

1. Issue Name

Community Development & Human Services

2. Issue Name

Community and Social Planning, Health and Environmental Services, Human Services, Leisure and Recreation Services, Corporate Planning, Environmental Management

3. Issue Identification and Scope

The contents of this issues paper has been drawn from the following:

- recent RSC strategic planning studies and reviews involving community consultation
- workshops with internal service providers
- research into local government leading practice
- focus groups conducted with external service providers and the community
- analysis of performance data
- literature review

Three key issues are addressed in this paper.

Strategic whole of Council framework to deliver strong communities

It is essential that the social effects of growth and change on the local community are planned, monitored and evaluated as these issues affect all areas of Council. A shared framework for ensuring strong communities would enable Council to drive a strong social agenda across areas of Council and provide clarity of intent to achieve common objectives. This paper proposes a framework defining what constitutes “strong communities” in the Redlands with measurable indicators that will enable better integration across Council’s program areas; and enhance Council’s capacity to plan and monitor the impacts of decisions on community life.

A “Strong Communities” Framework would also provide strategic direction for the achievement of multiple outcomes in communities through the development of a shared understanding of community development principles along with individual strategies for community development and human services and cascading program plans which align with performance measures and indicators.

Council’s role(s) in providing appropriate and accessible human services

Council needs to consider its role in possible new models of service provision including new partnerships between Commonwealth, State and local government, the private sector, non-government organisations and community groups. It also needs to define its role in encouraging, supporting and resourcing local organisations that support the community.

Key considerations for community development & human services

To inform this issues paper, a number of key considerations for community development and human services have been identified through an evaluation of current Council initiatives, community satisfaction surveys and a review of Council studies and documents containing comprehensive consultation with external agencies.

Key considerations are:

- Appropriate provision of social infrastructure
- Supporting Community Development
- Specific Population Group Needs
 - Ageing Community:
 - Young People:
- “Hidden” Communities:
- Indigenous Community

4. Executive Summary

This Paper focuses on three inter-related issues that together will enable a strategic approach to the planning and delivery of community development and human services. The current and projected population growth in the Redlands requires an integrated approach to developing strong communities that capitalise on their social, economic and environmental assets and actively work towards sustainability. Strong communities also understand and work with their most disadvantaged populations and support achievable standards of health and wellbeing for all. To enable communities to reach their potential, individual members of a strong community need to be engaged, involved, feel capable of working through issues and have access to resources to develop their capacity.

Strong Communities Framework

The need for a “Strong Communities” Framework that identifies the critical outcomes Council wishes to develop across the Redlands community; the key objectives that will achieve the desired type of community characteristics; and the indicators that will be used to measure the strength of communities. It is suggested that this be a whole of Council framework and provide direction in considering the social development of communities in decision-making. It will also act as an overarching guide for all community development and human services programs and enable an integrated approach across these services.

Council’s Role in Providing Appropriate and Accessible Human Services

Council provides a range of social services. A review of this function is current. Clear direction is required regarding the future role of Council as a direct service provider of social infrastructure. New models of service provision are likely in some areas including partnerships with the State, Commonwealth and non-government sectors.

Key Considerations for Community Development & Human Services

A “community development” approach to developing social infrastructure is proposed with Council taking an active role in supporting the community to build a strong identity and skills to play an active role in community life.

The ageing population is a key consideration and it is critical that Council is positioned to ensure that the necessary services to support older people are in place.

Stakeholders are keen that Council takes an inclusive inter-generational approach to developing services across the Shire and that young people’s issues; including personal safety, a need to increase participation in community life and affordable housing; are not ignored.

While Redland Shire records the third highest median income in the Brisbane / Moreton statistical divisions, there are pockets of disadvantage across the community. These include people on low incomes, people with a disability and Indigenous people. Strong communities ensure minimum standards for the whole population and it is important to understand the needs of the more vulnerable people in the Redlands. The data shows that there are particular issues of disadvantage on the Southern Moreton Bay Islands, including the Indigenous population of North Stradbroke Island. Council has been approached by the State and Commonwealth Governments to enter into a tripartite agreement in working with the Indigenous community on North Stradbroke Island. In order to do this effectively, a protocol for working in partnership with the community will need to be developed.

5. Regional Cooperation

The draft SEQ Regional Plan's vision for strong communities is:

- Cohesive, inclusive and healthy communities with a strong sense of identity and place, with access to a full range of services and facilities to meet diverse community needs.

To achieve this goal, improved coordination and integration between State and local government and the private and non-government sectors will be required, not only at local levels but on a regional / sub-regional basis. Many of the human services needs identified in the Redlands are funded and/or provided by Commonwealth and State Government. Therefore, Council will play an active role in advocating for the provision and location of services that meet the needs of Redland residents.

The challenges involved in developing strong communities with high levels of well being are experienced by all local and State government authorities. With a regional focus on "strong communities" collaborative effort across jurisdictions will bring benefits to Redlands.

Council participated in the following regionally focused initiatives:

- SEQROC Community Planning Project Group *
- SEQROC Local Government Sport & Recreation Forum *
- SEQROC Environmental Health Working Group *
- Leasing Review Partnership - RSC, Logan City Council & Noosa Shire Council

** Under the Mayors' Review of the role/functions of SEQROC, these Groups and Forums have yet to establish their role or direction either within or outside of SEQROC.*

6. Background Discussion

Key Themes

Strategic whole of Council framework to deliver strong communities

The community in the Redlands is in a state of change with substantial growth and a shift in the demographic population mix. This will be reflected in changes in the age of the Redland population, a more diverse multi-cultural population and changing lifestyle choices. The Redlands is a high amenity shire which is already experiencing the pressures of growth. These range from the perceived loss of "identity" for current residents adapting to the increases in population density, to ensuring adequate and appropriate community services and facilities to meet the needs of the emerging community.

It is essential that the social effects of growth and change on the local community are planned, monitored and evaluated as these issues affect all areas of Council. A shared framework for ensuring strong communities would enable Council to drive a strong social agenda across areas of Council and provide clarity of intent to achieve common objectives.

Strong communities are underpinned by robust economic, social, cultural and organisational development and capacity. All levels of government along with the private sector, non-

government organisations, community-based groups and residents have roles to play in the development of strong communities.

All levels of government across Australia have identified the development and support of “strong communities” as a priority. Strong communities:

- Are informed
- Have strong local organisations
- Have strong resident participation in community life
- Have improved levels of health, safety and well being
- Build effective and sustainable partnerships between key stakeholder groups
- Develop new working arrangements across government, business and the community
- Facilitate innovative solutions to community needs and priorities.
- Improve the use and operation of public and community spaces
- Facilitate sustainable forward planning & responses that address needs of the community
- Rely on integrated Council responses to engage and support the community

Other jurisdictions have defined “strong communities” as:

- “Cohesive, inclusive and healthy, with a strong sense of identity and place; with access to a full range of services and facilities to meet diverse needs”¹ (Draft SEQ Regional Plan)
- “Active, confident and resilient”.² (The Victorian Government)
- “A strong community is safe and welcoming; shares space and activities; has pathways to access networks, goods and services; and is resilient”.³ (Brisbane City Council)
- “A strong community identifies and drives their own ideas, is safe and welcoming, and works together to improve the wellbeing of the community”. (Geelong, Victoria)

The challenge for all governments is to develop an integrated and measurable approach to planning, resourcing and delivering strategies that actively support the development of well functioning communities – the type of community that people want to belong to; where people have the capacity to participate in and contribute to shaping their future and finding solutions to ensure quality of life.

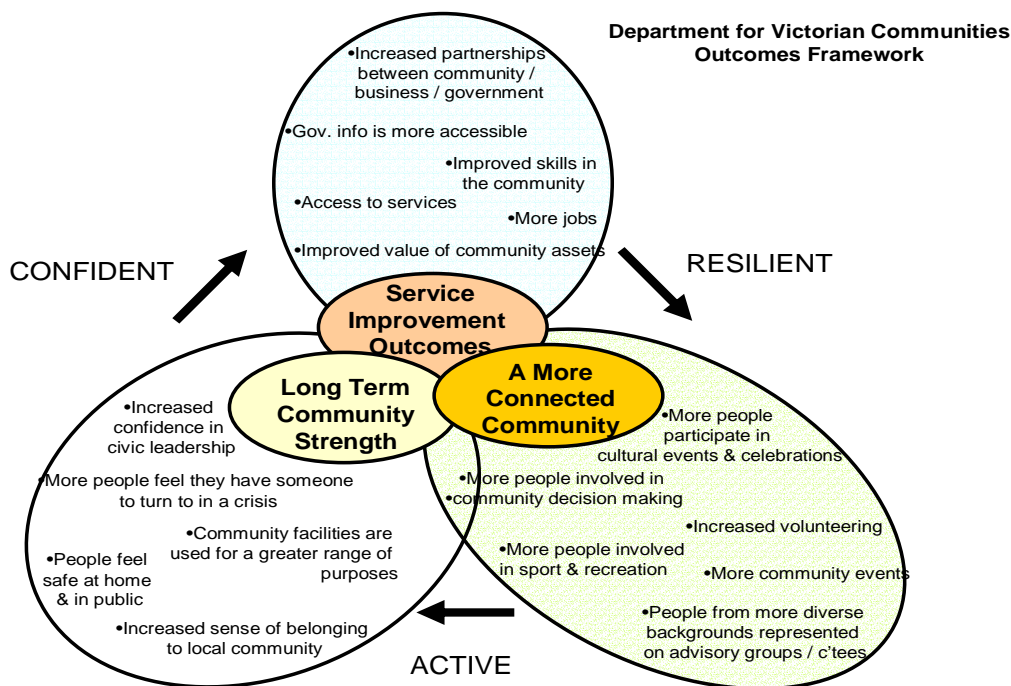
Strong communities do not “just happen”. And in a time of growth, where new communities are forming, it is essential to take a pro-active approach to supporting emerging communities to develop their networks, skills and social infrastructure. Furthermore, the impact of Council functions such as urban and social planning, transport planning, land use, community facilities and sport and recreation facilities and local laws all directly impact on the shape and wellbeing of a community.

Therefore, a “Strong Communities” Framework has relevance across the whole of Council. The following model is adapted from the Victorian Department for Communities (Indicators of Community Strength).

¹ Draft South East Queensland Regional Plan, Office of Urban Management, October 2004

² Indicators of Community Strength in Victoria, Department for Victorian Communities, 2004.

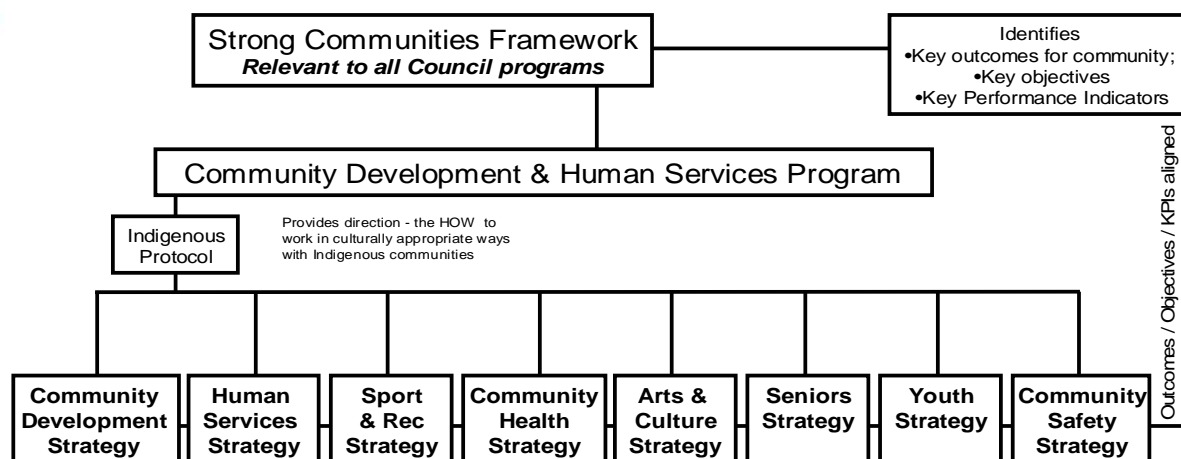
³ Brisbane City Council draft outcome definition for Pioneer KPI measurement, 2005



Extensive research has shown that successful community strengthening strategies deliver benefits to communities in three ways – **service improvement outcomes, more connected communities, and long term community strength.**

Utilising a similar approach, Council could identify its overall priority outcomes for communities (e.g. *confident, active and resilient communities*). It could then identify the strategic objectives through which it will achieve those outcomes. The value of such a framework is indicated by the following indicative model which demonstrates the cascading nature of planning for community health and well being.

The model encourages multiple outcomes for Redland communities by sharing a strategic planning framework via each of the different program areas. A common understanding of Council endorsed community development principles would further support the achievement of multiple outcomes.



**All strategies develop objectives, actions, output measures;
and all align with the Strong Communities Framework.
All strategies have an overall goal to develop confident, resilient, active communities
where there are service improvement outcomes, strong connections
and sustainable long term strength.**

Operational Outcome:

- Develop a *Strong Communities Framework* for Council endorsement and direction to ensure alignment of program objectives and strategies for strong sustainable communities in the Redlands.

Council's role(s) in ensuring accessible human services

Strong communities with high quality of life, health and wellbeing rely on a robust social infrastructure. Social infrastructure is categorised as health, individual, family and community support; education, arts and culture; information; sport and recreation; housing; community development; employment and training; legal and public safety; emergency services; land for community purposes; and public and community transport. Strong social infrastructure also relies on the capacity and capability of organisations and community groups who play a critical role in delivering services and supporting the life of the community.

Council has a role in ensuring that these services are accessible to its residents; and also in funding and/or providing some aspects of social infrastructure. It currently does this through a wide range of programs, grants and services including sport and recreation; libraries; arts and cultural services; community safety initiatives; public health programs; respite care; child care and home assist secure services. However, the whole range of social infrastructure is financed and managed through a range of mechanisms by Commonwealth, State and Local governments; non-government organisations; community groups and the private sector. It is essential that there are integrated approaches in planning and resourcing services.

Currently, Council's role in direct service provision in regard to delivery of child care, respite and home assist secure services is being reviewed. The review will examine the cost of each service and benchmark costs against private sector or other provision. However, cost will not be the only factor for consideration. For example, in the field of child care, private providers are keen to provide the services in certain areas but not in the less affluent areas of the Redlands. In the field of aged respite care, non-government organisations are closing down services for acute conditions. This is a reflection of the tight resourcing environment and the high cost of providing respite services to aged people with acute conditions (e.g. dementia, high need physical disability). Respite care is one of the identified priorities for the shire. A substantial increase in the number of aged residents by 2016 (+123% aged over 64 years; with numbers of those aged over 75 years doubling) means that it is essential to plan for an appropriate level of services.

Council needs to consider its role in possible new models of service provision including new partnerships between Commonwealth, State and Local government, the private sector and non-government organisations and community groups. It also needs to define its role in encouraging, supporting and resourcing local organisations that support the community.

Operational Outcome:

- Develop a Human Services Strategy for the Redlands, including defining Council's role in direct service delivery, resourcing, community and government partnerships and identify priority human services needs and strategies for implementation.

Key Considerations for Community Development & Human Services

The major goals of community development in local government are to build a strong and self-reliant community and to have a council responsive to community needs. Community development aims to encourage equity of access and opportunity for all members of the community to participate in community activities. Five key considerations for community development and human services have been identified through this issues paper. All priorities support the overall goal of building strong communities through increasing their *capacity*, *capability* and *effectiveness*.

Appropriate provision of social infrastructure:

- Maximising the use of Council assets including buildings, parks and land in ways that provide optimal community benefit. This could include utilising existing Council assets as community hubs, as sites for co-located services managed by community organisations; using "pocket parks" for local events and activities.
- Supporting community organisations to access alternative sources of funds to build appropriate social, cultural, health, recreational and human services infrastructure in the Redlands. This includes the Grants Writers' Assistance Program and facilitating community organisations to develop coordinated resource bids.
- Supporting and resourcing community organisations to operate efficiently and effectively. Community organisations are "the glue" that hold communities together. Mostly run by volunteers, they often require support on issues such as managing volunteers, new technology and planning which could be provided by Council supported training for organisations.
- Working collaboratively with government agencies and non-government organisations to ensure an integrated (non-competitive) approach to establishing essential social infrastructure in the region and in the Shire. The Draft SEQ Regional Plan provides opportunities for closer collaboration, as well as further developing existing relationships and taking on a strong advocacy role for social infrastructure in the Redlands.

- Consider appropriate provision of land for community infrastructure purposes through priority infrastructure policies, developer contributions, infrastructure charging plans and acquisition programs.

Operational Outcomes:

- Support community organisations through an organisational resourcing strategy to build their knowledge and skills.
- Work in cooperation with government and community agencies to ensure the Redlands is serviced by appropriate social and community infrastructure.
- Explore alternative uses of Council assets to support social and community infrastructure.

Supporting Community Development:

- Council needs to clearly define how it will support the development of well functioning communities through all of its programs. In times of growth and in new emerging communities, proactive approaches are required to ensure the development of well functioning, connected communities with a strong sense of identity and belonging.
- The proposed “Strong Communities” framework will help to define “what sort of community do we want in the Redlands”, and a community development approach will engage residents in identifying what is important to them, how they will work together to make it happen and sustain the type of community they wish to live in.
- This community development approach will help to inform Council decisions about the range of programs, activities and services that will support such communities. A community development approach needs to be supported across appropriate Council programs.
- A strong sense of connection and identity also results in communities taking responsibility to find solutions to problems rather than expecting “someone else” to solve their issues. This type of attitudinal change is particularly relevant to the areas of public health and local laws. The traditional regulatory regime is not viable in the current and future environment. There needs to be a greater shift to self regulation with a more strategic approach to regulation and compliance. This shift in the way compliance is managed is occurring across State Government compliance functions (e.g. Workplace Health & Safety, Transport, Environment) and in many local governments (Brisbane City Council, Noosa Shire Council). Changing attitudes and behaviour requires a mix of education, local laws and regulation.
- Sport and recreation is currently considered in isolation and not as a powerful tool to build strong communities. Active membership of sport and recreation organisations and regular participation in recreational activities (e.g. Council parks, sports venues, community halls etc), builds social cohesion, healthy communities and a sense of identity and place.
- Opportunities exist through improved sport & recreation communication plans to strengthen public/private & community partnerships; maximise tourism in regard to sport & recreation events (e.g. kayaking; triathlon) & support better asset management of community facilities.
- A community development approach to increasing public safety is also important. The Redlands Community Safety Committee has identified the following key priorities – graffiti and vandalism; reducing theft from vehicles; sexual assault and drink spiking; and domestic violence support and education.

Operational Outcomes:

- Work in partnership with other Council program areas to support a community development approach to new and growth communities.
- Develop a Community Health Plan to prioritise public health activities and promote a self help attitudinal change through community education.
- Improve community outcomes by delivering sport and recreation programs through a community development framework which includes partnerships with local clubs, service providers, industry representatives, tertiary sector, other levels of government and Council’s own service providers.

Specific Population Groups

Ageing Community & Young People

Seniors

The Redlands are already feeling the impacts of an ageing population. Support services for the aged are struggling; government resources are limited and non-government agencies are in competition within the Shire. Pressure on human services will increase; and there will be increased demand on issues such as physical safety, public space design, services for health, recreation, mental health, life long learning, and accessible transport.

- A “Seniors Strategy” that outlines the key priorities for the Shire is required. This will need to have a whole of Council approach, and be developed in collaboration with key community stakeholders. The Strategy will need to address issues such as those raised in the study commissioned by Council, on Retirement Villages⁴; and examine the current and emerging pressures on aged services as raised in the Community Services & Facilities Study⁵. Focus groups held with service providers to inform the development of this paper reinforced the issues of the urgent imperative to respond to the ageing population issues in regard to the provision of facilities and services; competition for limited resources; SMBI service provision; location of services; and the need to ensure that the issues associated with the ageing population are not addressed to the detriment of other needs.
- An increase in the number of elderly with memory impairment (e.g. dementia) also has major implications for public safety strategies.

Youth

While there will be significant increases in numbers of 75years+ residents by 2016, there will be an increase in residents aged 20 – 40 years so a major challenge for Council is planning and developing inter-generational communities where widely diverse needs are met.

- Stakeholders identified displaced and disenfranchised young people as a major current concern for the Redlands. A need for more youth facilities and programs was highlighted; along with issues such as accessible transport (limited transport options at night - young people become vulnerable walking on the streets; young males aged 15 – 24 years are most at risk of being a victim of crime against a person); the impacts of youth “boredom” including hooning, graffiti and vandalism increase as young people are disempowered and have a low sense of community ownership; lack of emergency accommodation for homeless young people.
- Council services to young people need to consider the changing leisure trends towards unstructured recreation and non-organised sport; the integration of multi-media and technology into all facets of life; and facilitation of more positive local media images of young people. Therefore, Council planning will need to consider how best to cater for diverse needs and enhance inter-generational respect and understanding. This approach is consistent with the State Governments discussion paper *Queensland 2020: A State for All Ages* (DoC 2003)
- A set of aligned strategies is required to guide an integrated approach to ensuring that Council’s programs are delivered efficiently and effectively and that Council plays a key role in ensuring that community services are accessible in the Redlands.

Operational Outcomes:

- Develop a Seniors Strategy to address the current and emerging needs of older people in the Redlands.
- Develop a Youth Strategy to address the needs of young people.

⁴ Retirement Villages – key issues for local government & criteria for best practice. Miriam Martin Consulting 2005

⁵ Community Services & Facilities Study, Derek Kemp, 2003.

“Hidden” Communities:

While the Redlands records the third highest median income in the Brisbane / Moreton statistical divisions,⁶ there are pockets of disadvantage across the Shire, including the Southern Moreton Bay Islands.⁷

Community	% population earning less than \$500 per week	Community	% population earning less than \$500 per week
Coochiemudlo Island	73.8%	Lamb Island	79.63%
Russell Island	75%	Karragarra Island	59.75%
Macleay Island	76.61%		

Other indicators of disadvantage include:

- an increasing number of single parent families in Mt Cotton and Victoria Point, “working poor” (low income families) and people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. ⁸
- Social isolation among older people living alone with low levels of family support, people with a disability, and carers of people with a disability who have low access to respite care.
- Lack of integration across home care services, which for some aged people are their only form of social contact.

A more comprehensive understanding of the level of disadvantage across the Shire is required to facilitate a planned Council response.

As an inclusive community, the Redlands needs to ensure that all residents have access to services and programs.

Operational Outcome:

- Undertake further analysis of the level and type of disadvantage in the Redlands and work in partnership with the community and other government agencies to implement strategies to address community needs.

Indigenous Community:

The Redlands population includes 1645 residents (1.4%) identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. Of these 334 live on North Stradbroke Island. This represents 13.3% of the Island’s population (compared to Queensland average of 3.1%)⁹

The Dept of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy approached Council to enter into a tripartite agreement with State and Commonwealth Governments to develop better designed, targeted and locally customised solutions with Indigenous people on North Stradbroke Island.

This proposal has come about through recognition of the comparatively high levels of disadvantage of Indigenous people on the island but also addresses ways of working together with Indigenous people across the Shire.

- The focus of the Agreement is to work with the Indigenous people of NSI to enable building the capacity of the community through developing stronger relationships, and develop collaborative approaches to maximise resources and outcomes.
- While this Agreement provides a formal relationship with the government agencies, it also highlights the need for Council to develop a protocol to guide its relationships and work with the Indigenous community.
- A protocol will need to be developed in collaboration with the NSI Indigenous community and will be underpinned by an acknowledgment of Indigenous culture and its impacts on

⁶ Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population & Housing, 2001 (unpublished data)

⁷ Southern Moreton Bay Islands Demographic Profile, Redland Shire Council

⁸ Southern Suburbs Needs Assessment, University of Queensland / Redland Shire Council, 2005

⁹ Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population & Housing, 2001

practice; symbolic activities; and the protocols associated with building relationships, working in partnership and consultation.

- A desired outcome is more effective models for collaboration, program and service delivery and increased Indigenous participation in Council, business and community initiatives.

Operational Outcomes:

- Engage in culturally appropriate ways to develop a Council protocol for working with the Indigenous community.
- Work in partnership with State and Commonwealth Governments to improve the health and well being of the North Stradbroke Island Indigenous community.

Summary of Operational Outcomes

In summary, the operational outcomes for Community Development and Human Services arising from this issues paper are:

- Develop and gain endorsement of a *Strong Communities* Framework as a useable cross-Council planning and performance tool that enables clear alignment of objectives and performance measures that contribute to strong communities.
- Establish clear direction on Council's role as a direct service provider for human services, based on evidence and analysis of the current and emerging environment.
- Ensure community development approaches that support strong sustainable communities are maximised through improved collaboration/ partnerships across Council program areas.
- Develop the social infrastructure of Redlands, including supporting community organisations to build their capability to operate effectively and efficiently and provision of land for community purposes.
- Work cooperatively with government, non-government and community to ensure that the Redlands is serviced by appropriate human services infrastructure that meets the needs of the growing population.
- Develop and implement a Seniors Strategy that outlines the way forward to ensure that the needs of older people are met, now and into the future.
- Develop and implement a Youth Strategy that addresses the needs of young people.
- Develop a Community Health Plan to prioritise public health activities and promote a self help attitudinal change through community education.
- Improve community outcomes through delivering sport and recreation programs through a community development framework and communications plan.
- Ensure that programs and services are accessible to disadvantaged residents.
- Develop relationships, collaborative working arrangements and a Council protocol for working with Indigenous people. Participate in the State/ Commonwealth Government tripartite agreement focusing on the indigenous community on North Stradbroke Island.

Research Base

This paper was informed by the following documentation:

- Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population & Housing, (2001) (unpublished data) and (2001)
- Brisbane City Council draft outcome definition for Pioneer KPI measurement, (2005)
- Community Services & Facilities Study, Derek Kemp, (September 2003)
- Community Survey – Evaluation of Redland Shire Corporate Plan- 2003
- Corporate Plan Review 2003, Redland Shire Council (2003)
- Draft South East Queensland Regional Plan, Office of Urban Management, (October 2004)
- Documentation from stakeholder focus groups on Community Development & Human Services; Sport & Recreation; and Environmental Health
- Funding Needs Survey – Local People with a Disability (December 2002)
- Indicators of Community Strength in Victoria, Department for Victorian Communities, (2004)

- Redlands Advisory Group of Seniors Issues Minutes (May 2005)
- Redlands Youth Forum Establishment Meeting Minutes (May 2005)
- Retirement Villages – key issues for local government & criteria for best practice. Miriam Martin Consulting (2005)
- Southern Moreton Bay Islands Demographic Profile, Redland Shire Council. ()
- Southern Suburbs Needs Assessment, University of Queensland / Redland Shire Council, (May 2005)
- Sport & Recreation Facilities and Services Study, Redland Shire Council (July 2004)
- Vision 2005 – Context & Issues Papers. Redland Draft Community Plan (December 2000)