works and Digital Technology Mick de Brenni opened the Queensland Government-funded changerooms at the John Street Oval in November. The changerooms project was coordinated by Council's Building and Facilities team.



ICT team working hard

The Council Information, Communication Technology (ICT) team's work is often appreciated but not seen, however the boys have also completed some highly visible upgrades. These included a new wireless link antenna at the Council depot and helping the water team locate fibre-optic cable.



Positive results from staff survey

Council's Organisational Business Services (OBS) division discussed the results of the recent Staff Engagement Survey. The results were extremely positive for all departments of Council, including the OBS team which results showed to be happy, proud and focused on delivering exceptional customer service to the community. Council was placed as one of Australia's best local government employers, based on employee feedback from the survey.



Council targets wandering livestock with portable cattle yards

Council continues to target problem wandering livestock by setting up the portable yards on private properties. A number of cattle were caught during November, and there is currently a waiting list of people who are willing to assist Council by having the yards set up on their properties.



Backup generator for Ayton radio tower

A backup generator was installed as part of the Ayton Radio Tower Resiliency Upgrades. Funding was provided by the Queensland Disaster Resilience Fund (QDRF) for the installation of a VHF repeater and upgrades to the power system at this important community infrastructure.



New paint for William Daku Park

The amenities block and kiosk at William Daku Park on the Cooktown waterfront received a lick of paint last quarter. The painting works were carried out by a local contractor, and included a repaint of all rendered surfaces and the main amenities block and kiosk.



Upgrade for Cooktown Airport terminal building

Painting works were carried out at Cooktown Aerodrome by a local contractor as part of the enhancement of Council's building and amenities in preparation for Cooktown Expo 2020. Areas painted included the exterior and interior of the terminal, toilets, tank stand and ramps.



Building team kept busy

The Building and Facilities team built a new shed for the storage of chemicals and equipment at Laura and upgraded the entrance and verandah on the Cooktown History Centre building in Cooktown.



Hands on for office workers

Proving old-fashioned hands-on work is sometimes the best option, Council's Planning and Environment Manager, Biosecurity Officer, Planning and Environment Senior Administrator and Facilities Team Leader acted promptly to respectfully assist with a burial at the cemetery. With the parks and gardens team unavailable at the time, the office-based staff donned boots and picked up shovels to move a large pile of earth and ensure the final send off ran smoothly.

Infrastructure department

The Infrastructure Directorate has had a busy second quarter in 2019-20 with record Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) works being largely completed by mid-December. The remaining works include about \$3 million worth of works to rectify landslip failures and a number of floodways.

With the wet season fast approaching at the end of the quarter, the Council road crew and contract road team were busy completing works before the Christmas shutdown. While the works period officially finished on November 5, crews continued through until December. The Savage Street upgrade project involved rock blasting and Aboriginal cultural heritage clearances and is expected to be finished in February 2020 with the installation of kerb and channel. Similarly the Poison Creek Road upgrade roadworks are underway and are expected to be completed in January.

The new pedestrian bridge across Two Mile Creek was installed some months ahead of schedule, with the concrete path scheduled for completion during the first part of 2020. A temporary unsealed path has been constructed so that residents and visitors can use the bridge.

The grant funding for upgrading to seal at three car parks at the Botanic Gardens precinct, as well as the entrance and a section of Finch Bay Road was approved. The access road has been designed and excavation works to subgrade the site have begun. The Grassy Hill to Cherry Tree Bay and Finch Bay track upgrade is at the funding review stage with the Queensland Reconstruction Authority.

Council's disaster preparation included Place of Refuge and Evacuation Centre training exercises; and Disaster Coordination Centre training. A great team of Shire staff and community volunteers participated in the Lakeland and Laura Resiliency Blitzes in November. In addition

to general tidying, drain clearance, maintenance and green waste removal, the team completed community improvements. Shire waste transfer stations also accepted sorted domestic waste for free during December to encourage cyclone clean ups.

The Annan Water Treatment Plant Operators work 365 days a year to ensure Cooktown has good quality water. As a result of below average rainfall, levels at the Annan River Weir dropped to a marker which required Council to instigate Level One water restrictions, which has resulted in a significant saving in water consumption.

John Street Oval was further improved with a drain cleared of regrowth and then armoured with rock to prevent erosion. The bank at the front of the new change rooms was also reshaped and top dressed with soil. Parks and Gardens will explore irrigation and grass cover for this new area as well.

Community safety and protection of property was again at the forefront with pruning and removal of several trees in the Cooktown Shire Hall grounds and on the corner of Walker and Adelaide streets.

A systems administrator position to assist Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangement (DRFA) works has been advertised to be filled in 2020. This position will play an instrumental role in the work to improve, develop and maintain sustainable software systems for DRFA related activities. This includes the maintenance and development of a range of computer-based systems such as DRFA Flood Damage Management, Assets, GIS and Spatial Access systems.



Airport emergency exercise

Airport staff and local emergency services sprang into action in response to a simulated plane crash at the Cooktown Airport.

Dubbed Exercise River Flat Rescue, the event helped airport and emergency personnel assess their preparation and systems.

The exercise involved Cook Shire Council, State Emergency Services, Queensland Ambulance Service, Queensland Fire and Emergency Services, Queensland Health, Hinterland Aviation, Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, My Pathway, Daintree Air Services and the Queensland Police.



Caring for parks and wildlife

When he's not keeping the town's community spaces green and tidy Parks and Gardens staff Broc Willis is a part time snake wrangler. He rescued a small children's python on the road to the Cooktown Waste Transfer Station and moved it to a safer location.



Water and wastewater team replacing asbestos water mains

The water and wastewater team replaced the 80mm asbestos cement water main in Council's depot. This is the first step in a planned upgrade of the ageing depot. The new main is 100mm UPVC.



Bloomfield fire safety boost

A 900m long, 7m wide fire management line which will reduce the risk of fire to Bloomfield residences and important assets including the town hall, Ergon Energy substation, Bloomfield Rural Fire Brigade shed and cricket ground and amenities was completed in October. The fire break was an initiative of the Cook Shire Fire Management Group which comprises stakeholders from across the shire, including Cook Shire Council, government departments, Aboriginal corporations, ranger groups, land trusts and property owners.



Recycled product gives new life to Coen playground

The Parks and Gardens team replaced the rotten timber sand surrounds at the Coen playground. The replacement material is made from recycled plastic and is expected to provide a lifespan of 20 years or more.



Unsafe tower removed

The water and wastewater team removed the old intake tower in the former town reservoir because it was structurally unsafe.

New side tipper for Council

Council's Fleet Manager Scott and truck driver Alan picked up a new Kenworth T610SAR side tipper and quad dog side tipping trailer from Townsville company Brown and Hurley in October. The truck will join Council's fleet, working on roadworks and Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements work across the Shire. Pictured is Alan with Brown and Hurley's Robert Garbutt.



Coen students better prepared for disaster following Council visit

Disaster Management Officer Tim and Community Development Officer Julie visited the Coen School in November to discuss how to prepare for natural disasters such as flooding, cyclones and fire, as well as the wet season. Each student was presented with a Get Ready bag that included lots of information about disaster preparedness.



DNRME land clearing workshop

Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy provided a presentation in October on land clearing, understanding vegetation mapping and clearing exemptions which may apply to Council activities as well as processes for land clearing in general. Land clearing and environmental regulations are an integral part of Council operations but are a consistently evolving area of law. Council continues to support staff in remaining up-to-date with regulatory and legislative changes to ensure compliance within Council operations. Further workshops are planned for 2020.

John Street oval drain tidy up

Council's works crew and parks and gardens team worked together to clear the drain next to John Street Oval. The drain was cleared of regrowth and then armoured with rock to prevent erosion. The bank at the front of the new change rooms was also reshaped and top dressed with soil, and Council will investigate irrigation and grass for the area.





New reservoir for Four Mile

The Four Mile Reservoir was replaced this year. The old reservoir was leaking badly and had reached the end of its life. The new reservoir also meets current safety standards for ladders and platforms and confined space entry and rescue.



Staff upskill with lifting training

Eight staff recently completed doggers training, which is the first competency of lifting. There are a lot of calculations, terminology and specifications staff must know to make a safe load assessment and safely guide the operator. It was a five day intensive course with both practical and theory assessments. It also covers the use of slinging techniques and helping a plant operator to move a load when it is out of the operator's view.

Staff from four different teams have completed this first stage of upskilling our team to create a safer working environment around lifting activities.

Upskilling for Council's water and wastewater team

Laurie Downs is completing his Certificate III in Water Operations. Laurie is pictured checking the SCADA computer at the Annan Water Treatment Plant.



Hard work to replace pipes

The brackets bracing the final treated pipe on the wall of the clearwater pump house at the Annan River water treatment plan are rusted and are being replaced. This involves digging up the pipe and providing support using concrete thrust blocks before replacing the brackets. Robert 'Stimpy' McGregor is pictured digging around the pipeline join.



Parks and gardens keeping our public spaces clean and inviting

Council's Parks and Gardens team has a huge job, especially maintaining vegetation during the wet season and irrigation and watering during the dry season. Among their routine tasks is cleaning of the fishing platforms at William Daku Park.

New Two Mile Creek walk bridge improves pedestrian safety and access on Charlotte Street



Following footing works in September, the new pedestrian bridge across Two Mile Creek was lifted into place in October using a 200 tonne crane. The accuracy of workmanship and attention to detail by Council's bridge



crew and Project Engineer meant the pre-fabricated bridge dropped into place without the need for any adjustments. The bridge is part of a project to improve pedestrian access and safety from the cemetery to

Racecourse Road. Installation of the bridge was months ahead of schedule with the concrete path scheduled for completion in 2020. A temporary unsealed path has been constructed so that the bridge can be used.



New parts for Annan plant

The non-return valves and isolation valves in the clearwater pump house at the Annan water treatment plant have been replaced by Neil 'Tomo' Thompson, Robert 'Stimpy' McGregor and Scott Harvey along with Annan Operators Lee Greaves (pictured) and Craig Hanran.

Facelift for park benches

Eight benches in the Botanic Gardens were given a facelift as part of routine maintenance. The benches, made locally from native bloodwood timber, were stripped back and repainted with sealant by Botanic Gardens staff, including Herbie Henderson.



New truck for Coen staff

A new hook truck and compactor was supplied to Coen. Pictured above is Coen-based staff member Benny loading the first rubbish pick up, and Coen town agent Bernie (left) with Waste Manager Sheils and Benny.