



Dowerin Strategic Community Plan 2018-2028



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A Message from the Dowerin Shire

We have pleasure in presenting the Shire of Dowerin Strategic Community Plan 2018 - 2028.

The Strategic Community Plan provides a blueprint for the future, conveying the visions, values, aspirations and priorities of the community and Shire of Dowerin. The Plan considers and prioritises the social, economic, environmental and governance issues facing Dowerin today in order to equip us for a successful future.

The Dowerin Strategic Community Plan was developed with invaluable contribution from the community, including residents, business owners and shire staff throughout 2017.

The community aspirations and expectations provide the framework for decision making at council level and will continue to drive the development of annual budgets and project planning for the next 10 years.

Our efforts are ongoing and the Shire of Dowerin will continue to uphold the important relationship that this local government organisation has with the community and the local business community. We will strive to ensure we take a collaborative approach to achieving our shared vision for the future.

Together with Council and the community, we will realise our opportunities, overcome challenges and bring projects and plans outlined within this document to fruition. The spirit and ingenuity of our community ensures that Dowerin continues to be a progressive and successful place to live, reside and do business in the Wheatbelt of Western Australia.

Cr Darrel Hudson
President
Shire of Dowerin

Andrea Selvey
Chief Executive Officer
Shire of Dowerin

1. Introduction

The Strategic Community Plan is an integral component of the State Government's Integrated Planning and Reporting (IPR) Framework for Local Government.

The Strategic Community Plan provides a vision, strategic direction, long and medium-term priorities and resourcing implications for the Shire of Dowerin, with a horizon of 10 years. It is an informing strategy, which together with an Asset Management Plan, Long Term Financial Plan and Corporate Business Plan will provide integrated strategies to inform council decision making.

The Dowerin Strategic Community Plan was first developed in 2013. An extensive review and re-write of the Plan was undertaken in 2017 to reflect current IPR guidelines (updated in 2016) and to account for the evolution of community priorities for the Shire of Dowerin over the years since 2013.

Detailed implementation for the strategies identified in this Plan are presented in the Shire of Dowerin's Corporate Business Plan.

1.1 Key Points of the Plan

The Dowerin Shire council engaged in robust community engagement throughout 2017 to ensure that the Dowerin Strategic Community plan set a vision and priorities for the coming decade that aligned to the community's needs and aspirations for the future.

In developing this plan consideration has been given to the financial, asset and workforce parameters that the Shire of Dowerin operates within to ensure that what is being planned will be achievable.

The Shire of Dowerin is in a period of economic and population dormancy. This requires careful consideration of strategies and actions to reverse these trends and ensure a more prosperous future for its residents.

The objectives, outcomes and actions identified in this Plan align to the pillars of sustainable development – leadership, lifestyle, infrastructure, economy and natural environment.

1.2 Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

The Western Australian Department of Local Government and Communities, IPR framework enables community members and stakeholders to participate in shaping the future of the community and in identifying issues and solutions. It is, in essence, a process designed to articulate the community's vision, allocate resources to achieve this vision and monitor and report on progress toward achieving the vision.

Resource allocation occurs through long and medium term financial projections based on robust costings of services and assets. Identifying resourcing requirements is fundamental to balancing aspirations with affordability.

The key components of the IPR Framework are outlined as follows:

Strategic Community Plan

Community vision, strategic direction, long and medium-term priorities and resourcing implications with a horizon of 10+ years

Corporate Business Plan

Four-year delivery program, aligned to the Strategic Community Plan, and accompanied by four-year financial projections

Informing Strategies¹:

Long Term Financial Plan

Long term financial position

Asset Management Plans

Approach to managing assets to deliver chosen service levels

Workforce Plan

Shaping workforce to deliver organisational objectives now and in the future

Issue or Area Specific Plans

Any other informing plans or strategies (e.g. ICT, recreation plan, youth plan, local area plan etc.)

Annual Budget

Financial statements and policies for one year

1.3 Planning Cycle

The IPR is cyclical in nature. It begins with community engagement which informs the development of the Strategic Community Plan. The medium-term priorities identified through the Strategic Community Plan then flow on to inform the development of the Corporate Business Plan and Long Term Financial Plan which have a four-year outlook, but that are reviewed annually.

Every year the Shire sets an Annual Budget which is based on the work program for the relevant year as outlined in the Corporate Business Plan. Progress against the Corporate Business Plan and any changes made to its content through the annual review process, are reported upon in an Annual Report.

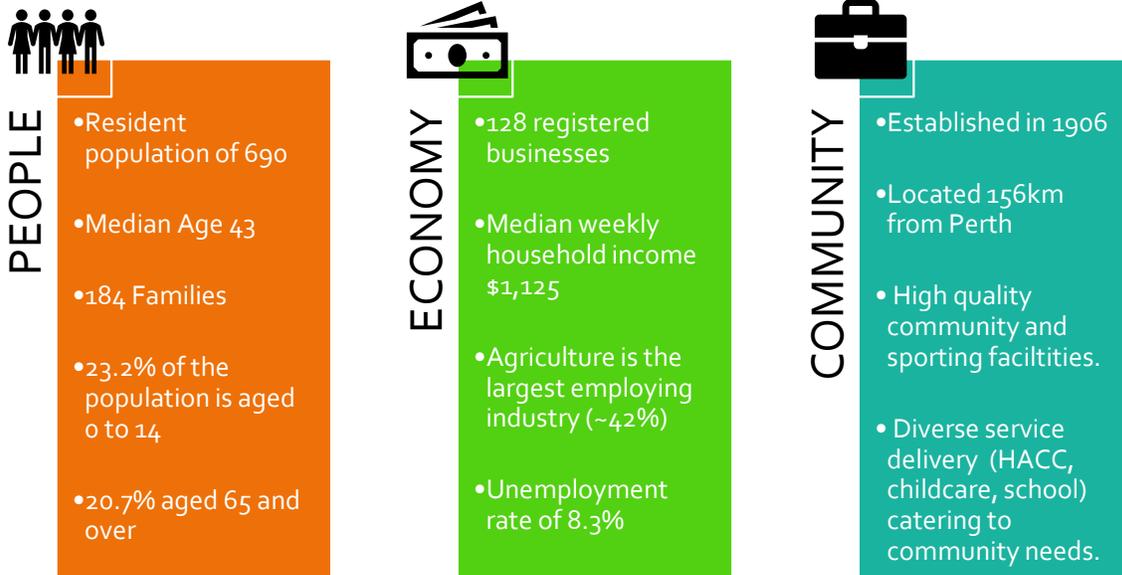
Every second year, the process enters the Strategic Review phase. The Strategic Review alternates between the minor and major versions. The minor version is generally a desktop review process and tends to focus on resetting the Corporate Business Plan. The major version involves re-engagement with the community on vision, outcomes and priorities, and a comprehensive review of the whole IPR suite of documents.



Figure 1. Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

2 Context

Dowerin at a Glance



2.1 Community & Economic Profile

The Shire of Dowerin is situated in the Avon sub-region of the Wheatbelt, approximately 156-kilometers to the north east of Perth. Covering an area of 1,867sq kilometers, the Shire of Dowerin consists primarily of agricultural land used for grain growing and sheep production for meat and wool.

The name "Dowerin" is taken from the aboriginal word "Daren" that was given to a series of lakes 8 kilometers south of the town. The first settlement for agriculture was in 1897 but the town was not established until 1906 when the railway line was extended from Goomalling. The town grew rapidly from that point, with the first store opening in 1906 and in a short time was able to cater for most of the settlers' needs.

2.1.1 Residents

Dowerin is home to an estimated 690 people, who reside in the 376 private dwellings based within the townsite and rural surrounds including the localities of Amery, Ejanding, Koombarkine, Minnivale, Manmanning and Ucarty. At the time of the 2011 ABS Census 1.2% of the Dowerin population identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and 10.9% were born overseas².

Dowerin's population has a disparate age profile with a significant proportion of people who are either very young (0-9 years) or at the opposite end of the spectrum, aged 60 years and over (refer to Appendix 1, 8.1 for further detail). Young people aged 15 to 24 are underrepresented in Dowerin, accounting for just 7% of the total Shire population. This is attributed to limited educational opportunities – both secondary and tertiary - to cater for this age group³ and presents a challenge to attract these people back to the district upon completion of their education.

The Shire of Dowerin is experiencing an out-migration of its resident population. Despite an increase in the population from the 2011 Census (up 1.7% from 678 persons), Dowerin had a net migration over this same period of -26.

The WA Planning Commission forecasts that the population of the Dowerin Shire will decline over the coming decade. The most significant decline is expected to occur in the 0-9 and 30-39 age groups. At the same time, a surge is expected in the population of people aged 70 and over. This suggests that in future there will be fewer families and an increase in the number of older people living in the community.

The WA Planning Commission use a robust modelling process to produce its population forecasts. However, the population projections assume that the community and Shire of Dowerin will take a passive rather than proactive approach to reversing the observed and projected population trends.

2.1.2 Workforce

Reflective of the dominance of broadacre farming in the Avon sub-region of the Wheatbelt, the primary industry of employment in the Shire of Dowerin is agriculture, with 41.7% of the labor force being employed in this sector. Other major employment sectors include education, public administration and retail (refer to Appendix 1, 8.2).

Traditionally an area of low unemployment, the Shire of Dowerin has experienced a considerable increase in its unemployment rate over the previous four years, reaching 8.3% in 2017⁴. This is

² ABS 2016 Census of Population and Housing

³ Department of Training and Workforce Development (2012), Wheatbelt Workforce Development Plan 2013-2016

⁴ Department of Employment 2017, Small Area Labour Market Data Tables, March Quarter 2017

reflective of an overall increase in unemployment rates across the Avon sub-region and more broadly, the State, over this period.

2.1.3 Economy

The Shire of Dowerin's economy is primarily driven by agricultural production. The Shire comprises 185,912 ha of agricultural land holdings generating approximately \$50.5M in production value per annum⁵.

There are no large employers within the Shire of Dowerin. As of 30 June 2015, there were 128 registered businesses in the Shire, the majority of which were "non-employing" (refer to Appendix 1, 8.3). Industry growth in the Shire of Dowerin is declining with the number of business exits outweighing the number of business entries between 2012 and 2015.

Recent economic planning for the Avon sub-region has identified economic growth opportunities exist for Dowerin in the industry sectors of agriculture, transport and logistics and retail. Capitalizing on, and moving forward with the identified industry opportunity will be imperative to stimulate the economy. Identifying the enablers and removing the barriers to economic growth in Dowerin will be a focus for the Council.

2.1.4 Community Services & Amenity

Dowerin boasts an array of high quality community and sporting facilities. A range of modern sports facilities are readily available for community use including; ovals for cricket, football and hockey, basketball, netball, badminton and tennis courts, a bowling green, an Olympic sized swimming pool, a rifle range, go-kart track, an all-hours gym and a recently developed equestrian facility.

Dowerin caters for the needs of varying demographics within the community with a variety of activities and services for seniors including Home & Community Care (HACC), a senior citizens group (Dowerin Companion Club) and a small range of retirement housing units. Dowerin Playgroup, the Lil Tigers Early Learning Centre, safe playgrounds and the provision of a highly successful District High School ensures that Dowerin is a family friendly place to reside. Residents of Dowerin have their medical needs catered for through collaboration between the Shires of Dowerin and Goomalling, which enables the provision of a general practitioner service and, the close proximity of the Goomalling and Wyalkatchem hospitals.

2.1.5 Tourism

Dowerin is host to one of the largest and most impressive agricultural exhibitions within Australia. The Dowerin GWN7 Machinery Field Days has put Dowerin on the map as home to one of the largest annual agricultural events in the Southern Hemisphere, attracting in excess of 25,000 visitors every

⁵ RPS 2013, Avon Sub-Regional Economic Strategy

year. With long term plans to expand this event and exhibitor numbers steadily increasing the patronage at this event will continue to grow.

The recently completed Dowerin Accommodation Precinct, located adjacent to the site of the Dowerin Field Days and adjoining the Dowerin Community Club, provides a combination of self-contained units, caravan and camping sites. With no other comparable accommodation of this standard in the district, the new accommodation precinct will enable the Shire to leverage off its affiliation with the “Wheatbelt Way” and “Pioneers Pathway” tourist trails and is expected to attract visitors for business and recreation all year round.

2.2 Strategic Issues

The Shire of Dowerin is currently experiencing a dormant economy and a population that is both aging and projected to decline. These challenges will impact labour supply, economic output, infrastructure requirements and service provision and will be a key influence on planning for the future of the Shire.

Population Challenges

Population decline, which is forecast for Dowerin (as it is for many regional areas across Western Australia and particularly the Wheatbelt), generates significant challenges for Local Government. Fewer people equates to less rate payers which reduces Council revenue and constrains the ability to provide services and infrastructure to a community. Attracting private and public-sector funding also becomes difficult as there is not a critical mass to guarantee a return on investment. A major challenge will be to identify opportunities to change this outlook by making Dowerin a community of choice to live and work.

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare⁶ suggests that whilst there is no universally accepted definition of a ‘working age’ population, 25 to 64-year olds are the most likely to be participating in the labour force. Population forecasts for the Shire of Dowerin predict a 20% decline in the working age population (i.e. those aged 25-64) by 2026 and at the same time a surge in the number of people aged 70 and over. Older Australians have much lower participation rates than the prime-aged working population⁷ which means that if nothing is done to reverse these trends, the availability of a local labour force will become increasingly constrained. Population aging and its impact on the workforce, is not unique to the Shire of Dowerin, it is a nationwide issue and one that has a considerable body of research to draw upon in identifying solutions to this challenge.

In addition to labour force considerations the increasing age of the community will impact on the provision of community and health services for an older population. Residential aged care is absent

⁶ <http://aihw.gov.au/australias-welfare/2015/working-age/>

⁷ Commonwealth of Australia 2013, An Aging Australia: Preparing for the Future

in Dowerin and is in critically short supply within the broader Avon sub-region. Whilst HACC services are available in the community, there are deficiencies in the range and level of care provided⁸. There is strong evidence to suggest a need for further aged care services including health care and senior housing options to meet future demand.

Economic Challenges

Recent economic planning for the Avon sub-region⁹ identified three key economic opportunities for the Shire of Dowerin:

- 1) ***Broadacre agriculture:*** Broadacre agriculture is likely to remain the foundation industry for Dowerin given its location in the north east of the Avon sub-region, large prevailing property sizes and reduced ability to attract the number of workers necessary to support more labor-intensive industry.
- 2) ***Transport and Industry:*** Opportunity exists to develop as a secondary industrial node by capitalizing on the existing supply of industrial zoned land, providing further industrial land choice and offering localized agricultural production transport and light/heavy manufacturing services.
- 3) ***Retail and Lifestyle:*** Increasing demand generated by population and visitor growth in the Avon sub-region could provide opportunities for further localized retail activity.

The Shire of Dowerin notes that whilst this planning identified broadacre agriculture as the primary economic opportunity for the Shire, the dominance of this industry limits the diversity and therefore the resiliency of the local economy. Whilst not identified as a potential industry opportunity through the economic planning undertaken, the Shire of Dowerin envisages that tourism could be an additional growth sector particularly with the addition of the Dowerin Accommodation Precinct. Capitalizing on identified economic opportunities will be dependent on the capacity of Council and the community to overcome existing barriers to economic growth.

The Organisation for Economic and Community Development (OECD) considers human capital and infrastructure to be central pillars of local economic growth¹⁰. Human capital refers to the need for a skilled and available workforce to provide the labour and expertise (e.g. tradespeople), that businesses need to operate and grow. Infrastructure refers to things such as transport networks and telecommunications, that are critical to business activities.

The major human capital constraints for the Shire of Dowerin at present are the declining working age population (due to an aging population and an out-migration of the prime aged working population), the lack of housing to accommodate an in-migration of new labour to the community and

⁸ Verso Consulting, Wheatbelt Integrated Age Care and Support Solutions Report

⁹ RPS 2013, Avon Sub-Regional Economic Strategy

¹⁰ [https://www.adelaide.edu.au/churp/presentations/Friday - The Demographic and Economic Drivers - SH.pdf](https://www.adelaide.edu.au/churp/presentations/Friday_-_The_Demographic_and_Economic_Drivers_-_SH.pdf)

deficiencies in telecommunications infrastructure. Reducing human capital constraints is imperative to economic growth in Dowerin and will require:

- (a) Drawing from the extensive body of existing research to identify best practice in relation to improving workforce participation rates in the older demographic;
- (b) Exploration of factors contributing to the out-migration of the prime age working population and implementing measures to attract and retain the existing workforce, particularly youth; and
- (c) Exploration of appropriate measures to overcome barriers such as a lack of housing, to attract new labour.

Understanding the infrastructure constraints to economic development in the Shire of Dowerin and strategic and well-planned investment in that infrastructure will enable improved productivity and efficiency of existing businesses and facilitate the establishment of new business.

3 Community Engagement

In developing the Dowerin Strategic Community Plan, the Shire of Dowerin encouraged and supported robust community involvement. Input was encouraged from all sectors of the community through a range of engagement strategies, each of which was designed to capture community insight and aspiration with regard to priority services and projects for the Council over the coming decade.



Figure 2. Community Engagement Mechanisms

3.1 Community Survey

A community survey was administered in May to June of 2017. The focus of this survey was two-fold:

- To review the vision, objectives and themes of the 2013 Dowerin Strategic Community Plan and gauge their relevance to the current planning process; and
- To determine service delivery priorities for the community.

Participation in the survey was promoted through advertisements in the Dowerin Despatch, the Shire website and social media. A total of 75 responses were received to the community survey, in its online and print formats.

Survey output indicated strong support for the high-level objectives of the 2013 Plan to remain the focus of the 2018-2028 Strategic Community Plan.

3.2 Community Workshops

Two community workshops were held in June and August 2017. Participation in the workshops was open to all Dowerin Shire residents and was promoted through social media, local print media (i.e.

the Dowerin Despatch), letters of invitation to stakeholder groups (e.g. sporting clubs, the local childcare centre, Dowerin Events Management, the Community Resource Centre, the school, etc.) and through phone calls to randomly selected rate payers.

Across the two workshops there were 102 participants representing a broad cross-section of the community including youth, older people, sporting groups and local businesses. Participants ranged in age from 14 to 84 and have lived in Dowerin from as few as one year to as many as 78 years.

The community workshops aimed to build on the survey by exploring in more depth the objectives and required actions and by prioritising Shire service



delivery and assets.

3.3 Other Community Engagement

Informing documents were developed and distributed to the community including:

- a) A “community scorecard” highlighting achievements of the Shire, as they related to the 2013 Strategic Community Plan;
- b) A community services booklet, providing a comprehensive overview of Shire service delivery, assets and expenditure; and
- c) Summary reports on the community survey and community workshops, to provide an opportunity for reflection on the input provided by community members and to ensure that the views and ideas of the community had been accurately captured.

A public comment period on the draft Dowerin Strategic Community Plan provided opportunity for all community members to review and provide further input in to the planning process. Community members were invited to review the Draft Plan throughout December and January 2017.

A planning workshop with Shire Council members and staff was held with the purpose of reviewing community input in to the Draft Plan and engaging in a rigorous process to prioritise near to medium term projects for inclusion in the Shire’s Corporate Business Plan.

3.4 Community Priorities

A summary of priorities emergent from the community consultation is summarised below. More detailed information on these priorities is provides in Appendix 2 and in the summary reports on the community survey and workshops, which are available via the Shire of Dowerin’s website.



4 Strategic Direction

The community’s aspirations for Dowerin are described through a vision statement and high-level objectives and outcomes that have been identified through extensive consultation. The vision serves to inspire the community and to guide the Shire of Dowerin in its activities over the term of the Plan.

4.1 Community Vision

Dowerin will be a thriving and growing rural community which offers lifestyle choice for all generations, is progressive in environmental management and is a preferred location for business development.

A thriving and growing rural community...

Dowerin will be progressive and successful community with a range of regular activities, events and opportunities available for residents, businesses and visitors to enjoy.

Shire facilities will be heavily utilised, well managed and successfully maintained and local residents will play an intricate role in the community through volunteerism and participation.

A lifestyle choice for all generations....

With high quality facilities and services that will cater for the needs of a range of demographics. Dowerin will be a prime location for singles, families and seniors to relocate from the hustle and bustle of the metropolitan area and will offer an affordable and desirable community in which to live, work and play. We will have employment choices, high quality education for all ages, health and emergency services. These attributes will combine to make Dowerin a safe and friendly place to reside.

A preferred location for business development....

Dowerin will be a prosperous and successful place to live and do business. Opportunities will be available for economic growth and business activity leading to a sustainable economy for the long term. Young people will stay in Dowerin to take advantage of traineeships and apprenticeships leading to a bright future. Residents and businesses will have access to 21st century telecommunications technology ensuring they are connected with the rest of the world.

Progressive environmental management

Dowerin will be progressive in its environmental practises, minimising waste to landfill and maximising potential for recycling whilst utilising the Dowerin Recycling Centre. Residents will optimise opportunities to minimise energy use and utilise alternative green energy resources. Residents will actively volunteer to participate in the Tidy Towns program and conduct work at the recycling shed.

4.2 Community Values

Communication: Regular communication ensures the whole community is informed and aware.

Progress: Driving change through innovative and strong leadership.

Community spirit and participation: Inclusive, caring and involved community.

Transparency: Open, honest and accountable.

4.3 Objectives & Outcomes

	Objective	Outcomes
Our Lifestyle	<i>A safe, friendly and engaged community with diverse education and employment opportunities and services that meet the needs of all generations.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A friendly and welcoming community that all residents and visitors have pride and participate in. ▪ Sustainable volunteer management through greater collaboration and innovative governance models. ▪ Better access to quality and diverse education and training opportunities.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A growing population of families and young people.
Our Infrastructure	<i>Our infrastructure will drive economic and population growth, be a key enabler of the digital economy and support reliable, efficient service delivery.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Diverse housing aligned to community need; ▪ Infrastructure is fit for purpose and responsibly managed and maintained. ▪ Reliable information technology and infrastructure that enhances business capabilities, provides opportunity for industry development and supports new employment models.
Our Economy	<i>A strong and growing local economy supported by new industry development aligned to identified economic opportunity.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Available, well-marketed and appropriately provisioned commercial and industrial land entices new business establishment. ▪ Tourism is a significant contributor to the local economy and is enhanced by investment in tourism initiatives that showcase Dowerin’s natural and built attributes. ▪ New industry and strengthened existing industry supports economic growth and local employment generation.
Our Natural Environment	<i>Dowerin’s unique natural environment is conserved and enhanced through sustainable practices and responsible environmental management.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increased community education and awareness supports the preservation of Dowerin’s natural environment. ▪ Sustainable practices are researched and entrenched in areas such as waste management, water management and renewable energy production. ▪ Sustainable infrastructure design and maintenance minimizes environmental impact.
Our Leaders	<i>A thriving and progressive rural community enabled by innovation in leadership, a focus on continuous improvement and adaptability to evolving community needs.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A community that is engaged and involved because of collaborative decision making and transparent communication. ▪ Through effective planning, services and programs meet community needs and aspirations, enabled by assets that are managed to optimize use and minimize life cycle costs. Continuous improvement in service delivery, responsible financial stewardship and good governance ensures the Shire is accountable and responsive to evolving community need. ▪ The Shire demonstrates commitment to safety of employees, residents and visitors by having sound planning and practices in place.

4.4 Themes & Community Outcomes

The key themes for the implementation of the Dowerin Strategic Community Plan are aligned to the pillars of sustainable development — community, infrastructure, economy, natural environmental and leadership. This section details the outcomes and actions that will help to achieve the community’s objective in each of these four key areas.

Whilst presented under separate themes, the outcomes and objectives described here are inter-linked and will influence and interact to create the community that we aspire towards.

Prioritisation: Council recognises that not all actions can be delivered immediately due to resourcing and other restrictions. Council also acknowledges that this document is a ten-year plan and therefore actions require prioritisation. The following categories were used for prioritisation.

Council’s role: This Community Plan is based on Community needs and aspirations and recognises that the Community was not asked to only focus on Council actions. As such this plan includes actions that are outside Council’s direct remit. Council recognises and values the contributions of other tiers of government, the business sector and community groups in delivering on community aspirations. Council used the following categories to clearly articulate its own role in progressing actions.

- DIRECT DELIVERY = The Shire funds and delivers the service or facility through staff or contractors;*
- PARTNER = The Shire partners with other agencies and contributes funds to ensure the service or facility is provided (e.g. Goomalling Medical Service);*
- FACILITATE = The Shire assists and supports other groups via indirect and in-kind contributions (e.g. CRC, Lil Tigers, Dowerin District Museum);*
- ADVOCATE = The Shire actively seek opportunities to engage with other tiers of government and other sectors to progress actions.*

4.4.1 Our Lifestyle

Our Objective:

A safe, friendly and engaged community with diverse education and employment opportunities and services that meet the needs of all generations.

Ref No.	Actions	Measure(s) of Success	Priority	Our Role
Outcome 1: More people, particularly young people and families, live and stay in Dowerin.				

C1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively promote Dowerin as a vibrant, family friendly community with quality and diverse amenities and services. This may include the development of a targeted marketing campaign similar to the successful “evocities” model. 	<p>Evidence of ongoing efforts to market the benefits of living and working in Dowerin.</p> <p>ABS population statistics indicate a stable or growing population.</p> <p>WA Planning Commission population forward estimates, forecast growth for Dowerin.</p>	1.	Facilitate
Outcome 2: Sustainable volunteer management through greater collaboration and innovative governance models.				
C2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a “volunteer register” which documents volunteering capacity, time commitments and other information as deemed relevant, to provide a measurable value to volunteering in Dowerin. 	<p>Volunteer register provides support for grant applications.</p> <p>Volunteering participation levels maintained.</p>	2.	Direct Delivery

Ref No.	Actions	Measure(s) of Success	Priority	Our Role
C3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate best practice in shared governance arrangements for volunteer groups to support a more sustainable volunteer base. 	<p>Local volunteering groups supported to investigate and discuss options for a shared governance framework.</p>	1.	Facilitate
Outcome 3: A friendly and welcoming community that all residents and visitors participate and have pride in.				
C4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Targeted engagement of all sectors of the community, recognizing cultural diversity. 	<p>Evidence of engagement activities and outcomes.</p>	1.	Direct Delivery/ Facilitate
C5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide an annual program of events that incorporates activities and opportunities 	<p>Diversity in annual program of events.</p> <p>Evidence of collaboration with</p>	1.	Direct Delivery/ Partner/

	that encourage all sectors of the community to participate and celebrates cultural events.	local businesses and organisations in delivering and promoting events.		Facilitate
Outcome 4: Better access to quality and diverse education and training opportunities				
C6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued support and advocacy for Educational Institutions in Dowerin including (but not limited to) the Dowerin Early Learning Centre and Dowerin District High School. Work with the Dowerin District High School to identify and integrate senior high school options to encourage the retention of students beyond Year 10. 	<p>Shire of Dowerin continues to provide in-kind, administrative and financial support to the Dowerin Early Learning Centre.</p> <p>The Dowerin District High School is retained and available for future generations.</p>	<p>1.</p> <p>1.</p>	<p>Facilitate/ Advocate</p> <p>Advocate</p>

Ref No.	Actions	Measure(s) of Success	Priority	Our Role
C7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate with the Community Resource Centre to deliver training/development opportunities aligned to community interests/needs. Advocate for local businesses/industry to support apprenticeships, training and further education opportunities. 	Number and type of training/development opportunities planned and delivered.	2.	Partner
			1. & 2.	Partner/ Direct Delivery
Outcome 5: Services provision meets the varying needs of different sectors of the Dowerin community.				
C8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create an “age friendly community” plan identifying infrastructure, such as Independent Living Units, and service delivery requirements that will ensure Dowerin remains a community where people can age in place. Continue to support the Home and Community Care (HACC) service as a priority service in our community. 	Age friendly community plan developed in consultation with community.	4.	Direct Delivery
			1.	Direct Delivery
C9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the Dowerin District High School Youth Leadership Group to provide youth led and informed social and developmental opportunities and experiences for young people (e.g. dedicated youth projects) and youth-related infrastructure. 	<p>Number of youth specific initiatives implemented.</p> <p>Community engagement indicates satisfaction with youth opportunities.</p>	1. & 5.	Direct Delivery/ Partner/ Facilitate

4.4.2 Our Infrastructure

Our Objective:

Our infrastructure will drive economic and population growth, be a key enabler of the digital economy and support reliable, efficient service delivery.

Reference Number	Actions	Measure(s) of Success	Priority	Our Role
Outcome 1: Infrastructure is fit for purpose, responsibly managed and maintained.				
I1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Empty spaces/places review to determine and promote opportunities for the re-use and revitalization of unused community assets. 	Completion of review. Number of assets re-purposed/revitalised.	1.	Direct Delivery
I2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a comprehensive asset management plan that prioritizes assets and details a replacement/maintenance schedule, that aligns to community need (e.g. investigations of options for refurbishment and renewal or relocation of the swimming pool, toilet in the park, etc.). 	Asset Management Plan developed in alignment with Dowerin Strategic Community Plan.	1.	Direct Delivery
Outcome 2: Housing meets existing community need and facilitates in-migration of families and workers.				
I3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake a “housing needs analysis” to identify specific housing requirements for the community and opportunities to address gaps in the market. 	Needs analysis completed. Benchmark housing data collected.	1.	Direct Delivery

Reference Number	Actions	Measure(s) of Success	Priority	Our Role
I4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate and implement appropriate housing investment models for Dowerin (e.g. private developers, housing co-operatives, etc.) 	Identification of a sustainable housing investment model.	4.	Direct Delivery/ Partner
Outcome 3: Reliable information technology (IT) and infrastructure that enhances business capabilities, provides opportunity for industry development, supports new employment models and facilitates improved service delivery.				
I5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gather data on local telecommunications to identify IT infrastructure deficiencies and opportunities, and work in collaboration with neighbouring communities to advocate for improvements to this critical service. 	Telecommunications review completed.	2.& 5.	Direct Delivery/ Advocate

4.4.3 Our Economy

Our Objective:

A strong and growing local economy supported by new industry development aligned to identified economic opportunity.

Reference Number	Actions	Measure(s) of Success	Priority	Our Role
Outcome 1: Available, well-marketed and appropriately provisioned commercial and industrial land entices new business establishment.				
E1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a Sub-Regional Industrial Land Prospectus to attract new business. 	<p>Investment prospectus developed and marketed.</p> <p>ABS industry data demonstrates an increase in business entries (particularly employing businesses) in Dowerin.</p>	1.	Direct Delivery

Outcome 2: Tourism is a significant contributor to the local economy and is enhanced by investment in tourism initiatives that showcase Dowerin’s natural and built attributes.				
E2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake a tourism “asset and opportunity” review to clearly identify target markets, tourism trends and opportunities for Dowerin to better promote current offerings. 	Number of new tourism and/or ancillary businesses/initiatives identified	1.	Direct Delivery
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage and support local businesses to better cater for visitors and tourists. 		1.	Direct Delivery
E3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued involvement in regional tourism marketing campaigns (e.g. Wheatbelt Way, Pioneers Pathway). 	Dowerin Accommodation Precinct utilisation data.	1.	Direct Delivery
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specific marketing /promotion of the Dowerin Accommodation Precinct through these campaigns to targeted markets e.g. businesses that work in the area. 		1.	Direct Delivery
E4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acquit the Wheatbelt Rail Heritage Initiative and maintain as a static display while exploring opportunities for transfer of ownership to private enterprise or community group. 	Wheatbelt Rail Heritage Initiative completed.	1.	Direct Delivery/ Facilitate

Reference Number	Actions	Measure(s) of Success	Priority	Our Role
Outcome 3: New industry and strengthened existing industry supports economic growth and local employment generation.				
E5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Complete a local economic development and incentivization plan that builds on existing economic analysis and identifies specific industry opportunity and actions to capitalise on this opportunity. A focus of this plan will be on business development that has employment creation potential. 	<p>Economic development plan completed.</p> <p>Small area labour market data shows a decrease in the unemployment rate and an increase in labour force participation.</p> <p>ABS census data shows a more diverse employment profile.</p>	1.	Direct Delivery
E6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Local businesses are supported to thrive through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Continued membership and promotion of the Wheatbelt Business Network (WBN) and its associated initiatives such as the buy local campaign and business after hours events. b) A local business development strategy that identifies actions to improve business performance and competitiveness in areas such as customer service and online markets. 	<p>Increase to local business revenue and customer bases.</p> <p>Increase in local business membership to the WBN.</p> <p>Local business development strategy completed.</p>	1.	Partner

4.4.4 Natural Environment

Our Objective:

Dowerin’s unique natural environment is conserved and enhanced through sustainable practices and responsible environmental management.

Reference Number	Actions	Measure(s) of Success	Priority	Our Role
Outcome 1: Increased community education and awareness supports the preservation of Dowerin’s natural environment.				
N1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work with environmental advocacy groups to deliver targeted education programs that support existing sustainability initiatives and encourages community ownership of recycling program (e.g. how to prepare waste for recycling). 	Number of educational programs delivered.	1.	Partner
N2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Investigate opportunities for local level support from an environmental officer. Specifically explore: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) A resource sharing model with neighbouring Shires to enable the reinstatement of a dedicated NRM or Landcare officer; and b) A formalised arrangement with Wheatbelt Natural Resource Management for greater support/resource allocation for Dowerin. 	Support of an environmental officer is available at a local level.	3.	Partner

Reference Number	Actions	Measure(s) of Success	Priority	Our Role
Outcome 2: Sustainable practices are researched and entrenched in areas such as waste management, water management and renewable energy production.				
N3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Large scale (commercial) renewable energy production (e.g. solar or wind generated power) investigated for development potential, in collaboration with neighboring Shires. 	Evidence of investigation in to feasibility and suitability of commercial scale renewable energy generation in Dowerin, including liaison with existing operators in the Wheatbelt.	1.	Advocate
N4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop a long-term plan for waste management (recycling and general waste) that considers infrastructure, site management and resourcing requirements and includes the investigation of local processing of recycled materials. 	Waste Management Plan developed.	1.	Direct Delivery
N5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Integrate water management planning with land use planning and focus on: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Strategies to improve rain water harvesting, storage and use; and b) Water quality and salinity management (e.g. feasibility of renewable energy powered desalination of water.) 	Water management planning is integrated in to the Shire's land use planning.	2.	Direct Delivery

Reference Number	Actions	Measure(s) of Success	Priority	Our Role
Outcome 3: Sustainable infrastructure design and maintenance minimizes environmental impact.				
N6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainable maintenance of parks, ovals and public spaces/infrastructure through planning for rain water harvesting, storage and use and renewable energy installations (e.g. solar panels). 	<p>Initiatives demonstrating responsible water reduction, recovery and re-use.</p> <p>Renewable energy installations reduce electricity consumption.</p>	1.&2.	Direct Delivery
N7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information packs and referrals to relevant associations for new infrastructure developments include specifications for responsibly sourced and energy efficient materials and design features. 	Information packs/referrals for environmentally friendly products and design features.	1.	Direct Delivery

4.4.5 Our Leaders

Our Objective:

A thriving and progressive rural community enabled by innovation in leadership, a focus on continuous improvement and adaptability to evolving community needs.

Reference Number	Actions	Measure(s) of Success	Priority	Our Role
Outcome 1: A community that is engaged and involved because of collaborative decision making and transparent communication.				
L1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specific volunteer groups/individuals are targeted for involvement in community projects that align to their areas of interest and expertise. 	Dedicated project committees demonstrating progress on community priorities.	1.	Direct Delivery
Reference	Actions	Measure(s) of Success	Priority	Our Role

Number				
L2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication between the Shire and community is multi-faceted and includes electronic and print media as well as in-person engagement. 	Regularity of media releases and other publications. Increased social media following.	1.	Direct Delivery
Outcome 2: Through effective planning, service delivery meets community needs and assets are managed to optimize use and minimize life cycle costs.				
L3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an asset management plan and long term financial plan consistent with identified community priorities for asset renewal and service delivery. 	Asset management plan and long term financial plan implemented and reviewed annually.	1,	Direct Delivery
L4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Efficient and proactive service provision and planning that adapts to meet changing community needs, as identified through the regular “community health” checks. 	Corporate Business Plan (reviewed annually) reflects service delivery priorities for the community.	1.	Direct Delivery
Outcome 3: Commitment to continuous improvement in service delivery and good governance practices ensures the Shire is adaptive to evolving community need.				
L5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continual review and revision of Council policy, procedures and governance frameworks to ensure responsible, efficient and effective service delivery. 	Annual review of Council documents and processes.	1.	Direct Delivery

Reference Number	Actions	Measure(s) of Success	Priority	Our Role
L6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Integrated planning evolves and adapts to meet the changing context for Dowerin. 	Annual review of integrated planning documents.	1.	Direct Delivery
L7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue to advocate for and create partnerships that will benefit the Dowerin community through: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Ongoing discussions with neighboring Shire's to identify opportunities for mutually beneficial collaborations which will optimize resource sharing and service/infrastructure provision. b) Active participation in regional, state and national groups/alliances to advocate for and represent the needs of the community of Dowerin. 	<p>Active participation in the Avon Regional Organisation of Councils.</p> <p>Number of collaborative initiatives with other Shires.</p>	1.	Direct Delivery / Partner

4.5 Councils decision making criteria

In determining the priorities outlined in this Plan, the council adopted the following decision-making criteria:

- 1) **Alignment to Community Priority:** How well does it align with one or more of the priorities identified by our community,
- 2) **Impact:** What strategic issue is it addressing? How well will it enable progress against community priorities and what impact will it have?
- 3) **Affordability:** What is it likely to cost and how will we pay for it?
- 4) **Achievability:** How will we do it, can we do it with available resources.
- 5) **Responsibility:** Is it our role – direct delivery, facilitation, partnering or advocacy?
- 6) **Sustainability:** Can we sustain the program/service/facility?

4.6 Shire Roles and Services

The Shire of Dowerin will work with the community, local business and other stakeholders to deliver on the vision for Dowerin. Collective action is required to maximise the benefit from all opportunities that are available to Dowerin.

4.6.1 Roles of the Shire of Dowerin

Local governments have specific regulatory responsibilities that are vital for community wellbeing. They also offer a range of discretionary services to enhance their community.

Financial Stewardship

The Shire of Dowerin is responsible for the appropriate management, reporting and expenditure of Shire funds in line with an Annual Budget and long-term financial plan.

Good Governance

The Shire of Dowerin is responsible for and committed to the principles of good governance including:

- *Accountability:* Reporting and monitoring on consequences of decisions made on behalf of the community;
- *Transparency:* A clear decision-making process with documented advice, information and consultation considered by council;
- *Following the Rule of Law:* Decisions are consistent with legislation or common law and are within the powers of council;
- *Responsive:* Council serves the needs of the entire community and balances the interests of different groups in an appropriate and timely manner;
- *Equitable and Inclusive:* All groups in the community, particularly the most vulnerable, have opportunities to participate in decision making processes;
- *Effective and Efficient:* Council decision making ensures the best use of the available people, resources and time to ensure the best possible result for the community; and
- *Participatory:* Anyone affected by or interested in a decision is given an opportunity to participate in the process for making that decision.

Service Delivery

The Shire of Dowerin provides a range of diverse facilities and services. The range and level of service has developed and evolved based on legislative requirements, community demand as determined via strategic planning and historical precedent.

Services and facilities delivered by the Shire are both asset based and non-asset based. Asset based services include the provision and maintenance of footpaths, recreation facilities, parks, roads and community buildings. Non-asset based services includes social services such as the delivery of aged care services (HACC) and library services.

Strategic Planning

The Shire of Dowerin is responsible for robust strategic planning which ensures that the Shire continues to develop in line with community vision and priorities.

Support

The Shire supports services to be provided by others in partnership rather than directly providing or funding the service. Examples include support for the Dowerin Early Learning Centre, Community Resource Centre and Dowerin Events Management.

4.6.2 Shire Services at a Glance

Below is an overview of the services currently provided by the Shire of Dowerin. Through the community survey and workshop, priorities for service delivery have been identified and are provided in Appendix 2.

Community	Infrastructure	Environment	Economy	Leadership
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Public Library ▪ Community Bus ▪ Parks, garden & playgrounds ▪ Support for community groups ▪ Community events ▪ Main street projects ▪ HACC services ▪ Childcare Service Support ▪ Youth Initiatives ▪ Doctors Service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sport & Recreation Facilities (including the swimming pool) ▪ Public toilets ▪ Residential Housing ▪ Road maintenance/renewal/upgrade ▪ Footpaths ▪ Town Hall ▪ Cemetery ▪ Street lighting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sewerage ▪ Household Rubbish Collection ▪ Fire Control ▪ Ranger Service ▪ Household Recycling ▪ Refuse Site (Tip) ▪ Drum Muster ▪ Landcare Services ▪ Sustainability Initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dowerin Field Days support ▪ Tourism services ▪ Wheatbelt Rail Heritage Project ▪ Vehicle licensing ▪ Airfield maintenance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Town Planning ▪ Building and health services ▪ Frontline customer service ▪ Governance ▪ Financial Stewardship

5 Resourcing Implications

The Shire of Dowerin takes great pride in its ability to successfully adhere to an accurate annual budget process which ensures that Dowerin's existing services and facilities are maintained whilst having the foresight to create reserve to help fund new and upcoming projects and activities.

Council's revenue comes from a limited number of sources including; council rates and annual charges, user fees and charges of council property and services, grants and contributions, and interest. However, Council has limited opportunities to source new revenue and therefore the importance of creating new infrastructure that combines facilities and limits maintenance is critical to the maintaining an acceptable standard of the Shires services, facilities and assets.

5.1 10-year financial profile

The Shire of Dowerin has developed a long term financial plan which highlights the Council's financial requirements to achieve its strategic vision for the community.

The long term financial plan recognises that the financial resources of the Council are limited and therefore financial decisions made annually need to be in the context of the long term financial viability of the Council.

5.2 Asset and workforce requirements

Council manages a wide range of assets on behalf of the Dowerin community. These assets include roads, bridges, footpaths, public buildings, reserves, parks and playgrounds.

The Council has developed an asset management plan which is aimed at ensuring the Council has a clear understanding of its financial requirements to manage these assets sustainably into the future.

5.3 Resource Capacity

	Current	Projected 2027
Shire Population	690	650
Shire Workforce (FTE)		
Annual Revenue (operating revenue, grants, subsidies)		
Annual Rates Revenue		
Value of Assets		
Annual Expenditure (capital and operational)		
Borrowings		

6 Strategic Risk Management

Strategic level risks are internal and external and impact on achieving the long-term objectives outlined in this Plan. A summary of identified risks is provided as follows:

External Risks	Internal Risks
Increasing community expectations in relation to service levels and service delivery.	The achievability of objectives and strategies contained in the Strategic Community Plan.
Rapid changes in information technology changing the service delivery environment.	The timing and actions contained in the Shire's Corporate Business Plan.
Increased compliance requirements due to Government Policy and Legislation.	Organisational size, structure and activities are sufficient to support delivery against community priorities.
Cost shifting by Federal and State Governments.	Current organisational strategy and culture.
Reducing external funding for infrastructure and operations.	The financial capacity of the Shire.
Declining population reducing rate revenue and ability to meet critical mass to support service delivery.	Allocation of resources to achieve strategic outcomes.
Increasing community expectations and regulations in relation to waste management.	Maintenance of corporate records.
Lack of community engagement resulting in poor or misguided planning.	Current organisational systems and processes.
Economy dominated by one industry which is subject to vast market and environmental fluctuations.	Organizational dysfunction including fraud, incompetence and skills shortages.

7 Performance Measures

The Shire of Dowerin is committed to monitoring progress towards achieving the vision, objectives and outcomes of the 2017-2027 Dowerin Strategic Community Plan. Performance measures for specific actions have been highlighted in the preceding section on outcomes and objectives. The following performance measures will be used as a high-level gauge of success in each of the focus areas of this Plan.

	Objective	Key Performance Measures
Our Lifestyle	<i>A safe, friendly and engaged community with diverse education and employment opportunities and services that meet the needs of all generations.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Resident population data ▪ Population forecasts ▪ Community participation rates ▪ Community volunteering rates ▪ Facility utilisation rates ▪ Community satisfaction
Our Infrastructure	<i>Our infrastructure will drive economic and population growth, be a key enabler of the digital economy and support reliable, efficient service delivery.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Resident population data ▪ Business registration data ▪ Workforce statistics (i.e. unemployment data and labour force participation) ▪ Infrastructure developments
Our Economy	<i>A strong and growing local economy supported by new industry development aligned to identified economic opportunity.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Business registration data ▪ Workforce statistics (i.e. unemployment data and labour force participation) ▪ Industry/employment profiles
Our Natural Environment	<i>Dowerin's unique natural environment is conserved and enhanced through sustainable practices and responsible environmental management.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Feasibility of commercial scale renewable energy production investigated ▪ Participation in sustainability initiatives
Our Leaders	<i>A thriving and progressive rural community enabled by innovation in leadership, a focus on continuous improvement and adaptability to evolving community needs.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Community health checks ▪ Community engagement ▪ Adherence to good governance practices

8 Appendix 1: Demographic & Economic Data

8.1 Demographics

A significant proportion of the population of Dowerin is aged 0-9 years (18%), much higher than the Western Australian average of 13%. On the opposite end of the spectrum, Dowerin also has a significant portion of people aged 60 to 69 at 19%, compared to Western Australia at 10%. Young people are underrepresented in Dowerin with just 49 people aged 15-19 (25 persons) and 20-24 (24 persons) (refer to Figure 3).

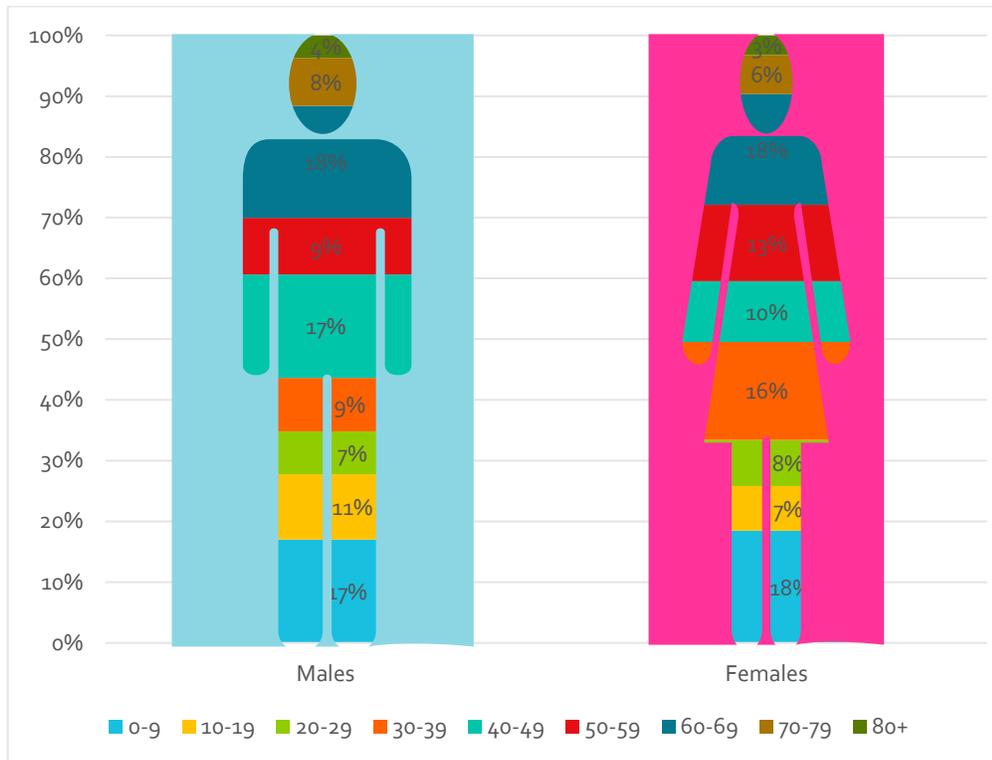


Figure 3. Resident Population by Age¹¹

¹¹ ABS 2016 Census of Population & Housing, Dowerin Community Profile

The Shire of Dowerin is experiencing an out-migration of its resident population, with the number of departures exceeding the number of arrivals (refer to table 1) resulting in a net regional migration of minus 26 over the period 2011 to 2015.

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Arrivals	61	53	41	60	52
Departures	63	65	42	68	55
Net Regional Migration	-2	-12	-1	-8	-3

Table 1. Internal Migration for the Dowerin Shire 2011 - 2015¹²

The WA Planning Commission forecasts that the resident population of Dowerin will decline over the coming decade, falling 4.3% to 650 persons by 2026¹³. As illustrated in Figure 4, the decline is expected to occur primarily in the 30-39 and 0-9 age group suggesting an anticipated reduction in the number of families in the community. At the same time, a surge is expected to occur in the number of people aged 70 and over.

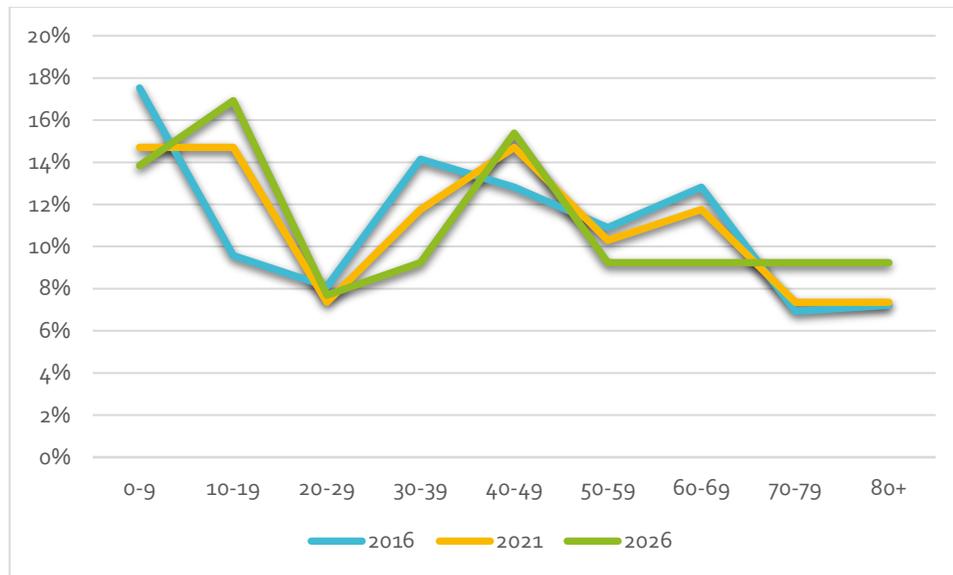


Figure 4. WA Planning Commissions Population Projections 2016-2026

¹² ABS, Local Government Profile Shire of Dowerin

¹³ WA Planning Commission 2015, Western Australia Tomorrow, Population Report 10

8.2 Workforce

Reflective of the dominance of broadacre farming in the Avon sub-region of the Wheatbelt, the primary industry of employment in the Shire of Dowerin is agriculture, with 41.7% of the labor force being employed in this sector¹⁴. Other major employment sectors (refer to Figure 5) include Education (9.4%), Public Administration (8.1%) and retail (6.2%).

Traditionally an area of low unemployment, the Shire of Dowerin has experienced a substantial increase in its unemployment rate over the previous two years from 2015 to 2017, reaching 8.3% in the March quarter of 2017¹⁵. This represents a doubling of the unemployment rate within the Shire during this time (up from 3.5% in March 2015). This is higher than the unemployment rate for Western Australia (6.2%) but reflective of an overall increase in unemployment rates across the Avon sub-region which averaged 9.5%.

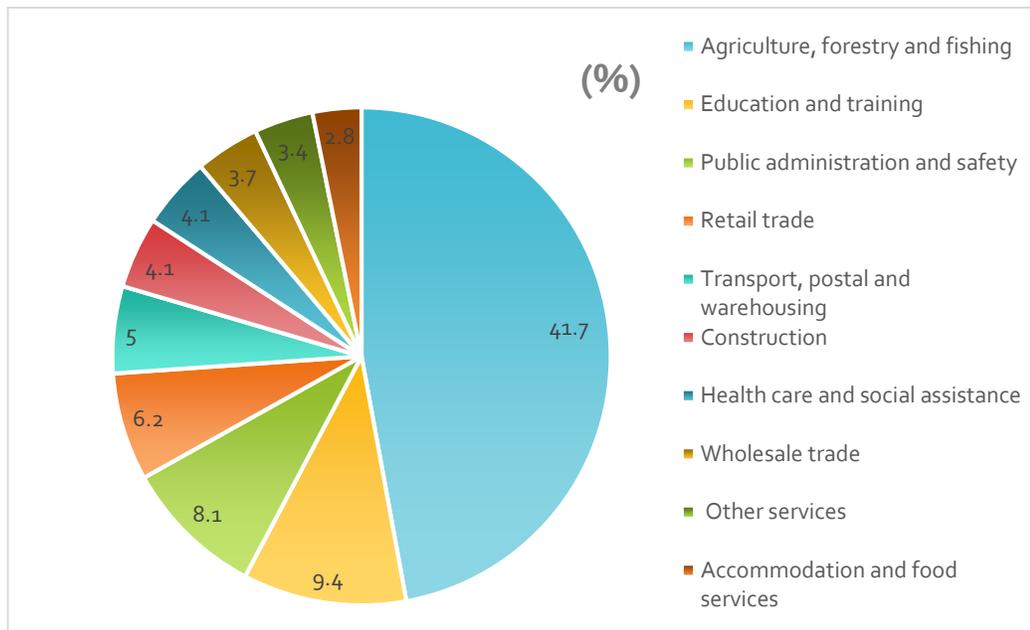


Figure 5. Percent Employment by Industry

¹⁴ ABS 2011, Employed by Industry

¹⁵ Department of Employment 2017, Small Area Labour Market Data Tables, March Quarter 2017.

8.3 Economy

The Shire of Dowerin’s economy is primarily driven by agricultural production which accounted for 57% of registered businesses in 2014. The Shire comprises some 185,912 ha of agricultural land holdings generating approximately \$50.5M in production value per annum¹⁶.

As of 30 June 2015, there were 128 registered businesses in the Shire of Dowerin¹⁷. This was a decline of 10% over the number of registered business at the same time in 2011(refer to figure 6). There are no large employers within the Shire of Dowerin. Of the registered businesses 58% are classified as “non-employing” and a further 35% are small/micro businesses employing between one and four people. In 2015 there were only nine businesses that employed more than five people and none that employed more than 20. The large number of non-employing businesses is attributable to the dominant industry of broad acre agriculture in the Shire.

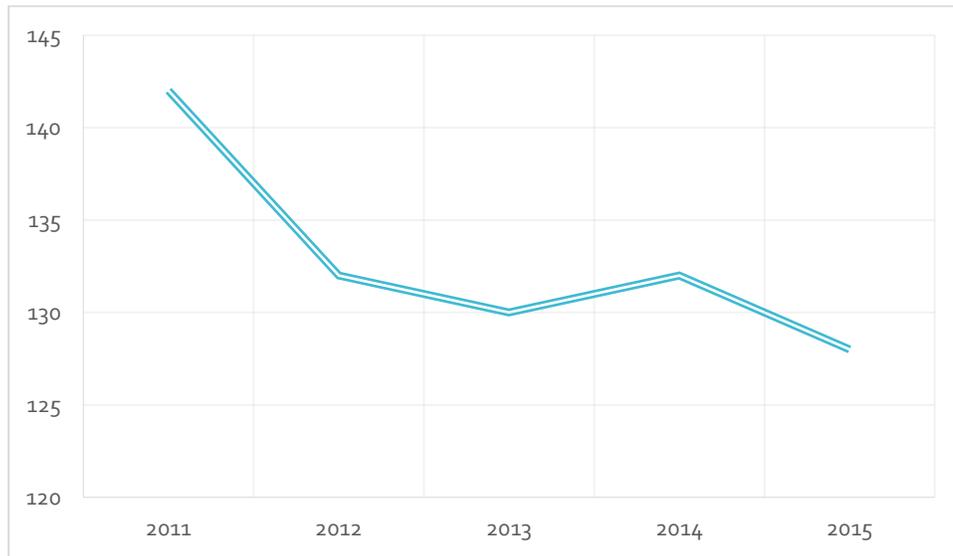


Figure 6. Registered Businesses in the Dowerin Shire 2011 – 2015

Business activity in the Shire of Dowerin is gradually declining with the number of business exits outweighing the number of business entries between 2012 and 2015 (refer to Figure 7). Of the business entries over this period, most (71%) were non-employing.

¹⁶ RPS 2013, Avon Sub-Regional Economic Strategy

¹⁷ ABS 2016, Regional Statistics by LGA, 2011-2016

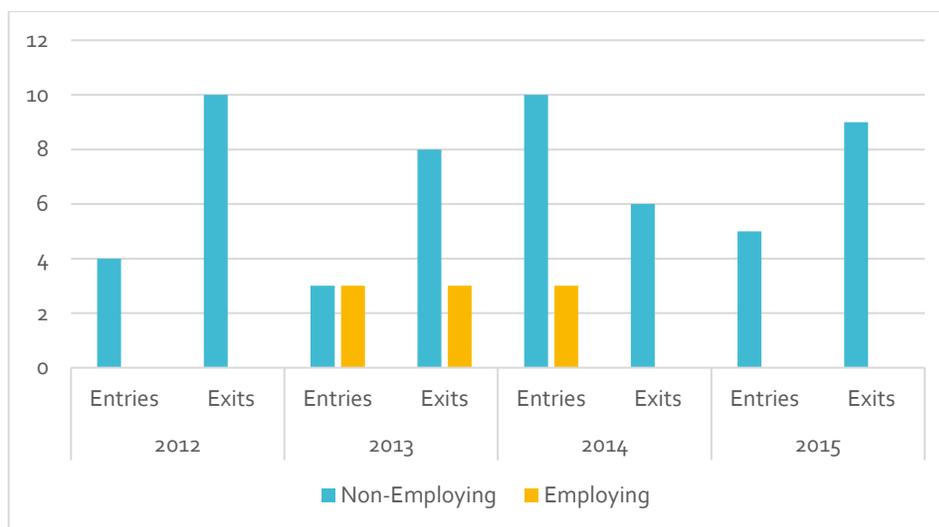


Figure 7. Business Activity 2012-2015

9 Appendix 2: Community Priorities

9.1 Themes & Priorities

Community priorities were identified through the various points of engagement used in developing the 2017-2027 Dowerin Strategic Community Plan. A summary of the priorities as they relate to the four focus areas of the Plan is provided below.

Community

- 1) *Population attraction and retention*: increase the number of people (particularly families and young people) living in Dowerin.
- 2) *Volunteering*: Supporting and retaining volunteers through greater collaboration across community groups.
- 3) *Community pride and participation*: Maintain a friendly and welcoming community by encouraging and allowing for all sectors of the community to get involved. Encourage community to take pride and participation in our community. Provide community events that are inclusive of everyone in the community,
- 4) *Housing*: Provide a diversity of housing that meets community need (rental and purchase, single plus family housing and independent living units for the elderly).
- 5) *Opportunities for Youth*: Provide youth opportunities and experiences that align to varying interests (e.g. arts, culture, leadership, sport.)
- 6) *Education and training*: Maintain and increase education and training opportunities and explore the potential to expand the District High School to a regional boarding facility;

- 7) *Employment*: Facilitate population attraction and retention through generation of diverse employment in diverse industry.
- 8) *Infrastructure*: Be innovative in the use and maintenance of existing infrastructure by re-purposing unused buildings and co-locating facilities (e.g. the town swimming pool).

Economy

- 1) *Availability of commercial/industrial land*: Increase the availability and modernize existing commercial land to entice new industry.
- 2) *Tourism*: Market Dowerin's point of difference and encourage longer stays.
- 3) *Industry growth and diversification*: Targeted marketing of Dowerin for industry development aligned to identified industry opportunity.
- 4) *Information technology*: Investment in reliable information technology;
- 5) *Business support*: Industry body such as a Chamber of Commerce to support local business development and facilitate collaboration amongst local businesses.
- 6) *Employment*: A diverse and growing economic base that will provide local employment

Environment

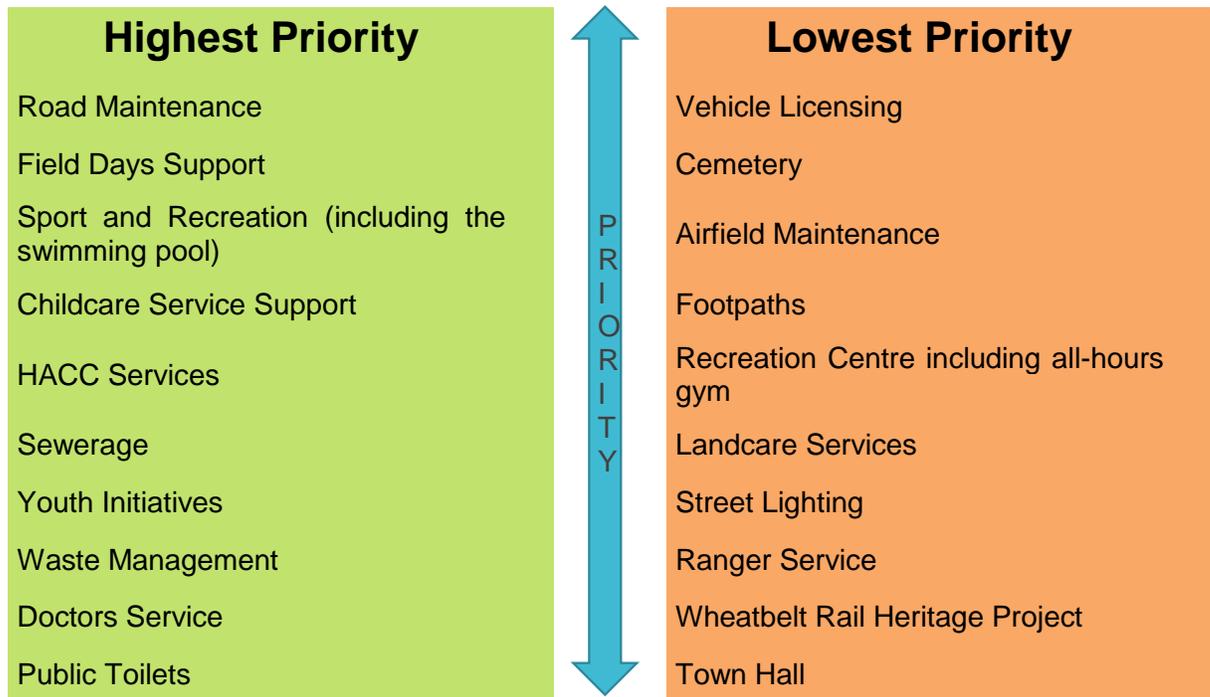
- 1) *Education/awareness*: Improve environmental education and awareness particularly in relation to waste management
- 2) *Sustainability*: Protect and conserve our natural environment and adopt sustainable practices.
- 3) *Renewable energy*: Investigate renewable energy generation (in particular solar power) as an industry opportunity.
- 4) *Waste management/recycling*: Retain and improve the regions waste management services, ensuring our Shire refuse site and local recycling centre is retained.

Local Government Leadership

- *Transparent communication*: Regular and informative communication between the Shire and the community.
- *Collaborative Decision Making*: Consultation and involvement of the community in planning and decision-making processes.
- *Strong Leadership & Governance*: A diverse and cohesive council.
- *Partnerships with other Shires*: Continue to work with neighbouring Shire's to deliver projects and services for the Dowerin community.
- *Targeted Community Engagement*: Engagement of specific groups/individuals in the community in projects/initiatives aligned to their interests/expertise.

9.2 Service Delivery Priorities

Survey data and workshop data combined provide the following top and bottom ten priorities for service provision from the perspective of the community:



10 Appendix 3: Long Term Financial Plan