

COUNCIL ACTIVITIES

Introduction

Johnstone Shire Council is committed to the provision of infrastructure and service to meet the needs of the community. Additionally, the Council is dedicated to maintaining the assets and liveability of the Shire.

News

Environmental investigations continued—to establish guidelines for improving the sewage treatment plant in order to reduce nutrients entering the waterways. Once these guidelines are set, work can progress to redeveloping the plant to meet new target levels. This will involve the addition of tertiary treatment.

The development of sewage at Mission beach progressed during 2003, with contracts awarded for all works, the sewage treatment plant, and for the pump stations and all reticulation.

Overflows from the sewage reticulation system for Innisfail were a problem again in 2003. Infiltration of groundwater during wet weather is the major cause of sewage overflows. In total 31 overflows occurred during 2003.

The town's sewage system has had only relatively small upgrades since installation in the 1970's. Expansion of the town with new suburban areas has added further pressure on the system. While larger pumps were installed to cope, the reticulation piping itself was not upgraded.

Whilst a respite was experienced during recent dry years, the overflow problem has returned with the wet weather, with significant amounts of sewage contaminated stormwater being released into the urban environment and thence into the creeks and rivers.

Council is now making a response to the situation, with the first priority being repair and upgrade of the reticulation system. A four year plan will be developed in 2004, with a goal of preventing overflows, and the inclusion of tertiary treatment at the sewage treatment plant.



Flood mapping was developed and made available to the public for the Innisfail area. The maps describe the levels of water likely to be experienced during slight flooding (a 1 in 5 year event) through to severe floods (a 1 in 100 year event).

The development of the Cycleway & Shared Use Path Strategy progressed towards completion. The draft report is due for release in April 2004. The aim of the plan is to guide future planning of footpaths and cycleways and encourage more walking and cycling in the Shire.

Pressure

- Council's role is to ensure service provision meets the requirements of the community, and;

To sponsor developments or services that increase the standard of living and opportunity in the community. This has to be balanced against the cost of maintenance of existing services and infrastructure.

To represent and support a diversity of viewpoints in the community. However, Council sets an example as a leader to private enterprise and the community and must determine the best direction in balance with these viewpoints.

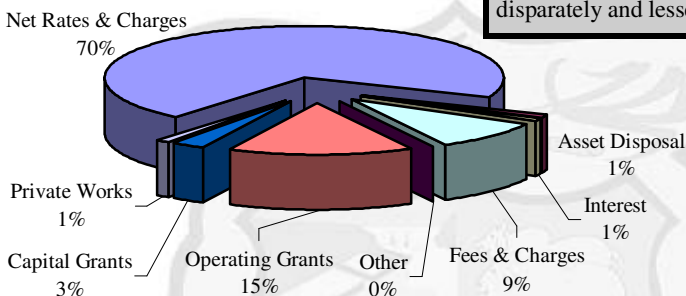
To be environmentally responsible in with the goals of sustainability, to ensure that opportunities for future generations remain at the same or a better standard that they currently exist at.

Council Employment – 194 Employees
(includes permanent, temporary and casual)

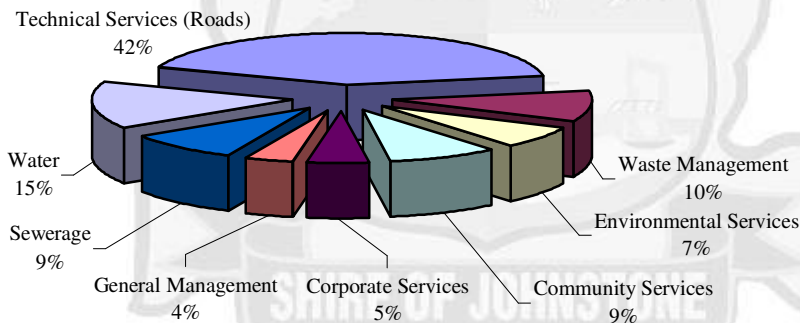
General Management	5
Corporate Services	20
Community Services	25
Environmental Services	33
Technical Services	111

Implications
 - Council facilitates the standard of living for the community through its services and controls. When this breaks down there can be inadequate infrastructure, potential health issues, lack of local law enforcement, and neglect of community issues and the environment. Rates and fees may also increase when Council is not able to manage its funds to meet its responsibilities.
 Council also provides a central hub from which direction can be organised. Without this, community groups attempting progress may act disparately and lessen their achievements.

Council Income



Council Spending



Functions	Revenue		Total revenue	Total expenses	Net result	Assets
	Grants	Other				
General Management	58,812	316,913	375,755	701,915	(326,160)	1,110,714
Corporate Services	1,647,874	9,586,525	11,234,399	1,245,381	9,989,018	14,822,276
Environment Services	252,417	292,129	544,546	1,548,247	(616,116)	1,003,701
Technical Services	690,175	616,459	1,306,634	9,818,705	(8,512,071)	76,895,056
Waste Management	15,067	2,496,051	2,511,118	2,478,557	32,561	2,006,414
Water	-	2,622,441	2,622,441	3,461,634	(839,193)	45,541,093
Sewerage	-	2,020,225	2,020,225	2,215,578	195,353	18,438,894
Total	3,991,848	18,150,041	22,141,889	23,612,904	(1,471,015)	163,240,059

Further analyses of these figures are available in the JSC Annual Report 2002/2003.



Conclusion

Council achieved positive progress in 2003 towards a number of new projects and initiatives. However, lack of maintenance of existing facilities has led to large expected costs over the next few future years.

Future Direction

Council will require greater commitment to long term planning, to ensure that maintenance of important systems is not neglected. The cost of repair of the sewage reticulation will have some impacts on other service provision.

The range of services that Council provides will continue to improve—with the addition of sewage at Mission beach, and the recreational opportunities afforded by the Cycleway strategy.

State of the Shire went live to radio in 2003 – Council staff were interviewed by the ABC. Summaries from the State of the Shire sections were included in the Innisfail Advocate to increase the exposure of this information to the public, and to heighten awareness of the source.

Dry weather during the year tended to concentrate chemicals and metals emanating from Council's landfills and transfer operations to ground and surface waters. The following exceedences of licences limits were recorded, but no clear patterns have proved evident, and no impacts on wildlife (eg. fishkill) have been seen: Stoters Hill (3) - Iron (may be normal for area). Bells Creek (2) - Iron and Lead. Goondi (6) - Ammonia, Zinc and Turbidity. Monitoring continues; to determine if landfill remediation work may be necessary in the future.



Report Card for Council Activities

OVERALL GRADE

B-

Criteria	Grade	Recommendation	Explanation
Action on recommendations 12 of 12 Completed	A+	All 2000 benchmark recommendations.	All have been investigated, and those practical have been acted upon.
State of the Shire	D-	-Development -IEMS -Maintenance	-Progress continued towards improving facilities around the Shire. -Some non-compliance, but this is due to past practices at the closed landfills. Monitoring will continue to determine the need for remediation work. -Council failed to conduct basic maintenance on the sewage system. This has led to great problems.
Goal Achievement	B	-All	Although work was conducted towards all recommendations, a few were impracticable.
Community Awareness	B	-Reporting	The annual report, and State of the Shire reporting continue as open sources of information to the community. The Council advertises important announcements in the Innisfail Advocate.