



Shire of West Arthur
Strategic Community Plan
2017-2027

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1. Welcome from the Shire President

The Shire of West Arthur Strategic Community Plan 2017-2027 was the first full review of the Strategic Community Plan prepared in 2013 as a requirement of the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework and Guidelines.

Following a number of community engagement activities in late 2017, a desktop review of the Plan was undertaken in 2018. A full review will be undertaken after the 2019 local government elections and prior to the preparation of the 2020/21 Budget.

During the past five years there has been some significant infrastructure development that has assisted to meet the community's vision including the completion of the Darkan Town Hall redevelopment, completion of eight new aged persons housing units, completion of the Darkan Light Industrial Area extension, Collie Darkan Rail Trail extension, and Darkan Caravan Park redevelopment. Other projects that are still in progress include Darkan railway reserve redevelopment, Lake Towerinning enhancement project, and expansion of the Health and Resource Centre.

As we look into the next ten years, funding for projects will be far more competitive and limited which will result in the Shire focusing more on services, community development, asset maintenance and preservation activities, and advocacy to ensure that the Shire remains a safe, sustainable and vibrant place to live.

This plan is the overarching guide for the future of our Shire and drives the community's vision. It identifies how the Shire will address issues like reduced funding, encouraging economic development, ensuring community vitality, and retention and enhancement of services. It is Council's commitment to achieving the vision and the community's aspirations.

The Shire has carried out a number of community engagement activities to ensure the Plan aligns with the desires, expectations and vision of local residents and ratepayers. Thank you to the community members who responded to surveys, met with Shire staff, participated in focus group planning, and attended the Enterprising Communities workshops.

The ongoing viability of this Shire and community will continue to be at the forefront of all deliberations of Council. We look forward to implementing the Plan.

Ray Harrington
Shire President

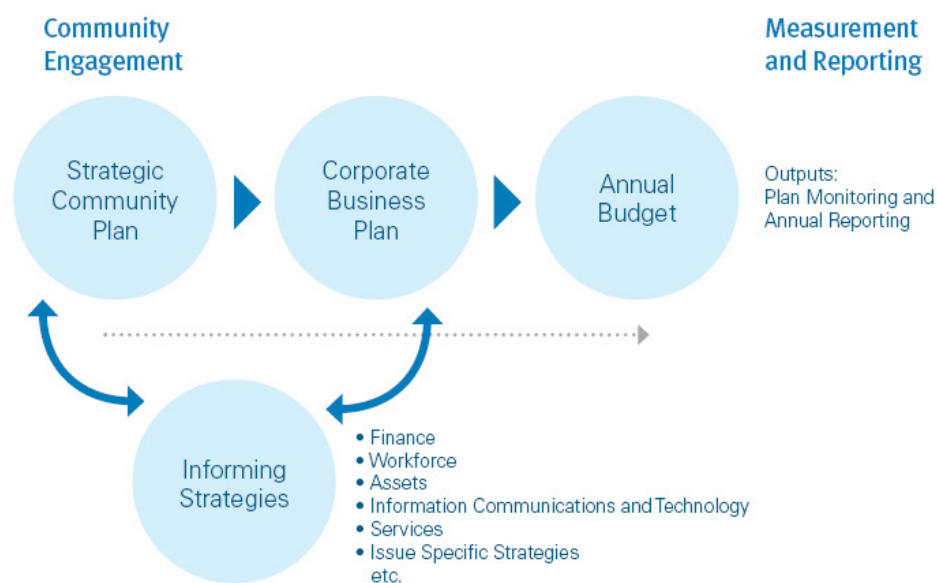
2. About this Plan

This document is the Shire's principal 10-year strategy and planning document and guides the development of other plans.

This Plan has been prepared with reference to local strategies and takes into consideration input from community surveys, and various local stakeholder groups.

The purpose of this plan is to give a clear sense of direction with priority areas and key goals for the community and the Shire for the next ten years. It should be read with the Corporate Plan which outlines the actions that will be undertaken to achieve each of the key goals.

Elements of Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

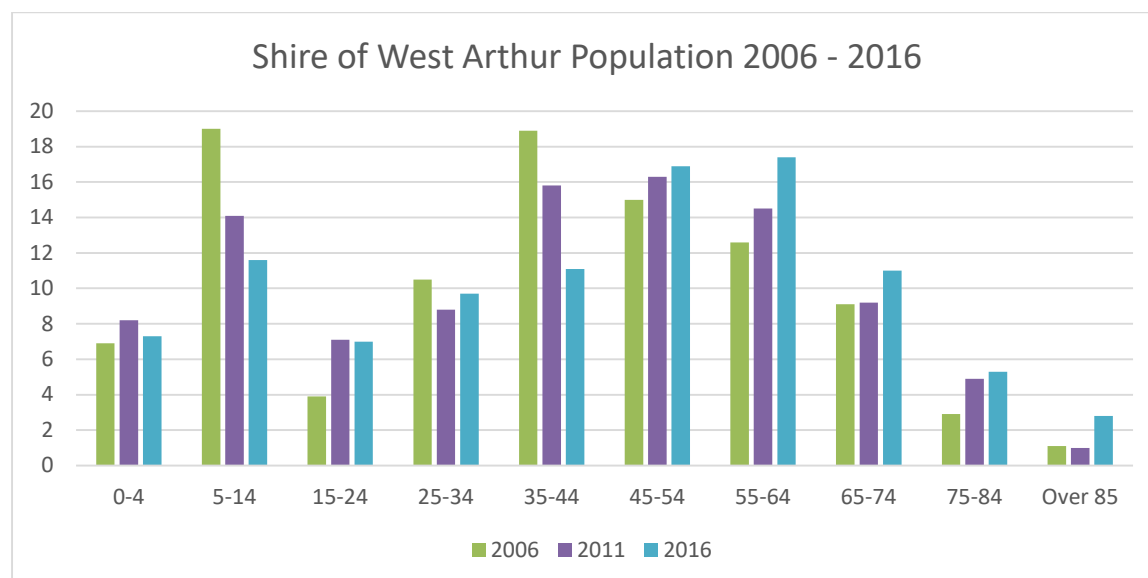


Elements of Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

This original version of this document, Shire of West Arthur Strategic Community Plan 2017-2027, was adopted by absolute majority at the June 2017 Council Meeting. A desktop review of the Plan was undertaken in early 2018 and adopted by absolute majority at the June 2018 Council Meeting.

Peaking in 1966 at 1427, the population of the Shire of West Arthur steadily decreased until the last 15 years when it stabilised and is now 904 (2015 ABS).

While the median age of 43 years is slightly higher than the state (37 years), the overall demographic pattern is of a stable but ageing population.



According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016 Census results, the people of West Arthur are predominantly born in Australia (82%) however there are small but significant populations of people who are born in the New Zealand (3.8%) and United Kingdom (3.2%). Though the proportion of people born in New Zealand (30) seems understated in comparison to the proportion known to be living in the district. As a region the Shire of West Arthur has a lower rate of crime and unemployment than the state average, and in terms of relative social and economic wellbeing (SEIFA scores), ranks above the national average as 'slightly advantaged'.

Darkan has a primary school and older school students generally board or travel by bus to a high school in a neighbouring town. Kids Central is a childcare centre managed by the Shire and currently operates three days per week.

West Arthur Health and Resource Centre, located in Darkan, is managed by the West Arthur Community Resource Centre and is home to the Shire's library and visiting professionals including a doctor, nurse and chiropractor.

Sport and recreation plays a major role in the community and there are facilities provided in Darkan, Moodiarrup and Arthur River. The Shire operates a gym, located in the Darkan Town Hall, and the Darkan Swimming Pool, which is located at the Darkan Primary School. Town halls are located in Darkan, Duranillin, Moodiarrup and Arthur River. A number of community assets are located on the Darkan Railway Reserve including a youth area, nature playground, war memorial, information bay, pioneer memorial and community shed/workshop. There are a number of walk trails in the Shire including the Darkan Heritage Trail and Collie Darkan Rail Trail. Team sports have reduced and there is more emphasis on activities that do not require a large number of participants including swimming, walking, informal sport and exercise, and using the gym.

3.2 State, Federal, Regional and sub-regional context and plans

The Shire of West Arthur is located within the wheatbelt region and is a stakeholder in the Wheatbelt Blueprint and Wheatbelt South Sub-Regional Economic Strategy. This analysis has been undertaken within the context of Federal and State planning.

The economic opportunities identified for West Arthur in this planning include agriculture, livestock and food supply chain; and tourism. The following actions were outlined in order for the Shire of West Arthur to leverage these opportunities:

- Investigate tourism enhancement projects
- Support the implementation of the Living Lakes Project
- Expansion of the Health and Resource Centre project
- Continue to support the Well Aged 4WDL Housing initiative and age friendly communities
- Completion of the Landcorp light industrial feasibility study
- Investigate realignment of Collie-Lake King Highway as part of Main Roads Grain Freight Improvement Program
- Monitor and investigate the impacts of Albany Highway and Collie Lake King Highway realignment on small businesses and heritage buildings

Specific strategies which the Shire of West Arthur see regional and sub-regional impact include:

- Trail development and enhancement – Collie to Darkan Rail Trail; Pump Track Darkan Nature Play Area linking to WA Mountain Bike Strategy and South West Mountain Bike Plan.
- Biennial Cultural Day – recognising and celebrating cultural diversity in the southern wheatbelt.
- Enterprising communities outcomes – building economic and tourism opportunities.
- Continued partnerships and collaborative activities identified with the 4WDL alliance.
- Wheatbelt Southern Inland Health Initiative
- Fire and emergency services including bushfire mitigation
- Water and agriculture – Southwest Catchment Council and Blackwood Basin Group

Federally the Shire of West Arthur collaborates closely with Regional Development Australia – Wheatbelt and is a stakeholder in the RDA Wheatbelt Regional Plan in particular infrastructure and telecommunications strategies.

3.3 Challenges We Face Now and in the Future

Maintaining and preferably increasing West Arthur's population is vital to ensure a vibrant sustainable community. In rural areas this is often difficult due to issues associated with services, housing, employment, education and social opportunities.

Services such as aged care, health, meals, and access to supplies are essential to ensure people can stay in our community as they age and so people don't have to travel. However, a minimum population base is necessary to create the economy of scale necessary to make these services viable.

Employment opportunities can be limited, especially for young people looking for part time work whilst they are still studying and full time when they finish school. Finding nearby employment for partners of people who have gained employment in the district can be difficult as there may not be opportunities, particularly for persons with specific skills sets.

Accessing suitably trained or skilled personnel can also be difficult for farmers, local industry, local government and medical and allied health services. Housing is often a barrier for local employees with

limited suitable family rental options available and the nature of seasonal work making it difficult to borrow funds to purchase a home.

For young families who have chosen to live in this rural community there are important decisions to be made regarding education with home schooling, boarding school or bus travel to public schools in neighbouring communities, the options for students from year 7.

Rural communities generally provide many social opportunities which are important for maintaining community vibrancy. Sporting opportunities for all ages including children; men's shed; rifle club; senior's activities; writing and photography groups; book clubs; and service groups, are well catered for at present and it is important that support and encouragement is provided for these to continue. Social options can be limited for teenagers and young adults as are options for evening meals and entertainment. We need to continue to monitor the social health of the community to ensure that a number of social options are available and inclusive of all.

Declining external government funding for the Shire and community organisations limits infrastructure improvements. Buildings have been well catered for with recent funding and focusing on maintaining these assets to ensure their condition does not decline is important.

A strong economy is one of the most important factors for the sustainability of West Arthur, ensuring we support and build on our local industry. With the current Landcorp development, industrial land is available for new or expanding businesses.

The nature and science of farming, and the development of the global market place has significantly changed agriculture the over the past fifty years. Mixed farming (cereals and sheep for wool and meat) remains the norm in the Shire of West Arthur and this may help to protect local farmers from the threats to agriculture from fluctuating global markets, world politics and climatic conditions.

3.4 Strategic Risk Management

Risks may arise and impact on the Shire's ability to deliver its identified strategic outcomes. The Shire maintains a risk register and the identified risks are regularly reviewed with regards to the appropriateness and effectiveness of systems and procedures for risk management.

Strategic risks identified below have been considered in the development of this Plan.

Organisational – ability to attract and retain skilled staff; ability to keep up with information and technology changes; cyber-attack resulting in loss of data; risk of fraud or error due to capabilities; increasing regulatory, compliance and accountability requirements; adequate systems and procedures; effective occupational health and safety management; and timelines and the ability to deliver within the given timeframes.

Financial– reliance on external funding; reducing grants; cost shifting by other tiers of government; and asset preservation.

Community – increasing expectations relating to service delivery and service levels; and ineffective management of public facilities or events.

Natural disasters – failure to meet legislative requirements and community expectations with regards to prepare, prevent, respond and recover.

4.0 Community Engagement

The community and stakeholders have sent the following clear messages from the community engagement:

What people like about living in or visiting West Arthur

- A community which
 - is friendly and caring,
 - proactive
 - is inclusive of all and celebrates different cultures, and
 - has a strong sense of community and community pride.
- A safe, peaceful and quiet environment with a beautiful natural setting.
- Well maintained infrastructure and amenities including sporting facilities and Mens Shed.
- Good services available including medical and childcare.

What people believe would make West Arthur a better place to live

- Economic development including encouraging research and value adding to agriculture and diversification into other industry;
- Darkan developed as a centre and improved and expanded commercial services including general store, specialist stores, hotel accommodation, and dine-in meals and take-away.
- Improved aged services, including transport, meals and increased medical services.
- Improved communications including internet and mobile coverage.
- Develop attractions for visitors, put Darkan and West Arthur on the map including ecotourism, using Hillman Rock, trails, rivers and Lake Towerrinning.
- Improve, value add, and utilise public open space and reserves including Nangip Creek reserve and Lake Towerrinning.
- Access to public conveniences available at the cemetery.
- More housing and accommodation.
- Local education options and part time employment for high school aged children and full time employment and training options for post high school.
- More community events and activities including youth activities, and sport and fitness activities.

Additional things the community would like the Shire to focus on

- Increasing population.
- Actively support economic growth and job creation including part time and full time and options for youth.
- Local education including support of the local primary school to ensure its ongoing sustainability.
- Maintain and improve roads and footpaths.
- Natural resource management and emergency water supply for rural land for fire and drought.
- Promoting a sustainable environment including recycling and provide verge and green waste pick up service.
- Encourage and coordinate more use of community facilities i.e. activities in town halls.

- Valuing and maintaining our built heritage.
- Retaining services in Arthur River including roadhouse, shop, freight and post.
- Improving visual attractiveness of Duranillin.
- Continue development of the Darkan Railway Reserve eg old bowling greens, nature play, gardens etc.
- Construct a permanent fixture for Darkan to encourage visitors to stop , develop ecotourism and provide more accommodation for visitors.
- Community transport including bus and car for appointments.
- Promote and support more events.
- Maintaining low rates.

The consultation that was used in the development of this Plan included:

- Community survey (42 responses).
- Youth focus planning through direct surveys, focus group meetings and in person during youth week activities.
- Seniors focus planning by the Shire's seniors support officer directly with seniors.
- Landcare workshop and development of Landcare strategy by Blackwood Basin Group.
- Lake Towerrinning Management Plan review including stakeholder meeting.
- Reference to stakeholder group meetings including Kids Central members and Arthur River Development Group meetings.
- Enterprising Communities Workshops.

5.0 Strategic Direction

5.1 Community Vision and Mission

Vision

In 2027 the Shire of West Arthur will be a safe, sustainable and vibrant place to live.

Mission

To value and enhance our community lifestyle and environment through strong local leadership, community involvement and effective service delivery.

5.2 Values

Safety - We will have at the forefront of all operations and future developments, the safety of our people and environment.

Sustainability - We will make decisions based on the long term sustainability of the Shire of West Arthur.

Vibrancy - We will support and encourage a vibrant community and economy.

Pro-active - We will be pro-active and innovative in order to respond and adapt to a changing world.

Viability - We will maintain the viability of the Shire through good governance and supporting local businesses and agriculture.

5.3 Strategic Planning Framework

This Plan is divided into six key themes. Each theme is further expanded with strategies on the following pages.

	1. Community Wellbeing	2. Local Economy	3. Built Environment	4. Natural Environment	5. Governance and Organisation
Goals	A safe and enabling place to live with a strong sense of identity and a thriving, active culture.	A vibrant, sustainable and growing community with active business and agricultural sectors	Well maintained infrastructure that supports the community and the economy.	Natural biodiversity maintained and responsible land and water use to preserve the environment for future generations	Strong local leadership; and responsible, ethical management; and efficient service delivery.
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Shire is a safe place to live, strives to reduce risks and is prepared for emergencies. • People of all ages have the support they require to live and participate in the community. • Physical and mental well-being will be enhanced through a variety of sport and recreational opportunities located through-out the Shire • Pride in our community and a strong sense of identity is forged from our cultural heritage and past and present achievements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The business community will be dynamic, growing and diverse providing employment and economic benefit to the Shire. • Agricultural businesses will be viable and sustainable providing employment and economic benefit to the Shire. • The community will have a growing population which will support new business development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A well maintained road system. • Sustainable well maintained quality facilities that support long term community needs. • Attractive townscapes. • Appropriate planning and development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable management of water resources. • Waste is minimised and managed sustainably. • Natural biodiversity of the Shire will be maintained and valued. • Responsible land use planning be undertaken with viability, sustainability and the environment considered in all decision making. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representation by skilled councillors to achieve the best outcomes for the Shire. • Accountable service delivery by Council and well trained, motivated, customer focussed Council staff • Strong leadership in advocacy and planning to ensure sustainability of the Council • Partnerships and relationships will be formed and maintained to nurture community interests and support community capacity building and good governance

Community Wellbeing

Goal 1 - *The Shire of West Arthur will be a safe and enabling place to live with a strong sense of identity and a thriving, active culture.*

Outcome 1.1 - The Shire is a **SAFE** place to live, strives to reduce risks and is prepared for emergencies.

- Government agencies, Shire and community are prepared for and responsive to, emergencies and volunteers are supported in their roles.
- The community is aware of hazards and risks and seeks to manage these with support from the Shire.
- Safety is considered in planning and works management to protect employees and the community.

Outcome 1.2 - People of all ages have the **SUPPORT** they require to live and participate in the community.

- Seniors will be valued and their needs met to enable them to stay in the Shire and participate in the community for as long as they desire
- The needs of people with disabilities will be considered to enable access and inclusion in the community.
- An engaging and positive environment will be provided for children and youths to create lasting connections with the community and facilitate growth and development.
- Affordable housing will be available to enable people to live in our community.
- People who live in our community will not be prohibited from opportunities due to isolation.

Outcome 1.3- **PHYSICAL AND MENTAL WELL-BEING** will be enhanced through a variety of sport and recreational opportunities located through-out the Shire.

- A range of health and support services will be available to all in the community.
- Collaborative partnerships with sport and recreational clubs will be formed to ensure sustainability and good governance.
- Public access facilities will be maintained and improved.
- Cultural, artistic and sporting events will be supported for community development and enjoyment.
- Lifelong learning and skill development will be promoted.

Outcome 1.4 - **PRIDE** in our community and a strong sense of identity is forged from our cultural heritage and past and present achievements.

- Our cultural heritage will be preserved and sites of significance maintained/conserved for future generations.
- Our cultural and shared heritage will be commemorated at community events.
- The community has a sense of pride in our public access areas and assists the Shire in the maintenance and development of these.

Performance Measures - Community Wellbeing

The Shire of West Arthur will be a safe and enabling place to live with a strong sense of identity and a thriving, active culture.	
Outcomes	Key Performance Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Shire is a safe place to live, strives to reduce risks and is prepared for emergencies. People of all ages have the support they require to live and participate in the community. Physical and mental wellbeing will be enhanced through a variety of sport and recreational opportunities located through-out the Shire. Pride in our community and a strong sense of identity is forged from our cultural heritage and past and present achievements. 	<p>Sufficient volunteers available to respond to all emergencies. Emergency Management Arrangements and the number of LEMC meetings held meet statutory requirements. Risk management plans prepared for all events. Number of seniors events held. Number of aged persons housing units available and maintained. Disability Access and Inclusion Plan reviewed and submitted annually. At least 4 youth, children's and family events held annually. Number of families using childcare centre does not reduce. Number of health services available is maintained or increased. Number of sporting clubs participating in the asset renewal reserve program. Number of sport and recreational opportunities in community does not reduce. Number of heritage and cultural projects is maintained or increased annually.</p>



Local Economy

Goal 2 - *The Shire of West Arthur will be a vibrant, sustainable and growing community with active business and agricultural sectors and well maintained infrastructure.*

Outcome 2.1 - The business community will be **DYNAMIC, GROWING AND DIVERSE** providing employment and economic benefit to the Shire.

- Light industrial land and infrastructure will be developed to promote light industry development.
- New businesses will be encouraged to locate in the Shire and new employment opportunities will be supported.
- Support will be provided to existing and new businesses
- Support approaches to eco-tourism and tourism development?

Outcome 2.2 - Agricultural businesses will be **VIALE AND SUSTAINABLE** providing employment and economic benefit to the Shire.

- Stay abreast of current issues affecting farming businesses.
- Ensure our farmers have the opportunity to be up to date with latest developments and encourage investigation and learning to ensure their farms remain viable and sustainable.

Outcome 2.3 - The community will have a **GROWING POPULATION** which will support new business development

- The Shire will be an appealing and attractive place to move to.
- There will be a range of short stay accommodation options for visitors to use encouraging them to stay in and explore the Shire.
- The Shire will be promoted to people outside of the Shire as a fantastic place to visit and live.
- There will be a range of residential and lifestyle options available.

- Tourism will be supported locally and regionally to encourage visitors and promote the Shire and lifestyle.



Performance Measures – Local Economy

The Shire of West Arthur will be a vibrant, sustainable and growing community with active business and agricultural sectors and well maintained infrastructure.	
Outcomes	Key Performance Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The business community will be dynamic, growing and diverse providing employment and economic benefit to the Shire.• Agricultural businesses will be viable and sustainable providing employment and economic benefit to the Shire.• The community will have a growing population which will support new business development	<p>Business owners' satisfaction with level of support provided.</p> <p>Local trials and landcare groups satisfaction with the level of service provided. Number of fields days or workshops held for farmers.</p> <p>Population is maintained or increased.</p>



Built Environment

Goal 3 - *The Shire of West Arthur will have well maintained infrastructure that supports the community and the economy.*

Outcome 3.1 - A **WELL MAINTAINED** road system.

- Roads will be well designed and constructed and regularly maintained for safe transport.
- Work with other shires and State Government to ensure sound planning and resource utilisation for maximum transport outcomes for the Shire.
- Collaborative partnerships will be formed with road users to enhance road safety strategies and plan for future demands.

Outcome 3.2 – Sustainable, well maintained **QUALITY FACILITIES** that support long term community needs.

- Long term approach to upgrades and improvements of facilities.
- Buildings, facilities, and public amenities are maintained to an appropriate standard.

Outcome 3.3 – **ATTRACTIVE** townscapes and public facilities for locals and visitors to enjoy.

- Maintain and improve the Shire’s parks, gardens, reserves and public open space to a high standard.
- Complete townscape projects to continue to improve the appearances of townsites and localities.

Outcome 3.4 – **APPROPRIATE** planning and development.

- Review, amend and implement the town planning scheme and policies to ensure any planning and development is appropriate through the Shire.

Performance Measures – Built Environment

The Shire of West Arthur will have well maintained infrastructure that supports the community and the economy.	
Outcomes	Key Performance Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A well-maintained road system. • Sustainable, well maintained quality facilities that support long term community needs. • Attractive townscapes and public facilities for locals and visitors to enjoy. • Appropriate planning and development. 	<p>Community satisfaction with road network. Long term road construction and maintenance program has been developed and regularly reviewed. Asset management plans have been developed for all Council buildings and community infrastructure. Annual inspections on all buildings and public infrastructure have been undertaken. All identified urgent maintenance completed. Community satisfaction with appearance of public areas. Number of townscape projects completed. Review of town planning undertaken. Number of policies reviewed or developed.</p>



Natural Environment

Goal 4 – *The Shire of West Arthur will maintain its natural biodiversity and built heritage, and ensure responsible land and water use to preserve the environment for future generations.*

Outcome 4.1 - Sustainable management of **WATER RESOURCES**

- Responsible use of water

Outcome 4.2 - **WASTE** is minimised and managed sustainably.

- Waste will be managed in accordance with best practice and regulations to minimise land fill, enhance recycling and ensure environmental disposal.
- Minimisation of waste will be encouraged through-out the community

Outcome 4.3 - **NATURAL BIODIVERSITY** of the Shire will be maintained and valued.

- Elimination/management of weeds and pests will be supported within the community by collaborative partnerships with government departments, local organisations, and community groups.
- The unique flora and fauna of the Shire will be protected and monitored/recorded
- Collaborative partnership with Government departments, friends of groups, and catchment land managers will be formed and supported to maintain natural bushland and waterways
- Biodiversity and protection of bushland will and considered with all land use applications and developments

Outcome 4.4 - Environmental and **SUSTAINABLE** principles will be promoted to the community and sustainability and the environment will be considered in all land use planning.

- Sustainability of rural operations and economic viability.
- Promote environmental sustainable principles.

Performance Measures – Natural Environment

4. Our environment

The Shire of West Arthur will maintain its natural biodiversity and built heritage, and ensure responsible land and water use to preserve the environment for future generations.

Outcomes	Key Performance Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainable management of water resources Waste will be managed in an environmentally sustainable manner to meet current and future needs. Natural biodiversity of the Shire will be maintained and valued. Environmentally and sustainable principles will be promoted to the community and responsible land use planning will be undertaken with viability, sustainability and the environment considered in all decision making. 	<p>Use of water saving devices on developments and gardens planned around water wise principles.</p> <p>Improvements to dams or other water infrastructure.</p> <p>Community satisfaction on the condition and management of the refuse sites in Darkan and Duranillin.</p> <p>Community satisfaction on management of Shire managed reserves.</p> <p>Number of community programs and promotions focusing on environmental sustainable principles.</p>



GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

Goal 5 - Through strong leadership and responsible, ethical management the best outcomes will be achieved in partnership with the people of the Shire.

Outcome 5.1 - **Representation** by skilled councillors to achieve the best outcomes for the Shire

- The Shire Council is representative of the people, interests and needs of the Shire.
- Elected members have the skills and knowledge relevant to local government to act in the best interests of the Shire.

Outcome 5.2 **Accountable** service delivery by Council and well trained, motivated, customer focussed staff

- Continuously strive to improve performance and delivery across all functions with a focus on customer service
- Compliance with regulations and best practice standards will drive good decision making by staff and Council
- Financial management and decision making will be transparent, accountable and in an accessible format for the public.
- Staff training and support programs will attract and retain the best quality staff

Outcome 5.3 **Strong leadership** in advocacy and planning to ensure sustainability of the Shire

- The Council will advocate and lobby to meet the needs of the local community
- The Council will provide leadership to the community in local government reform.
- Strategic alliances will be formed and fostered to achieve maximum outcomes for the Shire and region.

Outcome 5.4 – Active **engagement** with the Community to optimise input into planning and decision making.

- Community engagement strategies will be integrated into planning and decision making.
- Community participation with Council will be facilitated through a variety of methods.
- Partnerships and relationships will be formed and maintained that nurture community interests and support community capacity building and good governance

Performance Measures – Governance and Leadership

Governance and Leadership	
Through strong leadership and responsible, ethical management the best outcomes will be achieved in partnership with the people of the Shire.	
Outcomes	Key Performance Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representation by skilled councillors to achieve the best outcomes for the Shire. • Accountable service delivery by well trained, motivated, customer focussed staff. • Strong leadership in advocacy and planning to ensure sustainability of the Council. • Partnerships and relationships will be formed and maintained that nurture community interests and support community capacity building and good governance 	<p>Number of training programs that elected members participate in – in-house and externally.</p> <p>Community satisfaction with the services provided by Shire staff.</p> <p>Number of regional meetings attended by elected members and staff.</p> <p>Number of meetings held or coordinated with state or federal representatives.</p> <p>Number of forums, meetings or workshops held with the community on local issues.</p>

5.4 Decision Making Criteria

(how Council assesses costs, benefits and risks in making choices)

In assessing opportunities and requests, Council takes into consideration the following:

Long term vision and strategic direction	Is it aligned with the Shire's strategic direction?
Compliance and risk	Is it a compliance requirement or necessary to reduce risk and exposure to the Shire? Are there any compliance requirements associated with it and what are the risks of proceeding or not with consideration for financial implications, legislation, staff and community welfare, reputation and ethics?
Costs	What, if any, implications will there be on the long term financial plan, is this acceptable to Council and would it be acceptable to the community? What is required to manage the whole of life costs? Resourcing requirements - can it be done within existing staff resources or will we need to employ more staff? Does it replace anything that could be discontinued or potential for other efficiencies to reduce costs?
Equity/Fairness	Is it equitable distribution of funds across the community now and over time?
Environment	What is the impact on the built and natural environment?
Cost Benefit Analysis	What is the return on benefits to the Shire and the community for the expense required?

6.0 Resourcing Implications

This Strategic Community Plan was developed with an understanding of our current and anticipated future resource capacity.

6.1 Financial

Ensuring minimal increases in rates has been a priority for Council in the past, however with the current economic climate it is not sustainable. There have been low to moderate rate increases in the past and this is also a priority for the future. The Shire's long term financial plan is based on a 5% rate increase in the 2018/19 and 2019/20 financial years and 3% increases each year thereafter. This has proven difficult to achieve with increasing costs imposed on local government and reduced funding.

The Shire of West Arthur prides itself on being in a sound financial position with reserves established to meet long term asset replacement plans (some with funds matched by community groups) and low borrowings.

As at 30 June 2017, the Shire had:

Cash backed reserves	\$2,736,637
Property Plant and Equipment	\$15,730,186
Infrastructure Assets	\$97,219,843
Loans	\$974,227
Annual Rate Revenue	\$1,566,941

The Shire does however, have a number of buildings and other infrastructure that require upgrading including community halls, staff housing, footpaths and playgrounds. Replacing this ageing asset base whilst continuing to improve road infrastructure, and maintaining minimal to moderate rate increases represents a significant challenge for the Shire.

Over the recent past the Shire has been fortunate to attract a number of grants which have assisted us to provide new or upgraded infrastructure for the community and most of the Shire sporting facilities and special purpose buildings are currently in very good condition and well backed by reserves. We have relied heavily on grants to achieve the current condition of our infrastructure and it is recognised that these grants will not be available in the future and, where funding is available, it is likely to become more competitive.

The Corporate Plan outlines actions and projects aligned to the strategies of the Community Plan and a Long Term Financial Plan demonstrates that the Shire can achieve the outcomes of this Plan sustainably provided Council is cautious about commitments to expenditure, and efficiencies are implement where possible. The Shire may not be able to meet all of the community's expectations, however the West Arthur community is known for its resourcefulness and will be supported by the Shire where possible.

6.2 Asset and Workforce Requirements

The Shire's current workforce includes:

- Chief Executive Officer
- Finance, Administration and Community Support Services (4.6 FTE including managers)
- Additional project officers as approved through the budget process or otherwise by Council.
- Works Manager and 16.5 FTE support staff including supervisors, operators, mechanic, and gardeners.
- Builder
- Cleaning staff (1.3 FTE)
- Kids Central Childcare Coordinator and Childcare Support Staff

In 2018/19 it is anticipated that the existing childcare service will be transferred to a regionally managed service, resulting in a reduction in wages.

In 2019/20, if there is a reduction in roads funding, the number of works staff will decrease.

Shire of West Arthur
31 Burrowes Street
DARKAN WA 6392
0897362222
shire@westarthur.wa.gov.au
www.westarthur.wa.gov.au