



Commissioner's Message

On behalf of the Town of Port Hedland, I am pleased to present our 2018/19 Annual Report to the community.

I was appointed to the position of Commissioner in July 2019, following the State Government's decision to suspend Elected Members. Since commencing, I have had the pleasure of getting to know the Hedland community and working with the Town's Executive Team and staff. In October 2019, the Minister for Local Government, the Hon. David Templeman, declared all of the Town of Port Hedland Council seats vacant. Due to this decision, a new Commission was created which I was appointed to serve until October 2020.

The 2018/19 financial year saw many of the structural changes made in 2017/18 come to fruition. The rating strategy adopted in 2018 fundamentally changed how the Town collects rates yields, with the mining and industrial categories paying a more significant share than previous years. The Town's overall rates yield increase has secured reinvestment in core infrastructure assets, such as roads, footpaths, lighting, playgrounds and more. Further, our guiding principle for rates collection is now property values, giving local ratepayers more certainty and equitability. Increasing rates revenue derived from mining and industry has eased the pressure felt by households, evening the playing field.

The 2018/19 period was also the first financial year since the adoption of the *Strategic Community Plan 2018-2028* at the May 2018 OCM. This document has given Elected Members, the Executive Team and staff a blueprint to align decision making with community expectation. In December 2018, the

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Town conducted the annual perception survey to gauge how we were tracking on delivering the Plan's outcomes. We received a total of 1,002 responses, painting a rich picture of Hedland's community and views. People were generally optimistic about living in Hedland and enjoy the lifestyle, having high regard for waste management services and annual events. However, there were concerns about anti-social behaviour, litter, lighting adequacy and the lack of childcare places.

In October 2018, Council took a bold step in responding to community concern on childcare. Elected Members endorsed action on the chronic shortage of childcare places across Hedland, an issue not traditionally the jurisdiction of local government. This decision was based on data from the community perception survey, which highlighted the extent of the concern. A report was presented in February 2019, which investigated the viability of transitioning the Port Hedland Library into space for childcare service delivery, which is now being refurbished. Given the uncharted territory of the Town's involvement in this space, I commend the Council for stepping up and taking much-needed action.

In October 2018, the McGowan Government released its response to the Port Hedland Dust Taskforce Report. A critical report recommendation was for the Western Australian Planning Commission to consider an Improvement Scheme for the West End, giving both industry and residents more certainty on the area's future. In July 2019, the State Government announced it would approve the Improvement Plan. October 2018 was also when the first concept plans for the new Spoilbank Marina development were unveiled, a highly anticipated project for decades. From the outset, the Town played a central role in getting this project moving, with the establishment of the Spoilbank Community Reference Group in 2019. This group is responsible for providing a community perspective, making sure final designs meet local seafarer and stakeholder

expectation. The draft masterplans were unveiled to the community in early November 2019 in Gratwick Hall.

Strategic thinking and decision making was a priority over the last year, with the adoption of key plans. The *Coastal Hazard Risk Management Plan (CHRMAP)* was adopted in May 2019, recognising the reality of climate change and the need for all levels of government to mitigate future risks. The plan provides a framework for the Town to plan for flooding and coastal erosion in the Port Hedland LGA, occurrences set to increase in severity over the coming years. We're now in the process of implementing the CHRMAP, which requires the sourcing of external funds from the State and Federal Government. Again, this is an issue which in the 21st century, local government needs to take an active interest in.

In February 2019, we asked the community to contribute to the *Community Safety Plan 2019-2021*. This plan seeks to bring together all local stakeholders around health and safety priorities, moving towards a more holistic approach.

The future of sports and leisure in Hedland was secured with masterplans completed for a South Hedland Integrated Sports Complex, a renewed JD Hardie Youth and Community Zone and a McGregor Street Sports Precinct. These masterplans will impact how sports and leisure services are delivered in the community for decades to come, and I'm exceptionally proud of the work staff undertook to achieve this. The South Hedland Integrated sports precinct will incorporate Wanangkura Stadium and develop new outdoor courts, with the JD Hardie masterplan expanding on its youth focus towards a community hub for all ages. The McGregor Street Sports Precinct will incorporate the Turf Club oval and include new sports ovals. All of these plans deliver on the Town's SCP outcome to provide well utilised and valued community facilities and services.

Once again, I would like to thank the Port Hedland community for welcoming me since my appointment as Commissioner. It has been a pleasure getting to know you, and I look forward to continuing my service at the Town until October 2020.

Yours Sincerely,



Hon. Fredrick Riebeling

Town of Port Hedland Commissioner