



SOUTHERN DOWNS REGIONAL COUNCIL ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING

LATE AGENDA ITEMS
Wednesday, 23 June 2021

ORDER OF BUSINESS:


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12.4 2021-2026 Corporate Plan

Document Information

 Southern Downs REGIONAL COUNCIL	Report To: Ordinary Council Meeting	
	Reporting Officer:	Meeting Date: 23 June 2021
	Governance, Risk And Land Coordinator	ECM Function No/s:

Recommendation

THAT Council adopt the attached 2021-2026 Corporate Plan for Southern Downs Regional Council.

Report

Council's 2019-2024 Corporate Plan is currently outdated and does not reflect Council's current vision for the next five years. As a result, a comprehensive review of the Corporate Plan has been undertaken to produce a plan which reflects the visions, aspirations and strategic direction of Council and the broader community for the next five years. The revised Corporate Plan is also strategically focused and complies with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2009* and the *Local Government Regulation 2012*.

The attached draft Plan incorporates four central themes of People, Places, Prosperity and Performance and each theme nominates a statement of intent, over-arching outcomes and strategies.

The process undertaken to review the Corporate Plan has included consultation with a variety of stakeholders including Councillors, staff, external stakeholders and the general community. A draft Plan was developed and community feedback was sought on 24 May 2021, closing on 6 June 2021. A total number of ten (10) responses were recorded through the online platform Survey Monkey in addition to one detailed email response.

The general themes of the feedback are summarised as follows:

1. The Plan is heavily focused on the stereotypical core business of local governments;
2. There is a greater need for community engagement and community projects/initiatives to be identified within the Plan;
3. The Plan requires an increased focus on climate change and environmental concerns.

Consideration of this feedback was undertaken and as a result, the following significant amendments were made to the draft Plan:

- Inclusion of new deliverable number 10 (page 7) - actively support community initiatives to enhance general community wellbeing. Noting that this addresses general themes 1 and 2 outlined above.
- Inclusion of a new outcome for deliverable number 10 (page 7) - facilitation of community activities/projects within the region e.g. community garden.

- Amended the list of core services/functions listed in deliverable number 29 (page 12) to include libraries, community/youth services and fitness centres. Noting that this addresses general themes 1 and 2 outlined above.
- Inclusion of a new outcome for deliverable number 32 (page 13) - local businesses be identified and supported wherever possible for the provision of goods and services.
- Inclusion of a new outcome for deliverable number 34 (page 14) - implementation of strategies to address issues identified in the customer surveys to optimise service delivery.

In relation to the feedback about climate change and environmental concerns, it was determined that this is already sufficiently addressed in the plan under deliverable numbers 12, 22 and 24 and more broadly under the Places theme.

Budget Implications

Council engaged an external facilitator to assist with part of the consultation phase for this project at a cost of approximately \$9,000. In addition, staff time was utilised for facilitation, advice and graphic design.

Policy Consideration

Nil.

Community Engagement

Internal Consultation

Councilors and staff were consulted at various stages throughout the development of the Corporate Plan.

External Consultation

Community feedback was sought on 24 May 2021 for a period of two weeks. A small number of submissions were received about the draft Plan.

Legislation/Local Law

The Corporate Plan is a legislative requirement under the *Local Government Act 2009* and the *Local Government Regulation 2012* (sections 165 and 166). It must outline the strategic direction for Council over a five year period and state the performance indicators for measuring progress.

Attachments

1. 2021-2026 Corporate Plan [↓](#)

CORPORATE PLAN

PEOPLE. PLACES. PROSPERITY. PERFORMANCE

2021
2026



A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE, WORK, PLAY AND STAY.

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SOUTHERN DOWNS SOCIAL PROFILE

Estimated Population:

35,407

Regional Area:

7,120 km²

*Source: Community Profile www.sdrpc.qld.gov.au

Encompassing the rural centres of Warwick and Stanthorpe, Southern Downs is conveniently located within two hours' drive from Brisbane and in the high growth region of Southern Queensland.

The region services a growing population of approximately 35,407* and covers an area of approximately 7,120 square kilometres.

From magnificent historic sandstone buildings to sophisticated wine cellars and areas of outstanding natural beauty, Southern Downs offers an annual calendar filled with internationally renowned events and attractions to satisfy all interests.

The region is renowned for producing high quality agricultural products and offers an ideal environment for business and industry growth.

With clean, crisp country air, a low crime rate and a wide range of educational, medical and other community facilities, Southern Downs offers a terrific lifestyle in a welcoming regional community.



Cover: The Flood, Condamine River, Southern Downs, Queensland
Back: Girraween National Park, Stanthorpe, Southern Downs, Queensland

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CORPORATE PLAN STRUCTURE





PEOPLE



STATEMENT OF INTENT

OUR PEOPLE live in diverse urban and rural communities where varied cultures are recognised and celebrated for their differences.

OVER-ARCHING OUTCOMES

As a local government we will support community wellbeing and capacity for self-help and mutual collaboration by a range of community services and initiatives that promote the quality of life and opportunity for all to grow, learn, create, care and connect.

STRATEGIES

FOCUS AREA = COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Review engagement and communications strategies to improve trust and joint advocacy in the interests of residents, our communities and the region as a whole.

Deliverables	Outcomes
1. Review and update the Shaping Southern Downs strategy in consultation with key stakeholders including residents, ratepayers and the community.	>> Update complete and consultation constructive. Progress made in achieving key strategic targets.
2. Review Council's Media and Communication Engagement Strategy to increase its effectiveness in improving trust with the community and building Council's brand.	>> Improved community sentiment through survey. Continued goodwill from local and regional media.
3. Advocate for Councillor, staff and community representation on government, non-government committees and task forces relevant to the region.	>> Number of committees with Councillor, Council staff and community representatives.



FOCUS AREA = LEARNING AND DEVELOPING

Engage with communities and advocate on their behalf for greater educational, development and community capacity building opportunities while maintaining connections to Council.

Deliverables

Outcomes

- | | |
|--|---|
| 4. Engage with target groups within the community including young people to identify programs that will assist them to develop skills to enhance employment opportunities. | >> Engagement outcomes reported. |
| 5. Lobby education providers to offer increased training and learning opportunities for members of the community. | >> Skills gap completed.
Number of agencies consulted to achieve growth in training courses and spaces for learning across a range of programs. |
| 6. Engage with community groups to assist them to increase their connection to Council and their effectiveness and sustainability. | >> Number of targeted consultations undertaken and their effectiveness.
Number of programs undertaken.
Increased awareness of Council's operations. |
| 7. Offer contemporary library services across the region that reflect the needs of the community. | >> Increased library patronage. |



FOCUS AREA = WELLBEING AND DIVERSITY

Partner with external agencies and encourage active and healthy lifestyles celebrating cultural diversity.

Deliverables

8. Partner with relevant sport and recreation stakeholders to encourage active lifestyles throughout the region.
9. Develop and promote our unique artistic and cultural diversity whilst acknowledging and maintaining local heritage.
10. Actively support community initiatives to enhance general community wellbeing.

Outcomes

- >> Number of targeted consultations undertaken and their effectiveness.
Number of programs undertaken.
- >> Increased number of events and programs.
Increased visitation.
- >> Facilitation of community activities/projects within the region e.g. community garden.

Stay



OVER-ARCHING OUTCOMES

STRATEGIES

OUR PLACES serve the needs of our people, providing attractive environments for living, working, playing and staying. Our places are accessible, protected, fit for purpose, safe and sustainable.

As a local government we will ensure that the built and natural environments are based on a foundation of assets that will be strategically planned, effectively maintained and managed to support the lifestyle of the community and that our parks, waterways and environmental reserves are protected, celebrated and well managed.

FOCUS AREA = SAFETY AND PLANNING

Plan and prepare for safe, well managed and maintained, liveable areas minimising adverse outcomes from crime, injury and disaster events.

Deliverables	Outcomes
11. Partner with relevant agencies to develop a proactive approach to community safety and resilience in relation to Disaster Management, Bushfire preparedness and other natural disasters.	>> Improved response, recovery and coordination.
12. Rewrite the Planning Scheme in consultation and partnership with the community to ensure sound social, environmental and economic outcomes.	>> New Planning Scheme successfully implemented. Orderly and balanced development within the region, Good social/environmental/economic outcomes.
13. Ensure flood data and mapping is readily available to enable appropriate decision making.	>> Residents have access to up to date flood data and mapping.
14. Review the Urban Design Framework program.	>> Urban Design Frameworks' implementation progressed and critical aspects captured by the new Planning Scheme.



FOCUS AREA = ACCESSIBILITY AND SERVICES

Provide sustainable and cost effective services and facilities to our communities and advocate to State and Federal Government on behalf of our residents.

Deliverables	Outcomes
15. Lobby and plan for practical and cost effective solutions that provide safe and accessible air, road and rail transport corridors for the community, visitors and industry.	>> Improved transport networks including the New England Highway, the Cunningham Highway, rail links and regional airports.
16. Advocate for greater regional accessibility to essential services for all residents and visitors.	>> Essential services defined. Increased number of alliances and partnerships.
17. Through meaningful community engagement, review Council's level of service to the community, including consideration of needs, wants and resourcing.	>> Service levels defined and adopted by Council.
18. Focus funding and grant opportunities to critical services and infrastructure.	>> Increased funding as a percentage of budget allocated to critical services and infrastructure.



FOCUS AREA = SUSTAINABILITY

Adopt good practice approaches to environmental management to educate, protect, conserve and sustain our region.

Deliverables

Outcomes

- | | |
|---|---|
| 19. Further develop regional waste facilities in accordance with the Waste Management Plan. | >> Waste management plan outcomes are achieved. |
| 20. Implement innovative and affordable waste management 'good practice'. | >> Adoption of innovation within the waste business resulting in an affordable service. |
| 21. Develop and implement a Water Security Strategy that ensures a sustainable and reliable water supply for the region. | >> Community confidence improved through educational programs. Appropriate and community acceptable water restrictions. |
| 22. Promote, educate and implement awareness programs in relation to water conservation, waste management, wastewater recycling and environmental health and associated services. | >> Number of effective programs implemented around the achievement of water conservation and waste minimisation targets. |
| 23. Develop policies to enhance our agricultural sector and protect priority agricultural land from invasive pest animals and pest plants. | >> No increase in area of impacted land due to pest animals and plants. |
| 24. Manage our natural environment and facilitate planning that ensures ecological corridors are recognised and that Council owned and controlled land and open spaces are strategically planned. | >> Environmental Sustainability Strategy adopted by Council and key agreed actions initiated. Desired outcomes incorporated into the new Planning Scheme. |



PROSPERITY



Play STATEMENT OF INTENT

OUR PROSPERITY is supported by a constructive inter-relationship of public infrastructure and private investment, to facilitate sustainability and growth of the local economy.

OVER-ARCHING OUTCOMES

As a local government we will advocate for and support initiatives to create local economic conditions conducive to the attraction and development of an educated, skilled and well remunerated local workforce, a productive and sustainable rural sector and profitable commercial and industrial enterprises.

STRATEGIES

FOCUS AREA = POPULATION GROWTH

Grow our population to improve our long term sustainability whilst maintaining our unique character.

Deliverables	Outcomes
25. Develop and implement a Residential Attraction Strategy and a Job Creation Strategy to attract a diverse range of new residents to the region.	>> Strategies developed and first year action plan achieved. Second, third and fourth year action plans finalised at annual review.
26. Encourage residential and commercial development by implementing user friendly and proactive practices to make doing business with Council easier.	>> Processes streamlined and more efficient use of staff resources. Reduced timeframes for assessment.

FOCUS AREA = COMMUNICATIONS AND DEVELOPMENT INFRASTRUCTURE

Encourage technology providers to improve services that attract and retain businesses and advocate to other levels of government for nation building infrastructure.

Deliverables	Outcomes
27. Lobby telecommunication and technology providers to improve the quality and depth of services which will assist in the attraction of sustainable businesses within the region.	>> Number of lobbying activities conducted to encourage improved accessibility to high quality services.
28. Implement an effective advocacy program and a plan for securing increasing support for infrastructure investment across the region.	>> Development of an advocacy plan and number of activities resulting in increased support for infrastructure investment across the region.
29. Continue to provide quality core services/ functions to the community in the following areas, whilst ensuring that Council's legislative obligations are met:	>> Participation in the development of the Regional Infrastructure Plan. Services meet legislative requirements. Level of service maintained.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • libraries • building • plumbing • cemeteries • development assessment • community/youth services • parks and gardens • pools/fitness centres • waste • roads and drainage • water and sewerage • environmental protection • pest management 	



12 Southern Downs Regional Council
CORPORATE PLAN 2021 - 2026

SOUTHERN DOWNS
A GRLA PLACE: OLIVE, WORK, PLAY AND S. AY.



FOCUS AREA = ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM

Implement Economic Development and Tourism Strategies with a focus on making Southern Downs a destination of choice for businesses and visitors.

Deliverables	Outcomes
30. Implement the Southern Downs Economic Development Strategy.	>> Strategy developed and first year action plan achieved. 2nd, 3rd and 4th year action plans finalised at annual review.
31. Establish an Innovation and Development Committee and investigate the viability and potential benefits of an Innovation Hub.	>> Monitor and report on Committee outcomes and Hub viability.
32. Engage with business stakeholders and representative groups in relation to employment and expansion opportunities.	>> Meetings held and supply chain mapping. Local businesses be identified and supported wherever possible for the provision of goods and services.
33. Review infrastructure charges and developer incentives to provide a balanced and supportive approach to investment.	>> Development incentive strategy completed. Number of Lots developed.



PERFORMANCE

Work

STATEMENT OF INTENT

OUR PERFORMANCE as an effective local government – striving for excellence in every way – is underpinned by our values which we seek to demonstrate in all we do: **Success, Determination, Resilience, and Commitment.**

OVER-ARCHING OUTCOMES

As a local government we will seek – in the context of available resources and the demands of our core business – to demonstrate integrity and good governance, an orientation toward quality results through innovation, pursuit of excellence in service provision and continual engagement and communication with our communities and other stakeholders.

STRATEGIES

FOCUS AREA = CUSTOMER FOCUS

Continue a strong commitment to customer service regularly seeking feedback to enhance performance across the organisation.

Deliverables

Outcomes

34. Monitor and evaluate Council operations and conduct surveys of customer satisfaction levels.

>> Customer surveys completed and data analysed.
Implementation of strategies to address issues identified in the customer surveys to optimise service delivery.

35. Be a 'Customer Led' organisation and embody excellence in customer service, interaction and positive outcomes for our customers.

>> Customer Charter created, implemented and measured.

36. Be a high performing organisation by having high performing and empowered staff through personal and professional development, wellness programs and proactive support.

>> Effective training and wellness programs identified and implemented.
Staff surveys undertaken and improvement strategies developed.
Focus Groups formed and operating effectively.



FOCUS AREA = ORGANISATIONAL EXCELLENCE

Continue to pursue good governance, be an employer of choice, leverage technology and manage all assets responsibly.

Deliverables	Outcomes
37. Become an employer of choice – appropriate training, innovative leadership and improved career pathways.	>> Wider range of training offered to staff. Staff surveys completed which reveal an increased satisfaction with Council's approach to organisational development.
38. Invest in smart technologies to deliver better services to the community.	>> Undertake reviews of technology services utilising industry experts. Contemporary technologies used to improve service delivery and communications.
39. Complete, review and continuously improve Asset Management Plans and use them as the basis for prioritising investments in infrastructure renewal, repair and maintenance.	>> All Asset Management Plans completed and reviewed and, prepare a robust ten year financial plan including external peer review.
40. Promote a proactive approach to risk management, including business continuity.	>> Appropriate risks identified and training provided. Regular risk reporting completed and changes to practices introduced if required.
41. Implement and promote a strong Governance Framework.	>> Audit and Risk Management Committee functional and Internal Audit Plan implemented.
42. Allocate resources to core business over non-core business.	>> Organisational Structure aligned and resource allocation monitored.
43. Provide and maintain a safe and healthy work environment for employees, contractors, volunteers and visitors to the workplace so far as it is reasonably practicable.	>> Compliance with legislative requirements.



FOCUS AREA = ENERGY INITIATIVES

Seek opportunities to increase renewable energy sources and reduce Council's carbon footprint.

Deliverables	Outcomes
44. Consider implementing innovative measures to reduce Council's energy use and seek grant funding for alternate energy systems.	>> Reduction in Council's energy usage.
45. Encourage the use of renewable energy sources, such as wind and solar power.	>> Community uptake of renewable energy sources is increased.
46. Explore pathways to reduce our carbon footprint whilst reducing expenses or generating income.	>> Relevant outcomes considered as part of the new Planning Scheme process. Innovative ideas developed for further investigation. Building assets sustainability reviewed and action plan developed.

FOCUS AREA = FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

Pursue efficiency and economy in all activities and seek to improve non-rate revenue sources.

Deliverables	Outcomes
47. Review and maintain strategies to ensure Council's long term financial sustainability and continuous improvement through embracing innovation.	>> Financial statistics demonstrate improvement.
48. Identify Council's core business activities and prioritise resources on these areas.	>> Core business and services clearly articulated and funding as a percentage of budget increases.
49. Actively seek revenue sources, including grants and disposal of under utilised land, buildings and facilities to fund regional infrastructure and services.	>> Alternative revenue sources explored.
50. Undertake Council's commercial activities in order to maximise revenue streams.	>> Increased return on investment.

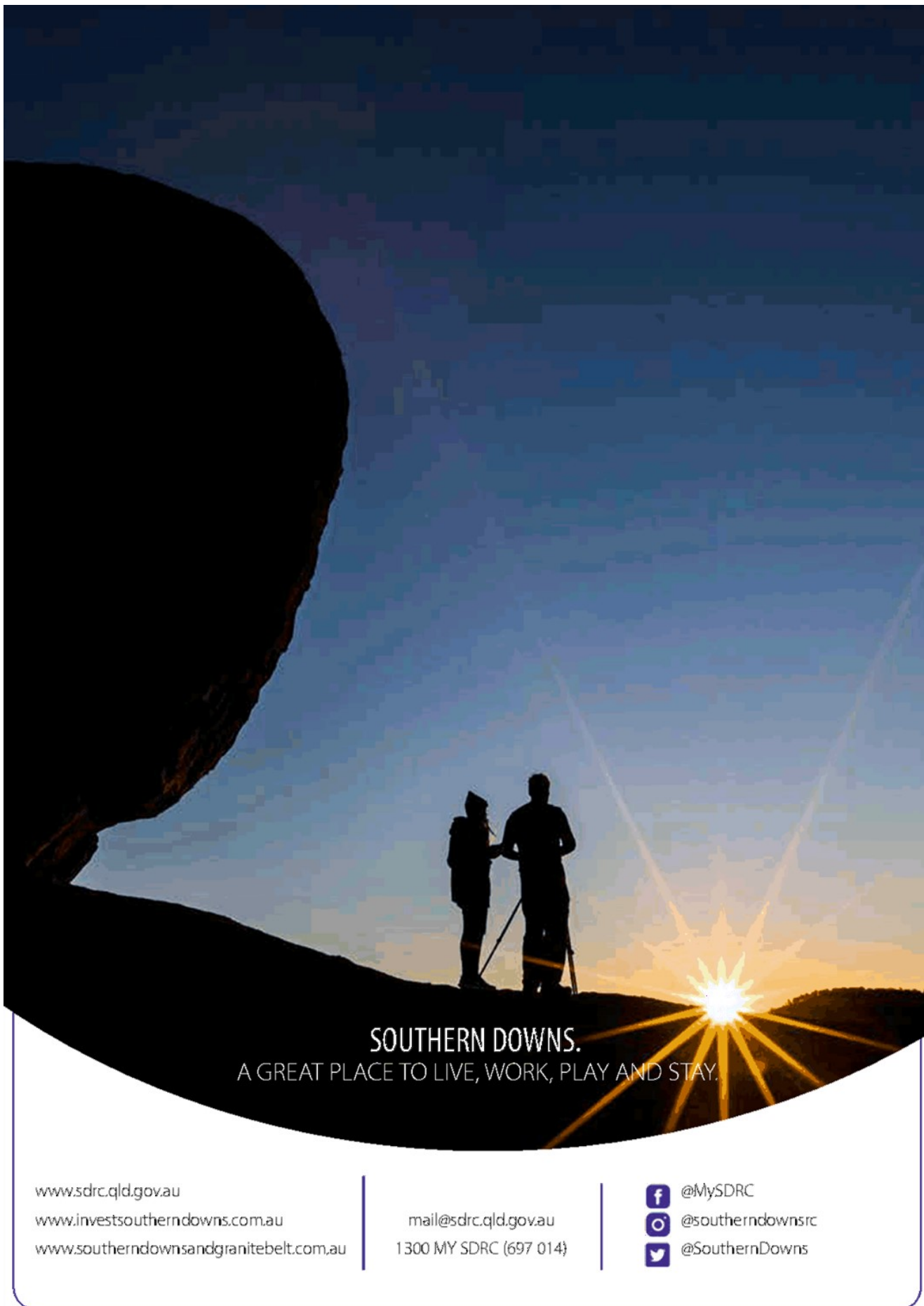


FOCUS AREA = PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATION




Continue effective partnerships with the community, neighbouring Councils and Government agencies and strengthen internal coordination and collaboration.

Deliverables	Outcomes
51. Commit to strategic alliances between Council, other local governments and key agencies.	>> Current strategic alliances are maintained and new alliances are formed.
52. Commit to strong collaboration between Council's organisational units to integrate service and connectivity with the community.	>> Number of internal processes reviewed and customer service improvement initiatives implemented.
53. Proactively engage with media outlets to promote information that is accurate and beneficial for all stakeholders.	>> Document regular interactions with the media.

Work

A promotional graphic for Southern Downs Council. The top half features a silhouette of two people standing on a rocky outcrop, looking out over a vast landscape at sunset or sunrise. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright starburst effect with rays of light. The sky is a mix of deep blue and orange. The bottom half of the graphic is a white curved banner containing contact information and social media links.

SOUTHERN DOWNS.
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