



Australia's most sustainable region
Healthy. Smart. Creative.

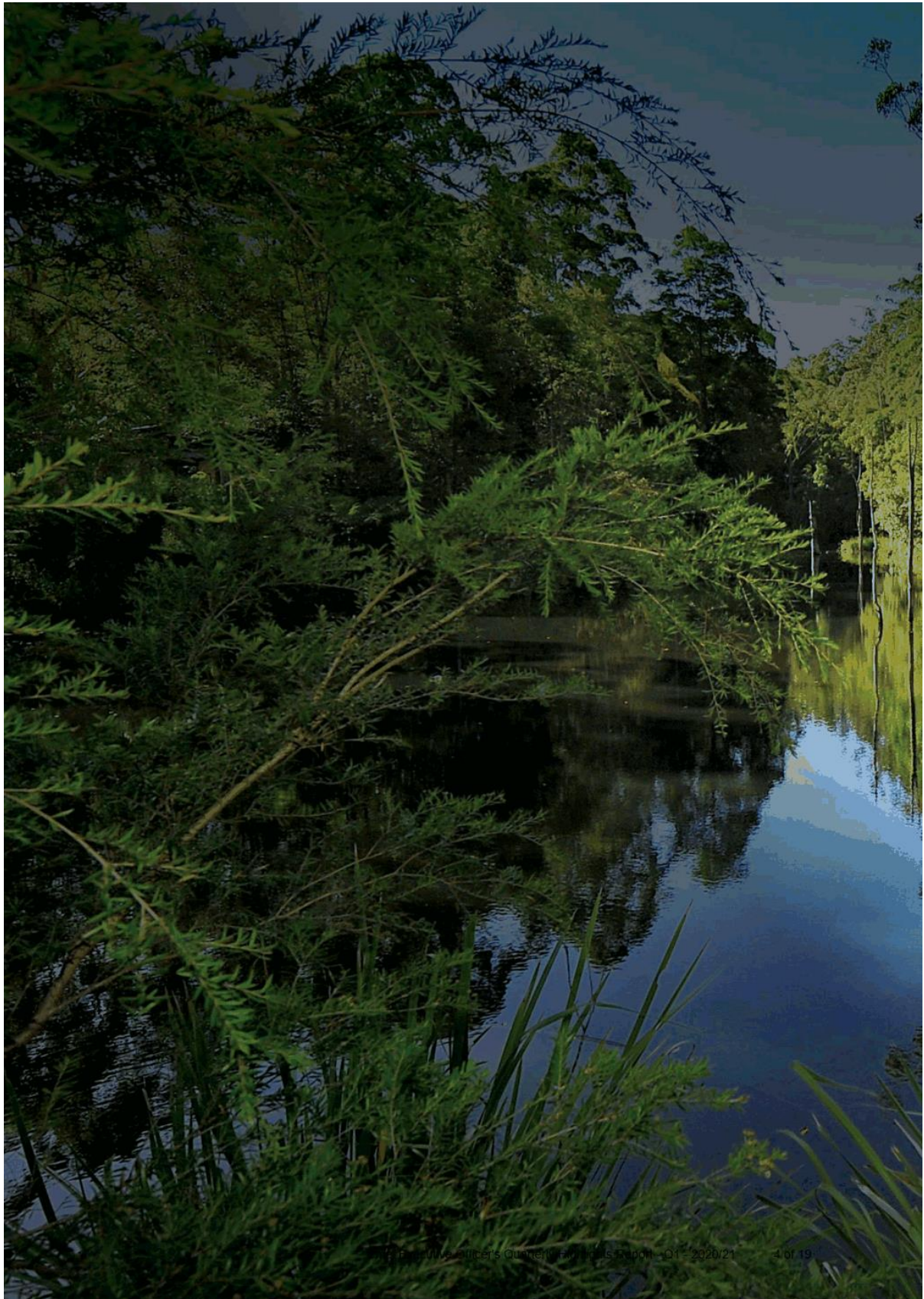


Sunshine Coast Council
CEO's Quarterly Highlights Report
Quarter 1 – 2020/21






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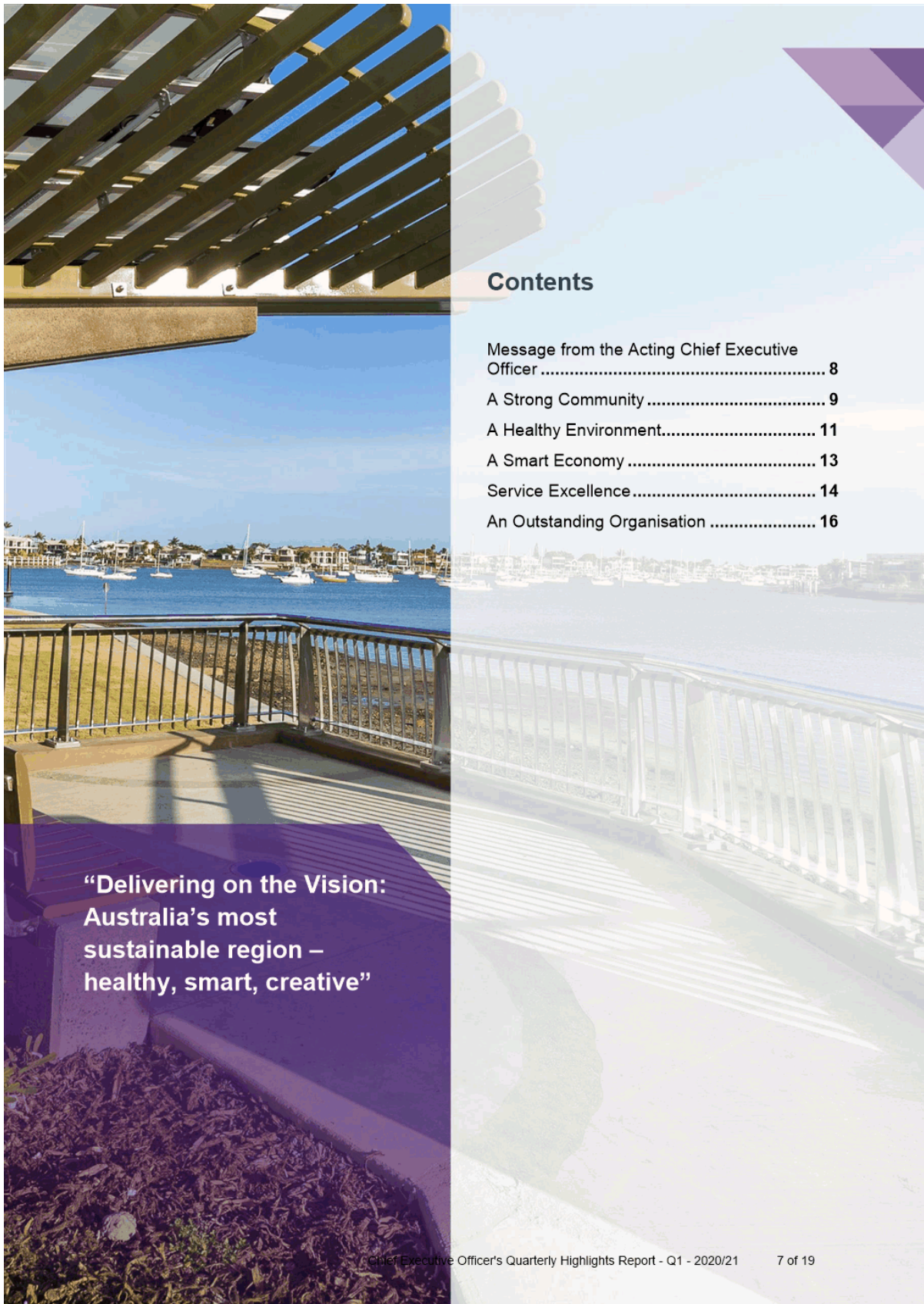
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Acknowledgement of Country

Sunshine Coast Council acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of this region, the Kabi Kabi and Jinibara peoples. Council commits to working in partnership with the Traditional Custodians and the broader First Nations community to support self-determination through economic and community development.



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**“Delivering on the Vision:
Australia’s most
sustainable region –
healthy, smart, creative”**



Message from the Acting Chief Executive Officer

Our early planning, COVID Safe Plans and our ability to adapt and transition to a 'new normal', has placed our region in a prime position for a fast recovery from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. We have been open to visitors who are choosing the Sunshine Coast as a holiday destination to explore, access our facilities, sample our local businesses, and enjoy our way of life.

This has been made possible by everyone on the Sunshine Coast working together to manage the impacts of the pandemic and it pleases me to say we are seeing great outcomes from our efforts.

As some southern states continued to work hard to control COVID-19 outbreaks, Council was able to support a number of national sporting codes and teams to temporarily relocate to the Sunshine Coast to utilise our first-class facilities and provide opportunities locally.

National Rugby League team the Melbourne Storm temporarily relocated to the Sunshine Coast to host six 'home' games during August and September under COVID Safe Plans at the Sunshine Coast Stadium. The exposure from these events alone has provided great opportunities for our region, and has contributed to the local economy by stimulating extra trade for local suppliers as well as providing social benefits for our community, and followers of these teams across the nation.

A number of initiatives have been progressed to support local businesses recover from the impacts of COVID-19 including providing business signage and information resources to local businesses, as well as the delivery of the Professional Advice Support program. In addition, the 'Vitamin SC' campaign was launched to generate jobs and prosperity in

the region, promoting companies to relocate to the Sunshine Coast.

The official lifeguard patrol season kicked off this quarter, with more than 20 areas across the Sunshine Coast being patrolled. Council has allocated \$5.5 million in the 2020/21 budget to our unsung water heroes who help keep our beaches safe. This investment includes the start of the new Bokarina Beach lifeguard tower as well as a number of new seasonal patrols.

Our new Chief Executive Officer, Emma Thomas was announced in September following an extensive recruitment process. I welcome Emma to the role and look forward to working with her as she leads our outstanding organisation to continue to serve our community with excellence and position the region for the future. I would also like to take the opportunity to thank everyone that has made my time as Acting Chief Executive Officer so rewarding.

As we settle into our new way of life under public health restrictions, the safety and wellbeing of our community and our employees remains front of mind for Council. We will continue to navigate the situation before us, seek out opportunities and plan for the future as we progress towards our vision of Australia's most sustainable region. Healthy. Smart. Creative.

Warren Bunker
Acting Chief Executive Officer

A Strong Community

Together we thrive - in all our communities, people are included, treated with respect and opportunities are available to all.



Over 140,000

visitors to the Libraries for the quarter



\$1.4 million

was allocated through 200 community grants for the quarter



110,819(m²)

total area of roads delivered, valued at \$4.5 million this quarter

Community and cultural development

The delivery of the grants program was supported by a review of the COVID-19 Community Response Grant and the provision of five grant information sessions and workshops attended by 86 people.

Council received a total of 459 applications for funding through its Community Grants Program. A total of \$1,361,943 was allocated through 200 grants to support a range of projects and activities contributing to the achievement of Council's vision for the region.

The heritage sector received \$207,000 in Heritage Levy grants funding and the Regional Arts Development Fund provided 11 projects with \$57,657.

Citizenship Ceremonies recommenced under a COVID Safe Plan, with three consecutive ceremonies held on the one day with 347 in attendance (196 recipients from 43 countries and 151 guests).

Disaster management

The annual disaster management exercise, Exercise PANDANUM, was delivered on 1 September 2020. The exercise was a bushfire scenario requiring evacuations of residents within the affected community, with a focus on developing operational strategies to encompass COVID-19 restrictions currently in place for our region. The Sunshine Coast Local Disaster Management Group have plans in place to ensure that the required operations are carried out in accordance with current State Government guidelines and restrictions.

Libraries

Library membership increased to 112,677, which includes 1397 new online members. COVID Safe Plans have allowed the reopening of libraries and the

welcoming of 141,409 visitors borrowing 461,473 items this quarter.

Library programs have remained exclusively online and public computer access is now available. The use of eBooks and eAudiobooks have remained high. Borrowing of eBooks is up by 44 percent compared with the same period last year. eAudiobook downloads are up by 24 percent and eMusic by 50 percent. eMagazines have continued to rise in popularity with a further 19 percent increase in downloads compared to the previous quarter.

Lifeguards

The official patrol season (September to May) commenced, coinciding with the launch of the new Bokarina Beach lifeguard tower.

Council will invest \$5.5 million into the lifeguard services program this financial year with more than 20 areas across the Sunshine Coast being patrolled by highly skilled lifeguards as well as lifesavers. Council's investment in lifeguard services this season will also see an increase to two lifeguards at Twin Waters plus a lifeguard outpost service at Maroochy River mouth during September, Christmas and the Easter school holidays.

Roads, cycleways and pathways

Road Safety

A proactive approach to road safety has been undertaken, with the utilisation of GIS mapping data to review speed limits, line marking, signage and delineation of all neighbourhood collector and district collector roads throughout the region. Council is also investigating minor crash locations which qualified as minor blackspot locations or where crash clusters have



been identified. This has resulted in several signage and line marking improvements being implemented.

Parklands Boulevard, Meridan Plains

Major road widening work, surface upgrades and construction of new and improved pedestrian, cycle and public transport facilities continued along Parklands Boulevard. A new 2.5-3.0m wide shared path facility along the northern side of the upgrade has been completed and offers significantly improved safety and an enhanced travel experience for pedestrians and cyclists, particularly those using the facility during peak school periods.

Road network management

A number of road network management initiatives have progressed this quarter, including:

- the 'Share The Path' campaign which was implemented across the region, targeting hot spots that have generated complaints of users not sharing the path, with local consultants engaged to undertake an Intercept Survey of path users
- free Cycling Workshops have been arranged for the Aura community as part of the Ridescore sponsorship agreement with Stockland
- Council has applied for a grant to support Heavy Vehicle Driver Awareness Training for drivers at Sunbus, BusLink and Council to raise awareness of the danger to cyclists.

Mooloolaba Transport Corridor Upgrade

Construction of Stage 1B of the Mooloolaba Transport Corridor Upgrade – Walan Street four lane upgrade is being undertaken by Hall Contracting Pty Ltd. The project has been subject to major, unforeseen delays principally caused by water main issues. Mitigation measures have required delivery changes with the full closure of Walan Street to enable the acceleration of the works to complete the majority by December 2020, weather and site conditions permitting.

Sporting Facilities

This quarter has seen the re-opening of many community sporting facilities and aquatic centres following closures due to COVID-19. Whilst there are still a number of restrictions in place, participation and utilisation has resumed, with the Sunshine Coast Stadium hosting the Melbourne Storm NRL team for training and playing of home fixtures (six games), and

five AFL clubs being hosted at the Maroochydore Multi Sports Complex.

The 2020/21 capital works program includes improvements to a number of major sporting facilities with construction underway, including the:

- Maroochydore Multi Sports Eastern Fields project which is due to be completed in November 2020
- ancillary building at the Sunshine Coast Regional Tennis Centre, which includes amenities and storage
- upgrade to the change rooms at the Maroochydore Rugby Union Club, providing a focus on women in sport with an expected completion in late 2020.

A Healthy Environment

Maintaining and enhancing the region's natural assets, liveability and environmental credentials.



4532 hectares

of mowing and garden beds maintained



9559 hectares

managed for conservation under Sunshine Coast Land for Wildlife program



423

wheelie bins of weeds removed by 737 volunteers with the Community Nature Conservation Program, contributing 2402 volunteer hours

Blue Heart project

The Blue Heart Sunshine Coast project is a tripartite commitment between Council, the State Government and Unitywater to support sustainable outcomes for more than 5000 hectares of the Maroochy River flood plain. It's an area where effective land and water management is demonstrating environmental, social and economic outcomes.

This quarter the successful acquisition of a 16-hectare property in the Blue Heart Sunshine Coast project area was announced, with further planning and research being undertaken to progress the project's recreation and offset opportunities.

Beaches, foreshores, coastal infrastructure and canals

Stage One of the Maroochy Groyne Field Renewal project was complete and is functioning well, with the northern-most groyne structures near the Cotton Tree Holiday Park being renewed. More than 1800 geotextile containers were filled with sand—also known as geobags. These were used to build a seawall and two groynes which will interrupt wave action, capture sand and provide an erosion buffer.

Golden Beach groyne renewal has been completed and investigations are underway to utilise these for a public art program.

Bushland conservation and habitat

Doonan Open Data Expo and National Tree Day

The Doonan Open Data Expo and the National Tree Day Event took place in August. There was a high level of community participation, and attendance by Kabi Kabi

First Nations Peoples who planted commemorative Bunya trees which are of great significance.

Fire management

Representatives of the Kabi Kabi and Jinibara people participated in Council's fire crew member training at the Maroochy Regional Bushland Botanic Gardens in July to support Traditional Custodian involvement in Council's fire management program.

Five prescribed burns were completed by Council on Council reserves across the region in preparation for the 2020 fire season.

Feral animal control

Feral animal control services continue to deliver positive outcomes for the region's agricultural and environmental assets. This quarter has seen a 42% increase in the number of new landowners partnering with Council in the program to gain specialised assistance with deer removal from their properties.

Mary River Turtle Recovery Project

With the Mary River Turtle Recovery project in its second year, innovations such as artificial intelligence cameras have played a critical role in monitoring. Information gathered on passive activity of feral and native animals will be used to better inform outcomes of the program.

Council is partnering with landholders, the Mary River Catchment Coordinating Committee, and the Tiaro and District Landcare Groups to administer programs that assists in the removal of wild dogs from the area that prey on the endangered Mary River Turtle.



Recreation parks, trails and facilities

A State Government grant of \$1.3 million was received as part of the 'Works for Queensland' program, the grant has been allocated to deliver a trail hub and amenities at Sugar Bag Road.

More than 2000 asset condition audits and infrastructure-related jobs have been completed throughout the quarter.

Sustainable growth and network planning

Council continues to monitor and provide advice in relation to Economic Development Queensland's role as the assessment manager for Caloundra South and Maroochydore Priority Development Areas and to ensure infrastructure is delivered in accordance with the infrastructure agreements for these areas.

Council also continues to collaborate with Queensland Treasury to progress the planning for the Beerwah East Major Development Area and to progress the preparation of the Options Analysis phase of the business case process for Sunshine Coast Mass Transit.

Transport planning continues to address the network needs of Sunshine Coast Council's growing community with particular attention given to our major centres of Maroochydore, Caloundra, Mooloolaba, Sippy Downs and Nambour.

The cultural heritage planning scheme amendment was adopted by Council and took effect on 24 August 2020.

A Smart Economy

Delivering a prosperous, high-value economy of choice for business, investment and employment.



\$4.5 million

in revenue for Sunshine Coast holiday parks



22,623

guests attended 13 major events, which generated approximately \$15 million in economic activity for the region



2343

businesses accessed specialist advice and information.

Brisbane Road car park redevelopment

Brisbane Road car park construction works have now reached the roof level of the new car park, with the roof structure currently being installed. The removal of scaffolding on Smith Street has started to reveal the finished façade and work has commenced on the First Avenue and Smith Street service relocations, streetscape and roadworks. The project remains on schedule for the car park to open in mid-December 2020.

Economic development

A range of programs were delivered this quarter, the majority of which focussed on helping the economy recover from the impacts of COVID-19. Programs to support local business included:

- Professional Advice Support program
- capital works supplier's engagement with project owners
- business signage and information resources.

Council continues to engage directly with local business to understand current challenges, develop programs that specifically address issues identified and effectively advocate on their behalf.

The region continued to be promoted as a significant investment destination with the launch of the 'Vitamin SC' campaign that encourages companies to relocate to the Sunshine Coast.

The Sunshine Coast Events Board endorsed six applications resulting in 12 events estimated to generate \$8.3 million economic benefit, \$1 million in local supply chain contracts and nearly 16,000 visitors to the region.

The Economic Resurgence Taskforce, a key part of the Economic Resurgence Plan was formed to assist with the region's economic recovery and has worked on several projects to date including:

- Next Level - a platform for digital upskilling created by Amazon Web Services
- an online talent board connecting people to jobs
- a retail activation initiative to boost retail take-up to be trialled in Caloundra, Mooloolaba and Nambour during 2020.

Holiday parks

A number of COVID-19 restrictions were lifted this quarter allowing visitors to stay at Sunshine Coast Holiday Parks. Patronage has remained stable during the first quarter with \$4.5 million in revenue, however there has been a downturn due to Queensland border closures.

Service Excellence

Positive experiences for our customers, great services to our community.



87%

of development applications assessed within statutory timeframes



2718

building approvals issued with a construction value of \$396 million



81,425

customers assisted through the development and customer contact centres

Cemeteries

Work has commenced to investigate opportunities for natural burials within the existing cemetery network in response to increasing community interest and in line with Council's adopted Cemetery Plan 2019-2028. Planning to respond to population growth and the cultural diversity in the region has also continued.

- Planning Scheme Code Checklists for common application types such as operational work applications and Concurrence Agency Referrals for building work
- introducing three defined assessment streams, including a Priority Assessment stream based on the level of complexity and risk.

Customer and community relations

Customer Experience

In line with furthering the customer experience program Council continued the implementation of its digital Customer Relationship Management System, including commencement of an integrated marketing and engagement platform.

Customer Contact

Large numbers of customers continue to make the transition from traditional channels (phone and counter) to more contemporary methods such as chat and email:

- chats exceeded 1000 interactions for the first time in August
- emails now account for approximately 30% of all customer enquiries.

Speed of answer and customer satisfaction remain positive across all channels.

Development services

Council has seen an increase in pre-start meetings and operational work applications in response to the Federal Government HomeBuilders Grant.

To help support customers with the impacts of COVID-19, Council has implemented a number of development assessment process improvements, including:

The Palmview major development area webpage was updated, including a new fact sheet titled 'Planning for the new Palmview Community' with specific information about roads, public transport and key development deliverable timeframes.

Local Amenity and Local Laws

Council has been working closely with organisers of scheduled events to arrange cancellations, rescheduling or redesign of events to manage ongoing impacts from COVID-19 restrictions.

There has been a strong educational focus regarding the enforcement of local laws with approximately 12% of notices issued being infringements, and the remainder being warnings.

Property Management

Council has also progressed a significant volume of maintenance and capital works activities to support the local supplier base and to take advantage of vacant sites to undertake otherwise disruptive works.

Building Condition Assessments have commenced on Councils owned facilities to fully inform future works and upgrade planning. The installation of interfaced building management systems in Council buildings continues to be rolled out to generate further reductions in energy and water use.

Public health

Council continues to work in conjunction with Queensland Health in undertaking COVID-19 'Ease of Restrictions' education visits to licensed premises. A total of 271 premises received a visit during the quarter with over 590 completed since the program commenced.

Food business operators are required to have and use a thermometer as required under the *Food Act 2006* to check food temperature levels for heating, cooling and storage. Council partnered with food businesses to deliver an education program to proactively reduce associated risk, this included the provision of a thermometer on the first occasion of non-compliance. This initiative has been well received by food businesses and subsequently over the last 12 months there has been a 50% reduction in the non-compliance levels.

Waste and Resource Management

In the first week of August 2020, Council's Collection Contractor Remondis identified a technical manufacturer's issue that affected two thirds of its collection fleet.

Council successfully coordinated a strategic and logistical response that ensured that over 200,000 domestic waste collection services were completed over seven days using less than half the normal number of collection vehicles.

Regular communication kept the community and other stakeholders informed of the situation with daily status updates being provided.

An Outstanding Organisation

A high performing, innovative and customer-focused organisation marked by great people, good governance and regional leadership.



4

award received during the quarter



\$66 million

or 69% of the available procurement spend for the quarter was to local business



28

offers of employment for the quarter

Sunshine Coast City Hall

An exciting milestone for the Sunshine Coast City Hall project was achieved in August with the turning of the first sod, marking the commencement of construction for the new building within the Maroochydore City Centre. Located in the geographic heart of the region the city hall will provide a central access point for our customers. The project is estimated to support 300 jobs in construction and supply chain industries over the life of this project.

Financial and procurement services

Council's Procurement and Contracting Framework has been adopted for the 2020/21 financial year in accordance with the legislation. The framework encompasses the required aspects to provide for effective procurement management, governance and legislative compliance relating to procurement, contract and supply functions.

Other highlights include:

- the Queensland Audit Office (QAO) Final Audit of the 2019/20 financial statements is complete with the QAO Closing Report issuing an expected unmodified audit opinion
- Council continues to pay creditors within 7 days since the COVID-19 pandemic commenced.

Governance

The Governance Awareness Program continues to be delivered to the organisation, providing education and leadership in a range of governance issues and topics.

People and Culture

COVID-19 response

A comprehensive safety service has been delivered to respond to COVID-19, including risk assessments, development of COVID Safe Plans, the implementation of controls, attending to mental health, and extensive consultation and communication. Ongoing review and improvement of the safety management system has continued, including responding to incidents and risks.

Leadership Program

Council is partnering with the University of Sunshine Coast to deliver a leadership program, Leading High Performance Teams, this is the second cohort of leaders to undertake the program.

Awards

- Sunshine Coast Council's Development platform won the Improving Planning Processes and Practices award at the Planning Institute of Australia National Awards for Planning Excellence
- the Migrant Work Ready program was announced as the winner of the 2020 Multicultural Australia category of the 2020 National Awards for Local Government
- the Sunshine Coast Design book has won a prestigious Gold Award at the Good Design Australia Awards
- the Parks and Leisure Association (Qld Chapter) awards were announced on 25 August 2020, with the Sunshine Coast Council being recognised as a winner in the Strategic Planning Category, for the the Sunshine Coast Sports Infrastructure Plan 2019-2041.

Australia's most sustainable region Healthy. Smart. Creative.

Connecting with Council

To receive Council news and information you can subscribe to Council's e-newsletters.

Through social media, Council aims to keep you up to date on a range of Council activities.

Follow Council on:

Facebook: @sunshinecoastcouncil

Twitter: @councilscc

Instagram: @sunshinecoastcouncil

Council invites residents to participate in its many forms of community engagement. These engagement activities range from simply telling you about what Council is doing and giving updates on Council activities, to getting your feedback by asking you to have your say.

We encourage you to visit
www.sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au



Sunshine Coast
COUNCIL

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The image features a large, stylized graphic of a house or building shape in shades of purple and orange. In the center, there is a diamond-shaped cutout containing a photograph of a woman holding a child's hand, with other people in the background. The background of the entire page is a repeating pattern of small triangles in various shades of purple and orange.