

CITY OF LAUNCESTON END OF TERM REPORT

2018-2022



City of
LAUNCESTON

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END OF TERM REPORT

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Cover Image: not pictured, Janie Finlay
(who served as a Councillor from November 2018 to May 2021).

Mayor's Foreword



When this Council made their declarations of office in November 2018, no one could have anticipated the challenges that would lay ahead.

The terms 'pandemic' and 'social distancing' were never part of our everyday vernacular, and no one had even heard of COVID-19 at that stage.

So to say this term of Council has been disrupted and, at times, difficult would be an understatement.

But looking back at what we were still able to achieve as an organisation throughout all that disconnection and uncertainty leaves me with an incredible sense of pride and accomplishment.

This will be my final term as both Mayor and Councillor with the City of Launceston.

The past 17 years have been an incredibly satisfying journey, with 15 of those proudly spent as Mayor of our magnificent city.

I have no doubts that Launceston is now a more inclusive, compassionate and progressive City than it was all those many years ago.

Over the term of the most recent Council, we faced a once-in-a-generation worldwide pandemic, with the impacts still reverberating even today.

Strict government enforced lockdowns meant that businesses could not open, while their staff faced a frightening and uncertain future.

A large proportion of workplaces had to rely on Federal Government payments to prevent them from going under. I remember all-too-well the uneasy feeling that pervaded many local businesses across the City.

In what was arguably one of the Council's crowning achievements over the past two decades, staff and elected members came together and developed a nation-leading \$10 million Community Care and Recovery Package in response to COVID-19.

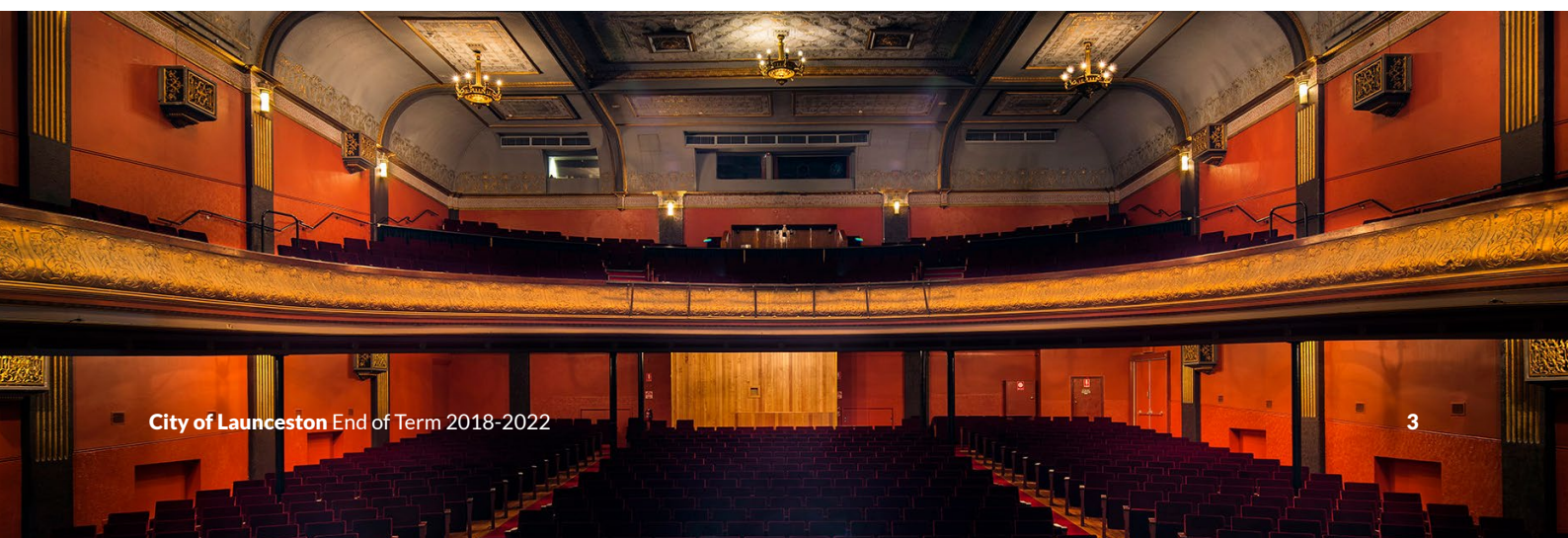
The package included much needed rate relief for businesses, rent and fee relief, a business grants program to help them transition to online, a rates hardship policy, and importantly a 0 per cent rate increase across the board.

Granted, the cost of the package was certainly to the detriment of the Council's budgetary position, resulting in an underlying deficit of \$7.215 million for the 2019/20 financial year.

However, the benefits to those in our community who needed it the most were clearly immeasurable.

The Launceston City Deal continues to be an incredibly important package for our City and I often wonder if some people underestimate or undervalue the importance of this tripartite agreement between the City of Launceston and the State and Federal governments.

The benefits of the \$300 million move by the University of Tasmania to the central business district are



certainly not realised yet. While progress has been steady, the vast majority of students will not be living and learning at the Inveresk site until midway through the term of the next council.

Only then will the city realise the full 'benefits' that move will bring with it but make no mistake, the positive impacts will be profound with thousands of students on campus on a daily basis.

The delivery of the University of Tasmania Stadium Future Directions Plan is another significant project that will have a lasting positive impact on the city and the council in the years ahead.

No one would argue the benefits of having a national quality stadium on the outskirts of our central business district - despite the multi-million annual cost to Launceston ratepayers.

Sport aside, the financial benefits of AFL played in our city are immense to our local economy,

with cafes, restaurants, local retail stores and our hotels all booming during the winter months thanks to those five annual Hawthorn Football Club matches.

But removing that financial burden on Council through the divestment of the facility to the State Government-owned Stadiums Tasmania will save ratepayers around \$5 million a year.

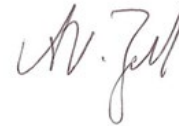
An increase in usage of the ground is also incredibly important and I am hopeful that a Tasmanian AFL team will help realise that into the future.

In closing, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Deputy Mayor Danny Gibson for his ongoing support, as well as the remaining Councillors, who have worked diligently and collaboratively in the best interests of our City over the past four years.

I would also like to personally thank our chief executive officer Michael Stretton for his well-considered and passionate leadership of the organisation, and

the hard-working staff at the City of Launceston, who work tirelessly for their community.

I wish you all the very best for the next four years.



Albert van Zetten
Mayor



Chief Executive Officer's Foreword



With the exception of Councillor Krista Preece, who was elected to the Council in June 2021, the current Council was elected in October 2018, with the Aldermen (now Councillors) making their declarations of office at Town Hall on 6-7 November 2018 and attending their first Council meeting some two weeks later on 22 November 2018.

As is the usual way, the first role of the new Council was to implement the *2018/19 Annual Plan* and Budget they inherited from the previous Council, while establishing its strategic agenda for the remainder of their four-year term.

In its first months of operation, the Council focused on the delivery of its community engagement program, Tomorrow Together, hosting the Qantas Australian Tourism Awards in the Cataract Gorge, delivering on its Launceston City Deal commitments such as the completion of the Brisbane Street Mall redevelopment, completion of the *My Place My Future Plan* and the forming a working group with the University of Tasmania (UTAS) to facilitate the university's relocation to Inveresk.

Financially, the City of Launceston achieved an underlying operating surplus of \$2.055 million for 2018/19.

The Council delivered its first Annual Plan and Budget for the 2019/20 financial year, and for the first half of the year the focus was on the implementation of the Organisational Alignment Project

(OAP), which was the largest re-structure our organisation has seen since amalgamation, and was aimed at enabling the organisation to be fit for the future.

The second half of the year was largely dedicated to responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, which included the development and implementation of the nation-leading \$10 million Community Care and Recovery Package:

- Rate relief for businesses
- Fee relief
- Rent relief for the use of Council facilities
- Grant program
- Circular economy grants program
- 0% rate increase in 2020/21
- Rates and Charges Hardship Policy
- Accelerated Capital Works Program

Due to the financial impost of the package, the Council unsurprisingly recorded an underlying deficit of \$7.215 million in 2019/20.

Despite the pandemic, the Council achieved some significant milestones in the 2019/20 financial year by completing the City's inaugural Cultural Strategy, adopting the Stormwater System Management Plan, and continuing to progress the Launceston City Deal.

Throughout 2020/21 there were short-lived shutdowns across most of Tasmania which impacted us all, particularly the tourism sector. Despite this, the Launceston economy continued to perform strongly, with some sectors such as our building sector, experiencing growth on an unprecedented scale.

The Council continued to support the community by endorsing an annual plan and budget based on a zero per cent rate rise, which delivered a \$2.23 million saving for ratepayers.

Operationally, the Council delivered on a number of significant commitments including the delivery of a new *Four-Year Delivery Plan*, approval of the *Sustainability Strategy*, the *Towards Zero Emissions Action Plan 2021-2025*, as well as the roll-out of the ABCDE Learning site program at Youngtown. Notably, the Council approved the *York Park (UTAS Stadium) Future Direction Plan*, the impetus for the creation of Stadiums Tasmania and a State Government commitment to initially invest \$65 million to re-develop the stadium to increase its seating capacity and user experience. For the City of Launceston, this reform will result in savings of \$3.2 million in operational expenditure and around \$2 million in capital expenditure each year, which was a significant achievement.

Despite initially budgeting for an operational deficit of \$11.3 million in 2020/21, the lock-down closures did not occur to the anticipated extent, which meant



that revenues were \$6.8 million better than expected. This resulted in an underlying deficit of just \$3.1 million, which was an excellent outcome given the extenuating circumstances.

In 2021/22, the impacts of the pandemic began to diminish as the community learned to live with COVID-19 and the Council started to return to a more normal operating state.

The Council had a very productive year with the highlights being the reform of Cityprom, delivery of the Launceston Place Brand, development of the Launceston Transport Strategy, review of the Northern Region Land Use Strategy to enable urban growth, development of a new Planning Scheme and development of an Aboriginal Partnership Plan.

Importantly, the Council endorsed the *QVMAG Futures Plan - A Paradigm Shift*, which has established an exciting future vision for the Queen Victorian Museum and Art Gallery which, once delivered, will set it up for future success and ensure the financial sustainability of the City of Launceston.

Speaking of finance, the Council returned an operational deficit of \$0.993 million for the 2021/22 financial year against a budgeted underlying deficit of \$7.1 million, which is a clear demonstration that the organisation is already starting to recover from the financial shock of the pandemic.

I believe it is fair to say that the current Council has played a significant role in leading the organisation as well as the community through what has arguably been one of the most arduous four-year terms ever served by a Council of the City of Launceston.

To lead through a one-in-100 year pandemic and continue to deliver the projects and initiatives has been outstanding. A full list of projects is included in Appendix 1. The Council has achieved this by accepting that there needs to be additional debt and deficits for the organisation, while ensuring that the Council is able to return to an operational surplus without unduly rating the community.

The Council has delivered this through its *Long Term Financial Plan* and should be proud of its achievements.

Personally, I have found this Council to be a very supportive, collegiate and aligned group of leaders who have worked collaboratively for the betterment of the City of Launceston.

It has been my pleasure to serve the Council and the entire organisation.

In closing, I would like to acknowledge the contribution of our retiring Mayor Albert van Zetten. Albert has been an outstanding leader of the City of Launceston over the past 15 years who is respected by Councillors, community members and staff alike.

He is not one to readily accept public praise, however, on behalf of the entire organisation I would like to sincerely thank Albert for his dedication and leadership, particularly during the pandemic, and wish him and Lyndle all the best for the future.

Michael Stretton
Chief Executive Officer

Why an End of Term Report?

The purpose of the End of Term Report is to acknowledge and objectively comment on our progress against the strategic goals that we set in 2018. The End of Term Report summarises the achievements of our organisation and our outgoing Councillors, and sets the strategic scene that our incoming Councillors will influence during their 2022-2026 term.

Our strategic goals are articulated in our *Corporate Strategic Plan 2014-2024*. The *Corporate Strategic Plan* was originally adopted by our then newly-elected Council on 24 November 2014, following the former Council's endorsement of the Greater Launceston Plan on 10 June 2014. Towards the conclusion of their term in office, our 2014-2018 Council was engaged in the review of our *Corporate Strategic Plan 2014-2024*, using the opportunity to consider both the structure and content of the plan. The *Corporate Strategic Plan 2014-2024: 2019 Review* maintains its links with the *Greater Launceston Plan*, and looks to deliver on the plan's goals via a focus on seven strategic priority areas. The *Corporate Strategic Plan 2014-2024: 2019 Review* was adopted by the current Council on 30 May 2019.

The Greater Launceston Plan (GLP)

The GLP articulates the Greater Launceston community's vision and aspirations for the greater Launceston area as we move toward 2035.

Visit www.launceston.tas.gov.au to download a copy of the GLP.

The GLP vision is: Sustainable prosperity for greater Launceston will be achieved by consolidating and building nationally and internationally recognised strategic advantages through a focus on creativity and innovation, maintaining exceptional environmental and liveability qualities and ensuring a diverse, connected and inclusive community.

The development of the GLP is a joint initiative the City of Launceston with the George Town, Meander Valley, Northern Midlands and West Tamar Councils to guide how the City and surrounding communities will develop over the coming decades. It answers questions such as:

- What will Launceston look and feel like in 20 years?
- Where will new housing be located and how will people live?
- How will we get around the city and greater Launceston area, within a state and national context?
- What infrastructure and projects should the government invest in?

The GLP was developed following substantial research on the future of northern Tasmania, our relative competitive advantages and challenges, data analysis and consultation with the community.

Our regional community said that the GLP should focus on increasing economic prosperity, liveability and creativity in Launceston and the surrounding region. In pursuing these objectives, the GLP seeks to satisfy five principal outcomes

for the participating councils and broader communities that they represent:

- To provide a unified vision and consistent policy framework to support prosperity and sustainable development for existing and future communities in the greater Launceston area.
- To provide an overarching metropolitan regional framework to coordinate planning and development in the municipalities that together make up the greater Launceston area.
- To provide a regional view of development priorities within the greater Launceston area.
- To identify key city projects to be undertaken by the participating councils which will act as a focus for new investment and sustainable development opportunities in the greater Launceston area.
- To facilitate a consistent approach to the implementation of planning and development policy and initiatives within the greater Launceston area.

This End of Term Report contributes towards understanding where we are now in terms of achieving the ambitious regional outcomes that are framed by the GLP that relate to Launceston itself. This is done by assessing our performance against our *Strategic Plan 2014-2024*, which is the City of Launceston's response to the overarching community vision set out in the GLP.

Integrated Corporate Planning Framework

Enablers

- Work Health and Safety
- Continuous Improvement and Lean
- Engagement Framework
- Project Management
- Asset Management Framework
- Integrated Planning Framework and Toolkit
- Risk Management Framework
- Contractor Management
- Cultural Development Roadmap
- City of Launceston Values
- Shared Expectations and Accountability
- Workforce Planning
- Change Management (People and Process)



Outputs & Outcomes

- Key Performance Indicators - Business Outcomes and Community Outcomes
- Quarterly Reports
- Annual Reports
- End of Term Reports
- Learning / Successes
- Corporate Planning Calendar - Timelines
- Workforce Planning Including:
 - Succession
 - Transition
 - Talent Management
 - Training and Development

Corporate Strategic Plan 2014–2024: 2019 Review

Our *Corporate Strategic Plan 2014–2024: 2019 Review* is prepared in compliance with the *Local Government Act 1993 (Tas)*, which requires us to develop a 10-year strategic plan and review it at least every four years. Visit www.launceston.tas.gov.au to download a copy.

Together with the GLP, our *Corporate Strategic Plan 2014–2024: 2019 Review* is a principal document in our Integrated Corporate Planning Framework. The City of Launceston’s Integrated Corporate Planning Framework pictured above aligns short and

medium-term strategies and goals to our community’s long-term regional vision.

This End of Term Report will provide valuable context, understanding and continuity for the incoming Council to enable it to continue delivering on the GLP.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic

The Coronavirus Pandemic emerged in the middle of this term of the Council and created a one-in-many generations challenge that has no modern precedent. This necessitated Councillors responding in near real time, along with senior staff, to emerging challenges and to think clearly about the things that needed support to ensure the effective care and recovery of our community.

This resulted in a care and recovery package that was the second largest of any Council in Australia. The package focused on supporting the community to remain connected and for businesses to adapt quickly to new ways of working. The rapid and full recovery of retail in Launceston’s central business district is testament to the positive impact of the package. This has come at a cost to the Council’s bottom line and has been something Councillors have grappled with across multiple budgets. However, the package remains as a key positive action taken by this Council in pursuit of working on behalf of the best interests of the City and its people.

Councillor Profiles



Our 2018-2022 Council was inducted in November 2018 and served to October 2022, with the exceptions of Janie Finlay (who resigned in May 2021), Krista Preece (who was inducted in June 2021) and Jim Cox (who resigned in August 2022).



- 1 **Mayor Councillor** Albert van Zetten
- 2 **Deputy Mayor,**
Councillor Danny Gibson
- 3 **Councillor** Rob Soward
- 4 **Councillor** Hugh McKenzie
- 5 **Councillor** Jim Cox
- 6 **Councillor** Karina Stojansek
- 7 **Councillor** Andrea Dawkins
- 8 **Councillor** Nick Daking
- 9 **Councillor** Paul Spencer
- 10 **Councillor** Alan Harris
- 11 **Councillor** Tim Walker
- 12 **Councillor** Krista Preece
- 13 **Councillor** Janie Finlay

Mayor, Councillor Albert van Zetten

Mayor Albert van Zetten was first elected to the City of Launceston in 2005.

Before entering the local government sector, Mayor van Zetten spent more than 30 years as a chartered accountant, 18 years as Chief Executive Officer of Launceston City Mission and had close involvement with a range of community organisations across Northern Tasmania.

In October 2007, he was elected Mayor with the aim of working with Northern Tasmanians to help make Launceston one of the world's great regional cities.

He is currently in his fifth term as Mayor of the City of Launceston, supported by his wife Lyndle and family, and strongly believes that community collaboration and teamwork can make the impossible, possible.

Launceston is on track to become one of the great regional cities in the world: it is small enough to manage and large enough to matter. He believes great opportunities lie ahead for Launceston, and that Northern Tasmanians, working together, can achieve great things for our community.

Deputy Mayor, Councillor Danny Gibson

Deputy Mayor Danny Gibson was elected in October 2011. He is passionate about the City of Launceston, having enjoyed a professional career in Northern Tasmania in education, media and The Arts.

Deputy Mayor Gibson is a volunteer, supporter and patron of many not-for-profit organisations and currently teaches drama to the region's young people. He has

been a long-time supporter of the city's cultural sector and believes it delivers important economic benefits to the region.

The Deputy Mayor is proud to have been elected to the Local Government of Tasmania's General Management Committee, effective June 2021.

Danny is proud of the Council's achievements over the four-year term.

Councillor Rob Soward

Councillor Rob Soward was first elected as a Councillor in 2009 and served as Deputy Mayor 2014-2018.

Councillor Soward holds postgraduate qualifications in educational leadership and business and has a strong community and sporting background including 24 years as a senior teacher with the Department of Education. He is a past Director of the Northern Tasmanian Football League and Connect Credit Union (My State Ltd) and has had 24 years' experience as an AFL Accredited Level 2 Football Coach.

Councillor Soward has held senior state manager roles in the Tasmanian employment sector working with business and industry on job creation and assisting people to gain employment. Councillor Soward has strong lifelong interests in improving community health and wellbeing and has extensive experience in successful project management in that area.

Councillor Hugh McKenzie

Councillor Hugh McKenzie was elected in October 2011. He comes from a strong business background, having been a partner in business advisory firm KPMG for 24 years. Since retiring from

that position in 2011 he has spent the past 11 years giving back to his community in a variety of ways, not the least in his role as Councillor.

He determined, in order to do this role, the way he wanted (which is full commitment) he needed to be free from a permanent fulltime role and as such now focusses on board positions and community roles outside his Councillor duties.

In the theme of giving back, he sits as the Council endorsed Director and current Chair on the Launceston Airport, is the President of the Board of Management for the Northern Suburbs Community Centre, is the Chair of the Cape Hope Foundation, a philanthropic organisation that funds "hand up" type projects in the Northern Tasmania region including scholarships for disadvantaged young people, and a board member of The Hobart Clinic.

He was previously the Chair of Primary Health Tasmania, Chair of Scotch Oakburn College, Chair of Cornerstone Youth Services (headspace), a founding Trustee of the Tamar Valley Peace Trust, State Chair and National Committee member of Chartered Accountants Australia New Zealand (CAANZ), board member of the Tasmanian Qualifications Authority.

He is an avid sports fan who has participated in football (Australian Rules), cricket, tennis, golf and cycling, including as past President of the Stan Siejka Cycling Festival.

He lives by the motto of "don't say, do" as actions speak louder than words.

Councillor Jim Cox (until 31 August 2022)

Councillor Jim Cox was elected in October 2011. He spent more than 20 years as a member of the Tasmanian Government, in which he held several key portfolios

including Police and Emergency Management, and Road Safety - and he remains passionate about improving road safety statewide.

Councillor Cox sees his current role in Local Government as an opportunity to give something back to a community that has supported him for many decades.

Councillor Karina Stojansek

Councillor Karina Stojansek was elected in 2015, and has more than 20 years' senior management experience in small to medium organisations, most recently as the Managing Director of a statewide training organisation. She studied a Bachelor of Commerce at the University of Tasmania and has extensive skills in accounting, human resources and business management.

Councillor Stojansek is currently on the board of the local Steiner School and has served on various committees including RSPCA Tasmania, and the Trevallyn Tennis Club in the positions of President, Treasurer and Secretary.

She has been involved with the migrant community, delivering the Foot in the Door Program helping migrants find employment.

Councillor Stojansek has a passion for community and believes strongly in the importance of health, family, an active lifestyle and building a vibrant, dynamic, connected and inclusive community.

Councillor Andrea Dawkins

Andrea Dawkins was first elected to City of Launceston in 2014, leading to a stint in state parliament from 2015 to 2018. Andrea has over 20 years in small business, having strengths in social enterprise and placemaking.

Andrea campaigned on waste reduction, a local food security plan for the LGA and greater focus on animal welfare. So far, in this term, Andrea has moved successful motions leading to the establishment of Australia's first public greyhound off-leash area and the phasing out of single use plastics in council managed properties and land and for council sponsored events.

Councillor Nick Daking

Councillor Nick Daking is a Launceston local and extremely passionate about Launceston as a city, its business community, and its citizens. Councillor Daking wants to ensure that Launceston is a city full of opportunity, and is motivated to help make the changes necessary for Launceston to become one of the most liveable cities in Australia.

Councillor Daking enjoyed a fantastic childhood growing up in Launceston and believes it is one he would like his children to experience. He loves the lifestyle Launceston offers and plans on calling Launceston home for many years to come. Councillor Daking has an Advanced Diploma in Civil Engineering and for many years worked with an International Funds Manager where he specialised in finance construction with large developments across the country.

Councillor Daking has spent years building and managing hospitality businesses in Launceston and during this time he has also been an active board member of the Tasmanian Hospitality Association.

Councillor Paul Spencer

Councillor Paul Spencer was elected in November 2018. He is happily married to wife Margy and has been for 41 years. Together they have five adult sons and six

grandchildren. Councillor Spencer has been a hard-working electrician for 47 years and self-employed in his own successful business for 31 years. Two of Paul's sons are also qualified electricians and have joined the business. Paul also manages a 130 hectare family farm.

Councillor Spencer has employed many apprentices and worked with varied tradespeople on jobs from heavy industrial to residential projects. His interests include restoring cars, motor racing, farming and spending time with his family.

Councillor Spencer is driven by his desire to provide a fair go for all and to help people from all walks of life. He is committed to his election promises of introducing a fair tender process and ensuring Council is transparent and fair in all its processes.

Councillor Alan Harris

Councillor Alan Harris was first elected to Council in 2018. Councillor Harris was born, educated and lives in Launceston. He is married to Katrina with two adult children and his interests include community service through Rotary, cycling, classic motorcycles and cars.

Councillor Harris has a wealth of business knowledge and skills, gained over a 40-year career working as a Senior Executive in Telstra, Federal politics and aged care.

Councillor Harris has been an active Rotarian since 2003, holding many leadership positions including Club President, Secretary, Assistant District Governor and leading a Rotary International Exchange team to Denmark in 2012. He is the past Chairman of the Carrick Community Committee and the Southern Launceston Community Development committee.

Councillor Harris is committed to bringing a fresh perspective, new ideas and strong leadership to Council and supports the introduction of 60-minute free parking in CBD Council owned car parks, expanded CBD pedestrian areas, increased street trees in the city, new dedicated off-road cycle paths throughout the city and improved traffic flow management around the city.

Councillor Tim Walker

Councillor Tim Walker was elected in 2018 and is a former ABC reporter and adviser to Senator Peter Whish-Wilson. He would like to see Launceston continue becoming a more inclusive and sustainable community. He has an active interest in heritage, arts, and protecting and restoring our environment.

Councillor Walker knows Launceston faces big challenges in terms of population growth, traffic management and housing availability and affordability, and looks forward to working with the broader community to find long-term solutions that are sustainable and inclusive. These include improving public transport options and dedicated cycleways, encouraging affordable and sustainable housing, improving resource recycling to reduce environmental pollution, developing a meaningful, ongoing relationship with the Tasmanian Aboriginal community, improving the kanamaluka/Tamar Estuary and our other waterways, supporting local fresh food security, and championing thoughtful urban development that does not detract from our enviable and unique community lifestyle.

Councillor Walker considers it an honour to serve the City of Launceston as a Councillor, and is

always available to hear from you about your ideas or concerns for our community.

Councillor Krista Preece (from 21 June 2021)

Councillor Krista Preece joined the City of Launceston in June 2021, winning a countback to fill the vacancy left by outgoing Councillor and former Mayor Janie Finlay.

Councillor Preece was born in Launceston, the eldest of three children. Her father worked at the local radio station and she spent time working alongside his team. She has also worked in retail before completing her apprenticeship as a hairdresser, working at several well-known businesses across the city during that time. She currently works at the Launceston General Hospital as a ward clerk in the Department of Emergency Medicine and Specialist clinic - a position she finds extremely rewarding.

Councillor Preece is a former Rotary president and current Assistant Governor. She is also a carer for her elderly aunt. Krista and her husband live in Newstead and they have four children. She is excited at the opportunity to represent the people of Launceston and wants to give back to her "amazing" community.

Councillor Preece believes that promoting a positive health message to those in our community is paramount. She is also passionate about providing residents with a reliable and well-connected public transport system, particularly for people who rely on catching a bus for work and medical appointments.

Councillor Preece is an avid supporter of the maker movement and the many incredible markets that operate across Launceston.

She is looking forward to helping shape the City's future post-COVID and believes she will bring accessibility and relatability to the Council table.

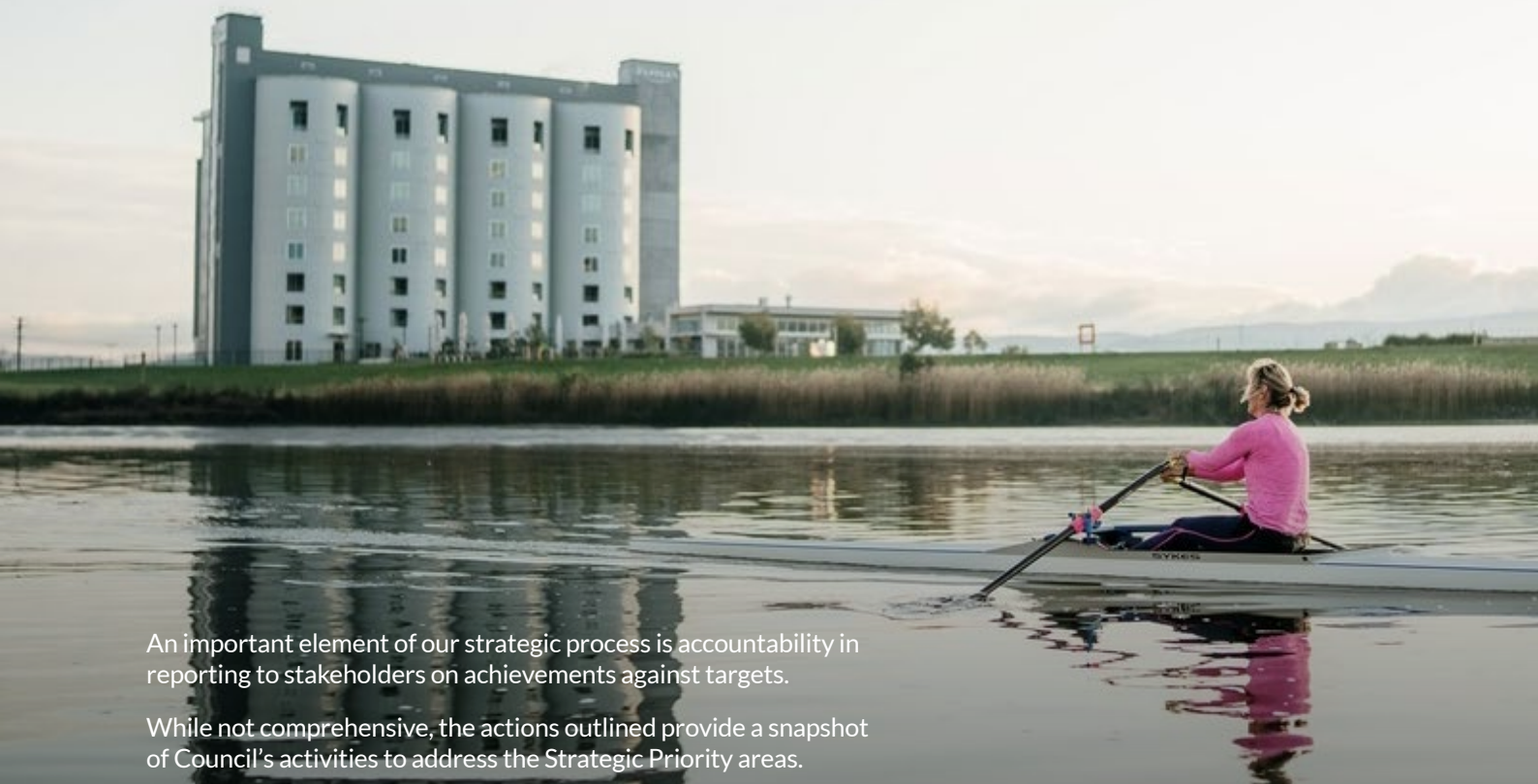
Councillor Janie Finlay (until 15 May 2021)

Councillor Finlay was first elected in 2000 and served as Mayor from 2002 to 2005 after being elected to the role at the age of just 27, the youngest female Mayor in Australian history. Councillor Finlay resigned from the Council in 2007 to pursue other interests and went on to serve as a Director of NAI Harcourts, Director of the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra, and Chairman of the Launceston Tornadoes. Councillor Finlay has operated two award-winning small hospitality businesses and in 2017 was appointed Communications Director for a global tech company, headquartered in Launceston.

Councillor Finlay was re-elected to the Council in 2014, bringing her experience in the not-for-profit and business sectors back to the City of Launceston. She has a strong focus on family, maintaining Launceston's unique character and a passion for good governance. Councillor Finlay is committed to working with leading organisations and community members to achieve the vision within our City Deal to make Launceston one of Australia's most liveable and innovative regional cities.

How do we measure progress?

The following sections of this End of Term Report provide an overview of Council's performance for the 2018–2022 Council term, expressed under the seven strategic themes that give our Corporate Strategic Plan 2014–2024: 2019 Review its structure.



An important element of our strategic process is accountability in reporting to stakeholders on achievements against targets.

While not comprehensive, the actions outlined provide a snapshot of Council's activities to address the Strategic Priority areas.

Prior to the start of each financial year, Council adopts an annual plan that sets out how our *Corporate Strategic Plan 2014–2024: 2019 Review* will be operationalised by the organisation. Each annual plan includes annual plan actions that form part of the annual plan reporting process to Council on a quarterly basis.

This provides the community with an opportunity to understand the City of Launceston's success in meeting its strategic goals.

Our *Corporate Strategic Plan 2014–2024: 2019 Review* details strategic goals around seven strategic themes.

1

We connect with our Community and our Region through meaningful engagement, cooperation and representation.



10-Year Goal: To seek out and champion positive engagement and collaboration to capitalise on the major opportunities and address the future challenges facing our community and region.

What will success look like?

Our interactions with our community are authentic, timely, accurate and open. We want to build strong and productive relationships with our community and regional partners.

1. To develop and consistently utilise contemporary and effective community engagement processes.
2. To lead the implementation of the *Greater Launceston Plan* via collaborative and constructive relationships with our regional partners.
3. To advocate and collaborate to enhance regionally significant services and infrastructure for the benefit of our communities.

Key Actions and Projects

Negotiated an extension to the Launceston City Deal

On 14 May 2019, the Prime Minister committed to extend the Launceston Deal to a 10-year agreement. In July 2019, noting the achievements already delivered under the Launceston City Deal and the partnerships created, the Council unanimously agreed its commitment to extend the Launceston City Deal to 10 years.

The agreement to review the Launceston City Deal at the three-year marker was undertaken and recommendations to inform the future commitments have progressed. Extensive research and engagement for future commitments are complete and the *Extension Implementation Plan* is scheduled for release in 2022/23.

Commenced a Regional Sports Facility Plan

The Northern Tasmania Sports Facility Plan is the 'first step' in a major long-term collaborative planning initiative of five Councils in Northern Tasmania. Working with the Northern Tasmania Development Corporation, the municipal areas of City of Launceston, West Tamar Council, Meander Valley Council, Northern Midlands Council and George Town Council have taken the lead in adopting an evidenced-based approach to the planning, development and management of sport and recreation facilities in Northern Tasmania to ensure that the long-term needs of the community are adequately catered for.

It is well recognised that sport has a significant influence on the physical, mental and social wellbeing of individuals and the communities in which they live. The provision of a range of quality sports facilities (indoor and outdoor) is vital to a region's ability to improve liveability to ensure communities are attractive places to live, visit and invest.

The Plan is being drafted following intensive community, sports club and stakeholder engagement which identified priorities, challenges and opportunities in relation to sport and recreation facilities across the region.

The Plan is intended to complement plans and strategies of national, state and regional significance and feed into local council planning processes such as annual plans and capital works plans. The Plan will also support the region to advocate for, and secure funds from the Tasmanian and Australian governments.

Interim update to the Northern Regional Land Use Strategy

The Northern Region Land Use Strategy was updated on the 23 June 2021. These changes clarify its intent relating to the future growth of the City.

2

We Facilitate Prosperity by seeking out and responding to opportunities for growth and renewal of our regional economy.



10-Year Goal: To have realised opportunities that grow and sustain our economy and foster creative and innovative people and industries.

What will success look like?

We use our influence and resources to deliver the foundations for ongoing economic development. We want Launceston to be the heart of a thriving regional economy.

1. To actively market the City and Region and pursue investment.
2. To facilitate direct investment in the local economy to support its growth.
3. To provide an environment that is supportive to business and development within the municipality.
4. To promote tourism, and the development of a quality tourism offering for Launceston.
5. To understand and support the establishment and growth of new and creative industries and businesses in Launceston.

Key Actions and Projects

Progression of Smart City initiatives and strategy

Development of the City of Launceston Smart City Strategy is underway with the engagement phase now complete and the draft strategic core document taking shape. We have engaged consultancy firm Delos Delta to bring expertise in the Smart City space. They have an impressive track record assisting with the deployment of similar strategies in every state of Australia.

Smart Cities are dynamic and evolve daily. In order to guide Smart City activity in Launceston a holistic strategy is required to align and streamline policy and projects and have a reference point that defines a clear way forward. This strategy will help guide all elements of Smart City transformation and ensuring Council meets community expectations, supports priorities, and uses technology and innovation to drive positive outcomes to the region.

Cityprom review and new model (Central Launceston Marketing Inc.)

Cityprom was established in 1988 following an agreement between the Council and a group of retailers as a way to meet the marketing and promotional needs of the central business district.

Following a notice of motion from Councillor Rob Soward several years ago, the Council agreed to conduct a full review of Cityprom. The review examined a number of areas, including the

structure, business model and performance of the organisation, contemporary approaches to marketing and activation, as well as the future direction of marketing of the Launceston central business district.

Under the new structure endorsed by Council, Central Launceston Marketing Inc. will be responsible for central Launceston destination marketing, place activation and advocacy.

This includes marketing and promotional activities designed to ensure that central Launceston remains the premier destination that residents and visitors visit for food, entertainment, accommodation, shopping and services in Northern Tasmania.

Councillors voted overwhelmingly at the Council meeting held on 16 June 2022 to endorse a range of reforms aimed at overhauling Cityprom.

- rebranding the new entity as Central Launceston Marketing Inc
- setting the new entity's funding at \$563,862 for the 2022/23 financial year
- agreeing to develop a Memorandum of Understanding to formalise the collaboration between the Council and Central Launceston Marketing Inc., and
- endorsing a new Operational Agreement that details the roles, responsibilities and services to be provided by the new entity.

Horizon 2025 - updated Economic Development Plan

The City of Launceston commenced a review of Horizon 2021, the economic development strategy for Launceston in 2020. This review examined progress to date, as well as laying out a strategic direction for the future.

As the largest city in Tasmania, Launceston plays a significant role in the Tasmanian economy, producing more than \$5 billion in Gross Regional Product. In order to maximise the benefits of our actions, the City of Launceston will align its economic development agenda with the broader regional and state priorities.

The reviewed strategy, titled Horizon 2025, focusses on enabling economic activity, providing leadership and vision and supporting industry and business.

The strategy recognises the value of innovation, knowledge and education, as well as the importance of tourism and the visitor economy to Launceston.

3

We are a Progressive Leader that is accountable to our governance obligations and responsive to our community.



10-Year Goal: To ensure decisions are made in a transparent and accountable way, that effectively meet our statutory obligations, support quality services, and underpin the long-term sustainability of our organisation

What will success look like?

Our decision-making and actions are evidence-based, strategic, transparent and considered. We are ethical, fair and impartial in complying with and enforcing the law.

1. To provide for the health, safety and welfare of the community.
2. To fairly and equitably discharge our statutory and governance obligations.
3. To ensure decisions are made on the basis of accurate and relevant information.
4. To continually improve our service delivery via a continuous improvement mindset, pursuing efficiency gains, and adopting technological and other process innovations.
5. To maintain a financially sustainable organisation.

Key Actions and Projects

COVID-19 Pandemic Care and Recovery Package

The Council adopted and rolled out an \$10 million package to support Launceston's commercial section, which was impacted heavily by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

The package included a range of support and recovery measures, including:

- A six-month rates remission for eligible businesses
- 0% rate rise for the 2020-21 financial year
- Accelerated \$40 million capital works programme
- 0% Cityprom business levy for 2020-21 financial year
- Rental relief on Council-owned facilities
- \$700,000 business grants package
- A new Rates Hardship Policy
- \$465,000 in fee relief for business
- Events and sponsorship relief
- Community assistance initiatives, including for the vulnerable

UTAS Stadium Future Direction Plan

Council endorsed its \$208 million *UTAS Future Direction Plan*. The plan aims to create a sustainable model for a fit-for-purpose sporting stadium in Launceston.

The plan contains a number of proposals that would see the most significant expansion of Launceston's sporting infrastructure since the 1960s by increasing the stadium's seating capacity to 27,500, the construction of a high-performance sports centre, as well as the development of an adjoining 5000-seat, multi-use indoor sports facility capable of hosting national-level sporting competitions and events.

Development of a Four Year Delivery Plan

The City of Launceston's inaugural *Four Year Delivery Plan* was developed in consultation with City of Launceston leaders, employees and Councillors and was first adopted by the Council on 29 October 2020.

The City of Launceston *Four Year Delivery Plan* is a key element of the Council's Integrated Corporate Planning Framework as it outlines

the key services, annual plan actions as well as key projects for advocacy, which will be focussed on by the Council over a four-year period. The Plan enables the Council to work towards delivering on the Community Vision as outlined in the Greater Launceston Plan and our Organisational vision and purpose as articulated in our *Corporate Strategic Plan 2014-2024: 2019 Review*.

While the Plan is established over a four year period it is reviewed annually to ensure that it remains agile and can respond to changing community needs over the period. At the conclusion of the four year period, a new four year delivery plan will be considered by the newly elected Council.

4

We value our City's *Unique Identity* by celebrating our special heritage and culture, and building on our competitive advantages to be a place where people choose to live, work and visit.



10-Year Goal: To sustain and promote Launceston as a unique place to live, work, learn and play.

What will success look like?

We facilitate our community's sense of place by enhancing local identity. We want people to be proud to say that Launceston is "my city".

1. To promote and enhance Launceston's rich heritage, culture and natural environment.
2. To continue to offer an attractive network of parks, open spaces and facilities throughout Launceston.
3. To promote and attract national and international events and support the sector to ensure a diverse annual events calendar.
4. To support the central business district (CBD) and commercial areas as activity places during day and night.
5. To support sustainable population growth in the Northern Region.

Key Actions and Projects

A Cultural Strategy for the City of Launceston

The Council's Cultural Strategy aims to strengthen community pride and sense of belonging, by leveraging Launceston's rich cultural assets.

The Strategy articulates five strategic directions for the Council:

- value and Respect Aboriginal Culture
- realise the potential of our cultural places and assets
- foster creative practice
- reveal our cultural stories, and
- build and extend partnerships

Launceston City Heart - completion of Stage 1 and planning for Stage 2

The \$19.4 million Launceston City Heart Stage 1 project is complete.

Brisbane Street Mall was completed and officially opened in December 2018. A rolling infrastructure program to enable free public Wi-Fi across the central business district is complete. The

underlying Wi-Fi platform and technical knowledge also enabled the expansion of the public Wi-Fi network to areas of Launceston's Northern Suburbs as an initiative of the *My Place My Future plan*. Free public Wi-Fi became available to Mayfield, Waverley, Ravenswood and Mowbray communities.

Completed in 2021, 200 new wayfinding signs were installed at key locations across the City to make navigating the street network and finding key points of interest easier for all.

The new Denham Henty garden adjacent to Macquarie House, new street furniture, and a new 4.5m-tall arbor system comprising a new overhead garden and a street-level garden featuring native plants complete Launceston City Heart Stage 1.

Launceston City Heart Stage 2 is in progress with extensive planning and designs for the redevelopment of St John Street and Paterson Streets complete. The Tasmanian Government has committed funds and a funding application was submitted to the Australian

Government in March 2022. The commencement of Stage 2 works is pending the outcome of the application.

Commencement of Albert Hall renewal Project

With funding secured from the Australian Government, minor works commenced on the upgrade of the Albert Hall.

The project will be undertaken in three stages, with the first stage including upgrades to heating, lighting, audio and visual capabilities, and Wi-Fi connectivity as well as repairs to sections of the hall's roof.

The second stage will see major improvements to the hall's toilet facilities and meeting rooms. There will also be upgrades to the stage access and under stage dressing rooms.

The third stage will include the redevelopment of the eastern foyer and café and the creation of a new accessible main entrance. With the development permit being issued for stage 3, submissions of tenders for construction closed at the end of July 2022.

5

We Serve and Care for our community by providing equitable and efficient services that reflects needs and expectations of our community.



10-Year Goal: To offer access to services and spaces for all community members, and to work in partnership with stakeholders to address the needs of vulnerable communities.

What will success look like?

We are invested in our community's long-term health, well-being, safety and resilience. We want to be trusted and respected by our community.

1. To plan for and provide services and facilities that recognise the changing demographics and needs of our community.
2. To define and communicate our role in promoting social inclusion and equity.
3. To work in partnership with community organisations and other levels of government to maximise participation opportunities for vulnerable and diverse members of the community.
4. To support the delivery of programs and events for people to connect with each other through participation in community activities and civic life.
5. To promote and support active and healthy lifestyles of our community.
6. To enhance community awareness of the impacts of uncertain weather patterns, natural and other disasters, and build community resilience.
7. To develop and manage infrastructure and resources to protect our community from natural and other hazards.

Key Actions and Projects

Revised Council's Australia Day policy, commenced flying of the Aboriginal Flag at Town Hall and developed and Aboriginal Partnership Plan

Australia Day

At the Council meeting of 19 September 2019, Council resolved make the following changes to events that have previously been recognised on 26 January:

- replace the National Australia Day Awards program with the Community Recognition Awards program.
- not participate in the National Australia Day Ambassador Program.
- disband the Australia Day Committee and instead ask Councillors to assess community recognition award nominations.

Flying the Aboriginal Flag at the Town Hall

At the Council meeting of 15 July 2021, Council adopted a revised Flying of Flags Policy to include flying the Aboriginal Flag at Town Hall.

Two extra flags poles were installed on the roof of the Town Hall and the Aboriginal Flag commenced flying in March 2022.

Completed Riverbend Park and pedestrian bridge across the North Esk River

Riverbend Park was officially opened to the public in August, 2018.

The new all-abilities park has transformed a former industrial precinct into a major new recreational area for Launceston,

funded by the City of Launceston and the Tasmanian and Australian Governments.

Connected to the Seaport via a 120m-long pedestrian and cycling bridge, Riverbend Park has become a major recreational attraction for the City, boasting popular play equipment like the Sky Walk, a wheelchair carousel, a water play area and basketball courts.

Action plan for the Access Framework

The Access Framework for Action was adopted by Council in November 2020 and the first action plan developed for the year 2021/22. Actions were developed through ideas gathered during consultation for the development of the Framework, from members of the Access Advisory Committee and verified with staff to ensure actions were viable, resourced and funded. It is recognised that making City of Launceston more accessible is the role of all staff within the organisation, but without a dedicated officer to coordinate these actions, some fell through the cracks.

Some positive outcomes from the Year 1 action plan include:

- All new Council produced videos have closed caption availability for the hearing impaired.
- City of Launceston's capital project budget evaluation now includes an accessibility checklist.
- Additional accessible parking bays were made available at CH Smith public carpark, and further analysis is being done on the most practical location of all accessible bays within the city centre.

- Albert Hall renewal design has included greater accessibility.
- Event facilitation checklists include additional requirements for event organisers to ensure events are as accessible as possible.

My Place My Future Plan including ABCDE Learning Sites rollout

A Northern Suburbs Revitalisation Plan was a commitment in the Launceston City Deal. Careful planning ensured that the communities within Launceston's Northern Suburbs remained a central focus. The result of this approach is a strategic document, the *My Place My Future Plan* that was agreed and accepted by the Australian and Tasmanian Governments, City of Launceston and the community.

The Launceston Northern Suburbs consists of seven separate suburbs: Invermay, Mowbray, Newnham, Mayfield, Rocherlea, Ravenswood and Waverley. Each of these suburbs is diverse, unique, and dynamic. Together, they make up 32% (66,802) of those who live within the City of Launceston's boundaries. However, five of these seven suburbs are in a percentile of below five on the SEIFA Index of Disadvantage; indicating that of all suburbs across Australia, only 5% are considered more disadvantaged. One of these suburbs has a percentile of 1; meaning that only 1% of suburbs have a lower SEIFA Index.

Launched with the community on 26 August 2019 by all three levels of government, the Plan is built upon ongoing collaboration and engagement that has developed community trust, and has resulted in an approach that the community is connected to.

The first year of implementation has focused on continuing to build relationships, supporting or extending existing programs, and developing bespoke programs to address identified needs.

Some key activities as a result of the Plan include:

- installation of seven free public Wi-Fi sites in the Northern Suburbs;
- development of a grassroots leadership program “Ignite Us” that will continue to build community capacity;
- a co-designed road safety campaign in the Northern Suburbs, addressing unsafe driving in residential areas;
- an art initiative involving migrant women followed by community workshops;
- development of an online Social Enterprise Toolbox that enables free, uninhibited information on establishing and operating a social enterprise; and
- establishment of a Strategic Working Group that consists of representatives from three levels of government. This group provides a mechanism for quick, tailored responses to emerging opportunities to be identified and actioned.

There are also a number of less tangible outcomes:

- much better communication between the community and the three levels of government;
- an understanding within Council that the Northern Suburbs are a strategic priority;
- more confidence for Council officers to develop and deliver projects in these suburbs, and a deeper understanding of the impact of these projects; and
- much better collaboration amongst Council officers on issues, opportunities or needs that relate to the Northern Suburbs.

In short, the Plan has delivered a place-based and community-led platform for change that is acknowledged by the three levels of government, and is flexible enough to allow emerging opportunities to be identified and actioned.

The City of Launceston has collaborated with Bank of I.D.E.A.S. to deliver five Asset Based Community Driven Effort (ABCDE) Learning Sites in the northern suburbs of Rocherlea, Ravenswood and Mowbray then Youngtown and Kings Meadows.

Learning Sites enable a community to identify their assets, build connections, and create change in the heart of the community. The approach is about focusing on ‘what’s strong, not what’s wrong’ and empowering local citizens to make change.

As one of the first local governments to embrace the Learning Sites, the City of Launceston has worked with local leaders within each location to identify, connect and mobilise their assets in order to take action, make positive change and directly shape their own community’s future.

The Invermay ABCDE Learning Site is currently underway until the end of December 2023.

6

We Protect our Environment by caring for our unique natural assets and amenity, and sensitively managing future development opportunities



10-Year Goal: To enhance the unique natural character, values, and amenity of our city by minimising the impacts of our organisations and our community's activities in the environment.

What will success look like?

We strive to minimise the impact of our actions on the environment, while planning for, adapting to and managing the impact of climate change. We want to protect the special character and values of our city for future generations.

1. To reduce our and the community's impact on the natural environment.
2. To contribute to air and river quality improvements in Launceston.
3. To manage the risks of climate-related events, particularly in the area of stormwater management and riverine flooding.

Key Actions and Projects

City of Launceston Sustainability Strategy and declaration of a Climate Emergency

The City of Launceston became the third Tasmanian local government authority to declare a climate emergency.

Establishment of Tamar Estuary Management Taskforce and River Health Action Plan (partnership)

The Council continues to be an active member of the Taskforce. In 2020, the Council committed \$11 million to the combined sewerage and stormwater project. This together with a commitment from TasWater of \$33.2 million increased the investment to \$140.7 million to implement key actions of the *River Health Action Plan*. These key actions include:

- \$129.2 million to deliver infrastructure upgrades to reduce overflows from Launceston's combined sewerage and stormwater system. In 2021, TasWater completed the Willis Street Pump Station preliminary upgrade and in 2022, the St John Street Pump Station upgrade project was completed.
- \$11.5 million allocated to the Catchment Works Program

to reduce pathogens for entering waterways across the kanamaluka/Tamar Estuary and Esk rivers catchments including Launceston's separated stormwater system. In 2021, Natural Resource Management (NRM) North partnered with Council engineers to deliver stormwater intrusion investigations. It is estimated that 13.2 mega litres of untreated sewage has been prevented from entering Launceston's separated stormwater system. In addition, NRM North have successfully delivered the Tamar Action Grants program to support landholders within the kanamaluka/Tamar Estuary and Esk River catchments to reduce nutrient loads entering waterways.

In 2021, TEMT released their vision for the future of the kanamaluka/Tamar Estuary and completed extensive community engagement. The vision was endorsed in 2022 by the Tasmanian Government.

Residential rollout of FOGO and organic waste processing facility

Launceston's kerbside food organics and garden organics (FOGO) service was launched in

2018, with the goal of diverting organic material away from landfill, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and extending the life of landfill cells. To date there are over 13,000 voluntary registrations and last year the facility diverted 11,000 tonnes of organic matter away from landfill which conservatively abated 22,000 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions. The other clear benefit is enabling the valuable compost nutrients to keep circulating in community landscapes.

In order to process the organic material collected in the FOGO bins, the City of Launceston constructed a purpose-built organics processing facility at the Launceston Waste Centre. This has allowed other Northern Tasmanian councils to roll out FOGO services of their own, and all material collected is processed at Launceston's organics processing facility. West Tamar Council and now Meander Valley Council have established FOGO kerbside collection services for their municipalities with other Northern councils are expected to follow in the coming years. City of Launceston is also developing opportunities to attract commercial organics loads with the Launceston General Hospital diverting two tonnes per week of food waste to the facility.

7

We are a City Planning for our Future by ensuring our approach to strategic land-use, development and infrastructure investment is coordinated, progressive, and sustainable.



10-Year Goal: To facilitate appropriate development via integrated land use planning, infrastructure investment, and transport solutions within our municipality and region.

What will success look like?

We play a leading role in balancing the enviable amenity of our municipality with the needs of future development and growth. We want to influence the delivery of the right investment for our city and region.

1. To ensure that our application of the land-use planning system at a local and regional level is effective and efficient.
2. To take a strategic approach to development sites and infrastructure investment within the municipality to maximise public benefit and encourage development and investment.
3. To improve and maintain accessibility, transport options, and infrastructure within the Launceston area, including its rural areas.
4. To ensure our suite of strategic planning initiatives are coordinated, and representative of our community's needs and aspirations.

Key Actions and Projects

Launceston Transport Strategy

The Launceston Transport Strategy was endorsed by Council on 4 November 2021 along with a *Four Year Implementation Plan*. The Strategy responded to the Greater Launceston Transport Vision which recognises that transport planning in the region requires a collaborative approach with the State and surrounding Councils. The Strategy has three themes, A Liveable Launceston, A Healthy Launceston and A Connected Launceston with 14 strategic directions and 30 initiatives under these themes. The Launceston Transport Committee, consisting of two councillors, eight external organisational representatives and two community representatives has since been established and will assist with progress of the strategy.

The Four Year Implementation Plan contains 43 initiatives under 16 headings building on the achievements of the previous Transport Futures strategies, *Invermay Traffic Masterplan* and the Smart City Mobility Project.

Thirteen of these initiatives are actively progressing. These include the e-scooter trial, speed limit review, transport safety improvements, pedestrian improvement program, off road trails and the central area parking implementation plan. Working through these initiatives in coming years will challenge established transport habits to ensure that Launceston is well placed to address the three themes of the strategy as it grows in size and population as a vibrant and sustainable regional city.

UTAS Northern Transformation Project (partnership)

The City of Launceston has continued its active involvement in the \$304 million relocation of the University of Tasmania (UTAS) to the city. This included finalising the land transfer, taking asset ownership of the new pedestrian and cycle bridge, the new car park and providing input into how the UTAS relocation can best shape Launceston and the region.

Construction commenced at Inveresk in 2020, and the project is now coming to fruition with the pedestrian and cycle bridge opening in December 2021, the Library in February 2022 and the community garden and activity spaces in July 2022. Staff and students from the Newnham Campus will relocate to Inveresk in 2023, which will see an influx of people at Inveresk and the City. The Rivers Edge and Stone Buildings are due for completion in 2023 and the Shed (Willis Street Buildings) in 2024. Full occupation is expected in 2025.

In addition to construction at Inveresk, the University of Tasmania progressed plans to create a vibrant mixed-use precinct at the Newnham Campus. In December 2021, UTAS released the Newnham Concept masterplan which aims to support research and industry engagement in addition to community facilities and new housing.

Launceston City Deal

The City Deal has continued to deliver tangible benefits for Launceston, including significant progress on our largest ever infrastructure build: the \$260 million relocation of the main Launceston campus of UTAS to the heart of the city.

The City Deal is now a 10 year plan to make Launceston Australia's most liveable and innovative regional city, with growing incomes and falling levels of disadvantage. In the first five years of implementation, the City Deal has already delivered some important results for Launceston.

Key achievements

Investing \$140 million to improve the health of the kanamaluka/Tamar Estuary through delivering on the *kanamaluka/Tamar Estuary River Health Action Plan's* 12 recommended projects. The Tamar Estuary Management Taskforce has released a 10-year vision for the kanamaluka/Tamar Estuary.

Improving the liveability of the Launceston city centre through the completion of stage 1 of the City Heart Project including Civic Square, Brisbane Street

Mall redevelopments and the implementation of wayfinding directional signs.

The relocation of the UTAS main Launceston campus from Newham to Inveresk is progressing well with completion largely on track for 2025. The project is receiving a total of \$260 million, and is the largest single infrastructure investment in Launceston's history.

The delivery of a raft of Smart City initiatives through a \$3.5 million Greater Launceston Transformation Project, including the development of a multimodal model to support and guide traffic and transport planning, Free WiFi rollout including locations in the Northern Suburbs. This is in addition to delivering a range of other 'Smart City' and data-related commitments, including the release of 34 Launceston datasets on data.gov.au, in support of city planning.

A coordinated and integrated approach to supporting emerging new technologies, entrepreneurship and cultural development - key enablers to deliver City Deal projects. The ability to develop a single, coherent

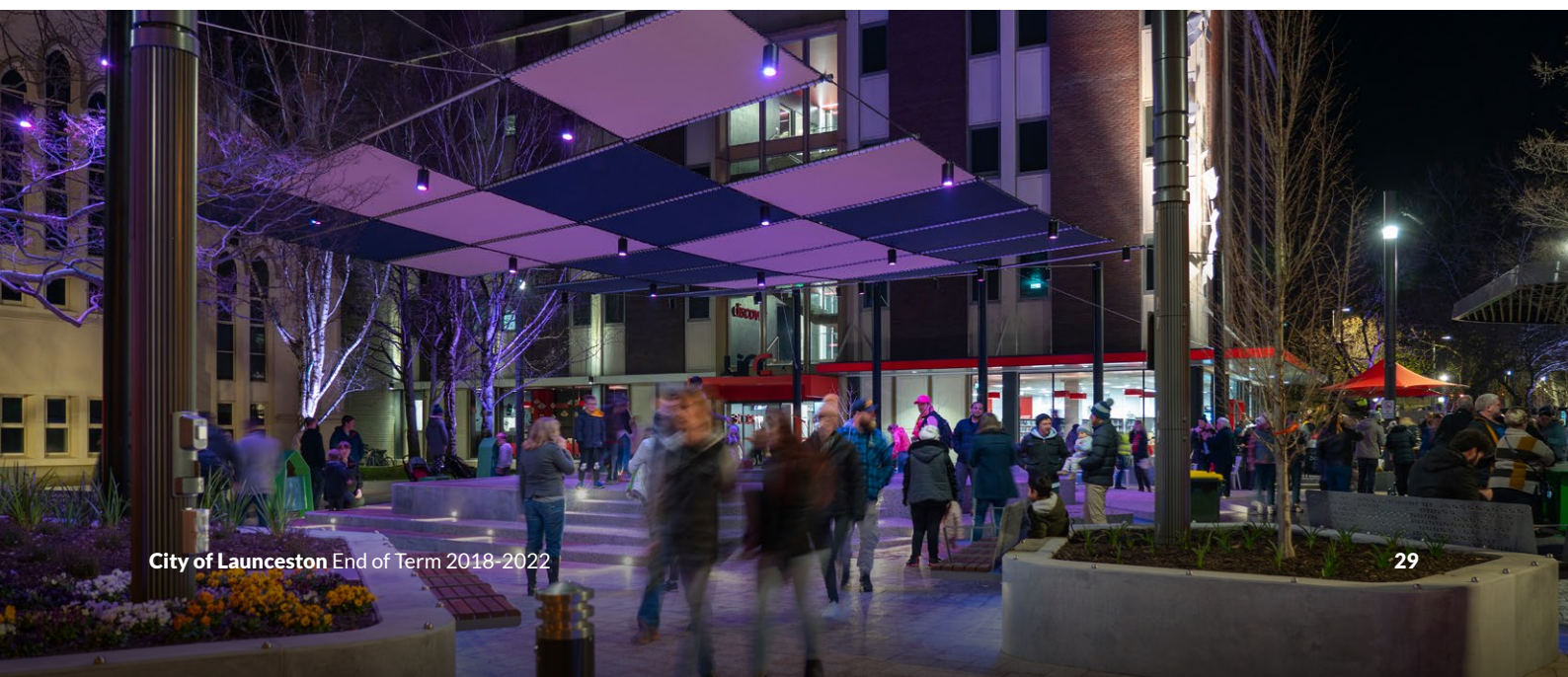
knowledge platform around latest technologies and sensing capabilities is crucial in shaping the future of the city and the region.

Launceston's first Cultural Strategy is complete and is in the process of implementation. The Strategy will strengthen community pride and a sense of belonging by leveraging Launceston's rich cultural assets.

The two year redevelopment project to enhance the Albert Hall as a cultural destination for communities across Northern Tasmania is underway.

The *My Place My Future Plan* provides an integrated approach to the revitalisation of Launceston's Northern Suburbs. The plan was developed by the City of Launceston in collaboration with the community and City Deal partners and initiatives are being delivered.

At the signing of the City Deal, there were 33 commitments. Of these, 15 commitments are now complete, 11 are well progressed and five commitments are at varying stages of construction.



Financial Performance

2018/19 to 2021/22

To remain sustainable, the City of Launceston's long term financial plan is structured to deliver small operating surpluses each year. In some years, however, this is not possible due to planned and sometimes unplanned urgent work as well as unexpected shocks such as the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting economic and social impacts that come from such an event.

Like all tiers of government, City of Launceston finds itself in budget recovery mode after the COVID-19 pandemic. Council approved a nation leading Community Care and Recovery Package, during April 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The package included the provision of rate remissions, rent and fee relief, community grants program and the freezing of all rate increases for 2020/21. Council elected to freeze rates in 2020/21 as part of the \$10 million Community Care and Recovery Package, after an initial proposal to increase rates by 3.9%. This resulted in lost revenue in excess of \$2.2 million in the 2020/21 financial year. This lost revenue compounds annually given it was a true freeze, not an increase and subsequent remission of rates.

Council frequently reviews its long term financial plan with a view to returning to a small underlying surplus in the medium term.

Council has budgeted for a general rate increase of 3.75% in 2022/23, in line with Council's long term financial plan and a forecast of 0.75% growth in the rating base.

Waste management charges have increased over the four year term, mainly due to the costs related to the collection and management of the FOGO service, rising materials recycling costs and the increase in average weight of kerbside waste being collected

per bin over the last 12 months. The collection of FOGO material has been an extremely successful opt-in initiative of Council and, importantly, this service reduces the amount of waste going to landfill, reduces greenhouse gas emissions and produces a quality compost. FOGO material is 100% processed at the Launceston Waste Centre's new organic processing facility.

As a consequence of the previously mentioned factors, there will be years where an underlying surplus is not possible but through careful and transparent planning our long term financial plan will respond so that the Council operates within its means without excessive rate increases or borrowings.

In the four years 2018/19 to 2021/22, the City of Launceston achieved an underlying operating deficit averaging \$2.315 million (noting that the 2021/22 underlying deficit of \$0.993 million is at this stage unaudited). The \$7.215 million COVID-19 affected deficit in 2019/20 contributed most to this outcome and our recovery to surplus is forecast, through our long term financial plan, to occur in 2025/26. The long term financial plan aims to keep rate increases during the next four years (2023/24 to 2026/27) to manageable amounts, only slightly higher than the forecast Consumer Price Indices (CPI). It is also worth noting that the 3.75% rate increase for 2022/23 was 2.75% below the 6.5% CPI increase that occurred from June 2021 to June 2022.

Cash holdings increased from \$68.635 million to \$81.901 million over the four years, with most of this increase attributed to funds needed for capital projects not yet completed and fully spent.

Total liabilities have increased by \$28.519 million from \$35.518 million in 2017/18 to \$64.037

million in 2021/22. The increase was mainly due to a \$10.2 million increase in the Waste Rehabilitation Provision (the Waste Rehabilitation Provision is the present value of all future costs to return the waste cells to a fully rehabilitated state) and a \$16.2 million increase in interest free borrowings.

Interest bearing loans have increased by \$16.231 million to \$26 million, up from \$9.769 million as at 30 June 2018. Interest payable on the \$26 million of borrowings is fully reimbursed by the Tasmanian Government and is effectively interest free for the Council.

An interest-free loan of \$9 million for the C.H.Smith Car Park was repaid in full in February 2022, and the remaining interest free loans totaling \$26 million will be repaid from forecast cash holdings as and when they fall due (\$20 million in 2023/24 and \$6 million in 2024/25).

Annual rate increases over the four years averaged 2.34% while the average Council Cost Index (CCI) rate was higher at 2.64%. CCI is calculated using a mix of the following: December to December increases - 50% Wage Price Index (Total Hourly Rates of Pay excluding bonuses - All Industries - Tasmania), 20% All Groups Hobart Consumer Price Index and 30% Producer Price Index (Road and Bridge Construction Australia).

The compounding effect of these rate increases over four years shows an actual compounded increase of 9.64%, compared to the compounded CCI increase of 10.97% for our costs; an unfavourable difference of 1.33%. In dollar terms this equates to \$806,000 in lost rate revenue in 2022/23 had rates increases kept pace with our cost increases.

Significant Capital Projects

Launceston Waste Centre Landfill Cell Liner

Construction of a new landfill cell liner at the Launceston Waste Centre enables the continuation of operations once the current landfill cell is filled. The new landfill cell was completed for use in November 2021. Total cost \$11.4 million.

Riverbend Park

Riverbend Park is an all-abilities park, with parking, toilets, barbeque and picnic facilities, basketball courts and multiple play zones including bespoke play structures. Riverbend Park was officially opened in August 2019. Total cost \$10.4 million.

Brisbane Street Mall Redevelopment (Launceston City Heart Project)

Undertaken as part of the Launceston City Heart Project, this redevelopment of the Brisbane Street Mall included the improvement of shelter, seating and lighting. The redevelopment was officially opened in December 2018. Total cost \$6.6 million.

Civic Square Redevelopment (Launceston City Heart Project)

Undertaken as part of the Launceston City Heart Project, this project revitalised Civic Square to

include a family play area, dining and social gathering areas, as well as improved amenities and infrastructure to increase the use of the square as an event space. The Civic Square redevelopment was officially opened in August 2018. Total cost \$7.6 million.

UTAS Stadium (York Park) Resurfacing

Renewal of the playing surface at UTAS Stadium, including base work and drainage was completed in 2019/20. Total cost \$6.2 million.

Macquarie House Redevelopment

As part of the Launceston City Deal, the redevelopment of Macquarie House provided for the full restoration and refurbishment of the building along with the construction of a new timber clad annexe, adding a much needed kitchen, toilet, and accessibility infrastructure. It was officially opened in September 2019. Total cost \$3.6 million.

Purchase of old Birchall's and Katies buildings (118-124 Brisbane Street)

Council took the opportunity to provide a safe and high quality connection from the Paterson Street Central carpark site (ultimately the bus interchange) to the Brisbane Street Mall by purchasing the former Birchalls and

Katies Building, at 118-122 and 124 Brisbane Street, Launceston. Additionally, given the identified need for food and public toilet offerings within the Brisbane Street Mall, the purchase of this building presents an opportunity to partner with a private commercial operator(s) to develop the public realm connection with a commercial operation (such as a food court development) which would have the added benefit of further activating the Brisbane Street Mall. Total cost of \$8.4 million.

Invermay Road Rehabilitation (Forster-Vermont)

Improvements to the riding quality of Invermay Road from Forster Street to Vermont Road together with renewed traffic functions for road safety were completed in 2020/21. Total cost \$1.8 million. (\$1.2 million of this project was funded through the Australian Government's Roads to Recovery Program.)

Golconda Road Safety Improvements

For improved safety, works to Golconda Road included improved alignment, cross fall and surface across identified road sections. This work was completed in 2021/22. Total cost \$1.9 million. (\$0.4 million of this project was funded through the Australian Government's Black Spot Program.)

Cimitiere Street Road Reconstruction

Works to repair pavement failure between Tamar Street and Lawrence Street was completed in 2018/19. Total cost \$1.8 million. (\$0.2 million of this project was funded through the Australian Government's Roads to Recovery Program.)

Granville Street Retaining Wall and Kerb

Rectification works of a failed section of retaining wall and upper roadway of Granville Street were completed in 2020/21. Total cost \$1.6 million. (\$1 million of this project was funded by the Australian Government's Roads to Recovery Program.)

Launceston Aquatic Centre Renewable Energy

The design and construction of a combination of renewable energy technologies (solar), and electric heat pumps to replace the Launceston Aquatic Centre's gas cogeneration system has delivered significant energy cost savings and also helps Council reduce its carbon footprint. Total cost \$1.7 million.

Boral Relocation

The final stage of the \$62 million Launceston Flood Authority Flood Levee Capital Program was completed in 2019/20. Spending occurred between 2007/08 and 2019/20.

Churchill Park Sports Centre (Stages 1, 2 and 3)

This project included the redevelopment of an existing car park area to provide a new quality playing field with appropriate subsurface drainage and improvements to the current car parking facilities.

Stage 1 - \$1.1 million, Stage 2 - \$1.9 million, Stage 3 - \$0.4 million. Total cost \$3.4 million. (\$1.4 million of this project was funded through the Department of Communities Tasmania.)

Other (non-Council funded but have become council assets through contributions or alternate means)

National Automobile Museum Building (University of Tasmania Land and Building Exchange)

As part of the exchange for Council land, the Council acquired an equivalent valued asset of \$3.4 million.

UTAS Inveresk Cycle/Pedestrian Bridge (Stage 1)

The (written down) value of the bridge asset taken up during 2021/22 was \$5 million.

Inveresk Northern Car Park

The value of associated roads and parks assets taken up during 2021/22 was \$3.2 million.

YMCA Building, 8A Blaydon Street

The (written down) value of building take up in 2021/22 was \$1.1 million.

Department of State Growth Road Asset Exchange

While not completely finalised due to delays in the proclamation process, this project involves an exchange of urban and rural roads and associated infrastructure between the Department of State Growth and Council. This exchange has been undertaken to align responsibility of the relevant roads which fit the role of each level of government. Specifically, roads transferred to the Department of State Growth align with their responsibility for roads which hold strategic regional or state significance, for example the transferred components of Wellington Street, Bathurst Street, Brisbane Street, York Street, Lower Charles Street, Prossers Road and Patersonia Road. Council will be taking on responsibility for John Lees Drive due to the changes to the status of this road with the construction of the new section of the East Tamar Highway, and an additional section of Lilydale Road.



Table 1 - Financial Performance - 2018/19 to 2021/22

	\$'000 2018/19	\$'000 2019/20	\$'000 2020/21	\$'000 2021/22	\$'000 4 Year Average
Underlying Surplus/(Deficit)	2,055	(7,215)	(3,109)	(993)	(2,315)
Cash Holdings	71,986	60,344	84,839	81,901	74,767
Total Current and Non-current Liabilities	39,280	48,912	75,658	64,037	56,971
Surplus Cash over Total Liabilities	32,706	11,432	9,181	17,864	17,796
Borrowings	9,000	15,000	35,000	26,000	21,250
Interest-free loans	(9,000)	(15,000)	(35,000)	(26,000)	
Borrowings that incur interest costs to Council	0	0	0	0	0
					Average
Actual Rate Increases (Ex Fire Levy) % also includes an average of 0.5% growth	2.80%	2.80%	0%	3.75%	2.34%
Council Cost Index (CCI)	3.38%	2.18%	0.95%	4.06%	2.64%
Difference between Actual Rate Increase and CCI					-0.30%

Table 2 - Delivered Capital Works Program - 2018/19 to 2021/22

2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	TOTAL
\$34.4 million	\$34.7 million	\$29.1 million	\$24.3 million	\$122.5 million

Where are we headed?

The Council's *Four Year Delivery Plan* is a key element of the organisation's Integrated Corporate Planning Framework as it outlines the key services, annual plan actions as well as key projects for advocacy which will be focused on by the Council over a four year period.

One of the first tasks of the newly formed Council will be to review the current *Four Year Delivery Plan* and develop a new plan which will guide the term of the Council. The plan will seek to progress the Greater Launceston Plan as well as the City of Launceston's Corporate Strategic Plan, and will be reviewed by the Council on an annual basis. Some of the key issues for the incoming Council to focus are outlined below.

The current Council has charted a path back to an operational surplus in the 2024/25 Financial Year following the financial impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and other financial shocks. The incoming Council will need to balance its strategic agenda with the organisation's long term financial plan.

The future governance and funding of the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery (QVMAG) were endorsed by the current Council in the *QVMAG Futures Plan*. The Futures Plan seeks to address key challenges and present a number of considered and innovative Key Directions that will inform and define the future strategic, performance and infrastructure developments which are required to support and enhance QVMAG as a sustainable, dynamic and accessible cultural and economic driver for Launceston. There are a number of key challenges, risks and opportunities facing QVMAG and the City of Launceston that need to be met with imagination, bold action, scaled commitment,

investment and long-term vision. The Futures Plan now forms the basis of the funding discussions with the Tasmanian Government.

The Launceston City Deal represents an exciting 10-year partnership between the Australian and Tasmanian Governments, and the City of Launceston with a vision to see Launceston become "Australia's most liveable and innovative regional city, with growing incomes and falling levels of disadvantage". The Launceston City Deal's liveability and innovation vision and are in accord with various Tasmanian, Northern Tasmania and municipal strategies and plans in housing, population growth, economic development, smart cities and transport. The incoming Council will be responsible for the final negotiation and endorsement of the five year extension of the City Deal which will build on the success of projects and initiatives already delivered during the initial five-year phase. Priorities for the extension include the kanamaluka Tamar Estuary Taskforce Vision, Stage 2 of the City Heart Project, the *UTAS Stadium Future Direction Plan*, *My Place My Future Plan* initiatives, implementation of the City of Launceston's *Cultural Strategy* as well as transport planning and initiatives.

There will need to be continued focus on master planning for urban growth. Residential land demand and supply assessments undertaken for the City of Launceston have identified critical deficiencies in the supply of land for future housing within the municipal area. The Council is working closely with partner Councils to not only progress a review of the *Greater Launceston Plan*, but to engage in master planning to realise a future

supply of residential land. The major projects include particular attention to future land use requirements for areas like St Leonards and undeveloped areas to the City's South, together with continued investment in in-fill and inner-city living development.

Another key priority issue for the incoming Council will be the continuing work to improve the planning and provision of Launceston's sport and recreation facilities. The Council has been working with the Tasmanian Government, Northern Tasmania Development Corporation, neighbouring councils and importantly, local and regional sporting clubs and associations, to develop a framework for delivery of a Regional Sports Plan. Our goal is to lead a process that will provide for the fair and equitable distribution of recreation and sports facilities to our regional community.

Homelessness has become a significant issue in which the Council has a continuing role to play. Through the recent formation of its Homelessness Advisory Committee, the Council will continue to play a role through an educated, collaborative and needs focussed approach, working with the community to play a constructive role in the provision of strategies and actions to support the homeless community.

The most recent national census results and analysis will progressively be released over the next nine months and this will inform the updates to our annual State of the City report. This report plays a significant and important role in Council's strategic planning and with the updates, will provide the new Council with an excellent basis for their strategic discussions and planning.

Appendix 1 - Full Project List

Strategic Priority Area 1

We *connect with our Community and our Region* through meaningful engagement, cooperation and representation:

- Tomorrow Together community engagement program
- New regional dog and cat shelter services provider.
- Modernised nomenclature for elected members from Aldermen to Councillors.
- Revised Launceston Flood Authority structure
- Commenced a Regional Sports Facility Plan
- Negotiated an Extension to the Launceston City Deal.
- Interim Update to the Northern Regional Land Use Strategy.
- Community Engagement Policy, Strategy, Framework and Toolkit

Strategic Priority Area 2

We *Facilitate Prosperity* by seeking out and responding to opportunities for growth and renewal of our regional economy:

- Cityprom review and new model (Central Launceston Marketing Inc.)
- Unsolicited bids assessment process for Council owned land
- Big Bash Cricket and A-League Soccer games to UTAS Stadium

- Collaborated to bring MONA FOMA to Launceston.
- Horizon 2025 - Updated Economic Development Plan (Draft)
- Progression of Smart Cities initiatives and Strategy
- Shopping in the City report
- Hosted AFL Finals matches at UTAS Stadium

Strategic Priority Area 3

We are a *Progressive Leader* that is accountable to our governance obligations and responsive to our community:

- COVID-19 Pandemic Care and Recovery Package
- UTAS Stadium Future Direction Plan
- Completed the Organisational Alignment Project
- Development of a Strategic Asset Management Plan
- Development of a Long Term Financial Plan
- Development of a Four Year Delivery Plan
- QVMAG Futures Plan
- Interim review of the Corporate Strategic Plan (2019)
- Commenced Future Workforce Plan
- Created eight new apprentice positions
- Developed the Organisational Cultural Development Roadmap

Strategic Priority Area 4

We value our City's *Unique Identity* by celebrating our special heritage and culture, and building on our competitive advantages to be a place where people choose to live, work and visit:

- A Cultural Strategy for the City of Launceston
- Development of the Launceston Place Brand
- Implementation of the TASMANAC Tourism Information Platform
- Progressed the Digital Culture Experience
- Commenced the QVMAG Collection Audit
- Launch new contemporary and local stories exhibitions of QVMAG
- Commencement of Albert Hall renewal Project.
- Commenced planning for the Princess Theatre and Earl Arts Centre upgrade.
- Hosted the National Tourism Awards at the Cataract Gorge
- A new operating model for Myrtle Park.
- Commenced the City of Launceston Open Space Strategy.
- Launceston City Heart - Completion of Stage 1 and planning for Stage 2

Strategic Priority Area 5

We *Serve and Care* for our community by providing equitable and efficient services that reflects needs and expectations of our community:

- Revised Council's Australia Day policy, commenced flying of the Aboriginal Flag at Town Hall and developed an Aboriginal Partnership Plan.
- My Place My Future Plan including ABCDE Learning Sites rollout.
- Planning Controls for Levee Protected Areas.
- Public Wi-Fi to Northern suburbs and CBD
- Developed a Circular Economy Grants program (partnership)
- Completed Riverbend Park and pedestrian bridge across the North Esk River.
- Redeveloped the Cataract Gorge play space.
- Completed a major resurfacing of UTAS Stadium
- Tasmania's first DC electric vehicle charging station
- Launceston's first Changing Places facility at the Paterson St West Car Park
- Action plan for the Access Framework

Strategic Priority Area 6

We *Protect our Environment* by caring for our unique natural assets and amenity, and sensitively managing future development opportunities:

- Establishment of the Tamar Estuary Management Taskforce and River Health Action Plan (partnership)
- City of Launceston Sustainability Strategy and declaration of a Climate Emergency
- Construction of the Newstead Flood Levee
- New Stormwater Management Plan
- Residential rollout of FOGO and organic waste processing facility
- New flood modelling for the North Esk and South Esk Rivers
- Recycle Hub at the Town Hall Customer Service Centre
- Street art project Electric Botany, (finalist in the Australian Street Art Awards)

Strategic Priority Area 7

We are a *City Planning for our Future* by ensuring our approach to strategic land-use, development and infrastructure investment is coordinated, progressive, and sustainable:

- Launceston Transport Strategy
- Introduced the EasyPark smartphone parking app and upgrade parking metres
- Complete the redevelopment of the C.H. Smith site
- Redeveloped historic Macquarie House
- New Way-Finding signage across the city (City Heart).
- Micro-mobility electric scooter trial
- Major redevelopments at Churchill Park
- New landfill cell at the Launceston Waste Centre.
- UTAS Northern Transformation Project (partnership)
- South Prospect Residential Growth Strategy and Masterplan.
- Completed Relbia Future Development Plan
- Developed a new Dog Management Policy.



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