

Media Release

18 November 2020

Gladstone Regional Council releases its 2019/20 Annual Report

The development and further growth of partnerships, and a continued vision to Connect, Innovate and Diversify, form the basis of Gladstone Regional Council's 2019/20 Annual Report.

Gladstone Region Council (GRC) had its 2019/20 Annual Report unanimously adopted at Tuesday's General Council Meeting.

The 220-page report highlights Council's performance, finances, organisation structure and challenges over the past 12 months as well as what we are looking forward to next year.

Gladstone Regional Council CEO Leisa Dowling said the 2019/20 Annual Report's theme of partnerships involved engagement with residents, business and political representatives to develop an empowered region.

"This theme is woven throughout the report along with three categories of focus – highlights, challenges and looking ahead into next year," Ms Dowling said.

"We wanted to build strong partnerships with existing and new groups in the community, industry and other levels of government to deliver the best economic and lifestyle outcomes for residents.

"We've focussed on a more inclusive and community-focussed engagement style to ensure we create a strong fabric of community connectedness.

"During the year ahead, we will need energy and determination as an organisation, as individuals and as a regional community, to recover and renew after an unrelenting year dominated by COVID-19 and natural disasters such as bushfires and drought.

"It is a challenge we need to meet for future generations, but one I know we can succeed with."

Ms Dowling added that despite global uncertainty, GRC continued to transform throughout the year, never losing sight of Council's vision Connect, Innovate, Diversify, with the community's best interests at the forefront of all decision making.

Gladstone Region Mayor Matt Burnett praised Council staff who prepared the report across varying business units.

"The whole organisation helped contribute in some way to the shaping of this report, which for the first time will have interactive elements," Councillor Burnett said.

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“To improve the way the content of the report is presented, interactive links have been embedded so readers can jump quickly throughout the document to areas of interest, or move to Council’s website or YouTube page to watch videos of highlights that took place during 2019/20.

“The pages of the report tell the story of a year built on our theme of partnerships – in the community, industry and different levels of government.

“The idea was that by working together, Council could achieve a strong economy and lifestyle for all residents, while forging our way through the challenges of COVID-19, prolonged drought and bushfires.”

Cr Burnett said the community remains at the heart of every piece of work, program or event that Council undertakes.

“We’ve placed extra focus on engaging with the community on issues that are important to them,” Cr Burnett said.

“The change to our Gates and Grids policy, which involved extensive community consultation and was supported by our rural sector, is just one example of this engagement within the community.

“While projects such as the Philip Street Communities and Families Precinct, due to be completed next year, demonstrate that Council is listening and acting on the community’s wants and needs.

“Our focus on partnering with community groups, industry, levels of government and the community will ensure Council delivers the best outcomes for the Gladstone Region, now, and into the future.”

Highlights of the 2019/20 Annual Report include:

- \$26,120,998 of funding was approved to fund 46 projects during 2019/20
- More than 100,000 interactions across customer relations
- 21 seconds average time to answer a call
- 108 community groups responded to Council’s Gladstone Region Rise Up COVID-19 funding initiative
- Population growth 0.72%
- Welcomed 433 new residents
- Implemented Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan
- 20 new trainees and apprentices welcomed
- Progress continued to be made on the Philip Street Communities and Families Precinct

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- Customer insights:
 - 78.3% contacts resolved in Customer Solutions
 - 93% 'I got the help I needed'
 - 96% 'You made it easy for me to do what I wanted'
 - 80% 'My enquiry was resolved today'
 - 78% 'This is the first time I've contacted you about this issue'
- Challenges include:
 - Coping with COVID-19 pandemic
 - Being drought declared and reduction of raw water supply in Baffle Creek impacting the Miriam Vale community
- Looking ahead:
 - In 2020/21, Council has changed our approach to our Operational Plan. It's focused on our community and is manageable within the context of the year.
 - We'll continue to work towards the long-term goals outlined in the Corporate Plan and will work on 15 new business activities that are considerate of the large amount of effort it takes to deliver our core services.

Visit www.gladstone.qld.gov.au/plans-reports to view or download Gladstone Regional Council's 2019/20 Annual Report.

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