

Mackay Regional Council

Annual Report 2023-24

Member information

Details	
Organisation name:	Mackay Regional Council
Main address:	PO Box 41 , Mackay QLD 4740
Main email:	business@mackay.qld.gov.au
Main phone:	1300 622 529
Main website URL:	Mackay Regional Council - Mackay Regional Council , Discover Mackay
ABN:	56 240 712 069
Charter signing date:	10/03/2021

Authorised representatives

The nominated staff members will take on the responsibility for Small Business Friendly (SBF) activities, which includes participation in SBF meetings. They will be the primary contact for receiving program details, updates, and inquiries.

Authorised SBF representative details	
Full name:	Brenton Randall
Position:	Senior Economic Development Officer
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Phone:	07 4961 9677
SBF Proxy details	
Full name:	Nadine Connolly
Position:	Principal Economic Development Officer
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Report information

Details	
Report date:	26/09/2024
Prepared by:	Carly Hunter, Economic Development Officer
Stakeholders consulted:	Yes ☐ No ☒
Report published:	Yes ☐ No ☒
Report URL (if online):	

Charter performance

Actively communicate and engage with small businesses

Commitments		Performance self-assessment			
		● Not yet	● In progress	● Achieved	● Very well achieved
a)	Actively engage and be mindful of small businesses, their issues and priorities when making decisions. (e.g., create a business advisory group).	☐	☐	☒	☐
b)	Communicate clearly in a timely manner both formally and informally. (e.g., working at all levels to exceed your customers' expectations).	☐	☐	☒	☐
c)	Engage with statewide partners where appropriate on matters affecting small businesses.	☐	☐	☒	☐
d)	Publish clear service standards stating what small businesses can expect from us. (e.g., in service charter, economic strategy, annual plan, etc.).	☐	☒	☐	☐

Summary of key activities and achievements in relation to this element:

- Mackay Regional Council (MRC) delivers a newsletter providing updates on MRC activity, support and assistance from other agencies and departments and local information of interest to the business community.

MRC is responsive to small business enquiries and is refining our first point of contact process.

- MRC Economic Development and Tourism team attends regular business networking events held by the Mackay Chamber of Commerce, Resource Industry Network, and indigenous business networking events.

In response to small business needs, MRC is being proactive in the skills attraction and retention area.

Raise the profile and capability of small business

Commitments		Performance self-assessment			
		● Not yet	● In progress	● Achieved	● Very well achieved
a)	Publicly recognise and value the importance of small businesses to our community and local economy.	☐	☐	☒	☐
b)	Encourage campaigns to promote small business and local spending (e.g., buy local).	☐	☐	☒	☐
c)	Help small businesses develop networks, access education, and increase their capabilities.	☐	☐	☒	☐
d)	Assist small businesses to access government, business and industry programs and resources.	☐	☐	☒	☐

Summary of key activities and achievements in relation to this element:

- The MRC Economic Development and Tourism team continues to provide a wide range of support and assistance to small business operators. The broad range of experience and knowledge in the team ensures small businesses receive the information and support they require.
- MRC Economic Development and Tourism team sponsored the 2024 Small Business Lunch featuring Dominique Lamb, Small Business Commissioner as the speaker.
- MRC partnered with Mackay Chamber of Commerce for 2024 Small Business Month to showcase local businesses in the region and to provide a platform for recognition and profiling for small businesses to increase local spend and established the Small Business Awards Program.
- MRC sponsored the *Meet the Buyer and Supplier Event* in October 2023. This is a business event for local indigenous businesses to foster relationships with various stakeholders
- MRC Economic Development and Tourism team participated in Major Project Forum providing info on major Council projects and procurement processes.
- MRC has a dedicated Waterfront PDA team working specifically with businesses in the City Centre and Waterfront Priority Development Area.

Promote and showcase small businesses

Commitments	Performance self-assessment			
	● Not yet	● In progress	● Achieved	● Very well achieved
a) Encourage and promote small business engagement via marketing and communication channels (e.g., engaging with local small businesses, collaborating with local chambers of commerce, industry groups etc.).	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Create awareness by promoting the Small Business Friendly Councils (SBFC) program (e.g., using the SBFC identifier online, in marketing collateral and in communication materials).	☐	☒	☐	☐
c) Sharing successes, ideas and learnings with other Small Business Friendly Councils and other stakeholders.	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) Allow the Queensland Small Business Commissioner to promote our Small Business Friendly Council activities and achievements.	☐	☐	☒	☐

Summary of key activities and achievements in relation to this element:

- MRC has a strong social media presence and promotes small business and small business opportunities on an ongoing basis.
- MRC works with the Mackay Chamber of Commerce, Resource Industry Network, Split Spaces Mackay, Mackay Isaac Tourism and other key stakeholders to deliver networking and learning opportunities on an ongoing basis providing funding, venues, speakers and facilitators as required.
- MRC actively participates in the Small Business Friendly Program roundtable meetings, fostering the exchange of successes and challenges with fellow Small Business Friendly Councils and stakeholders.

Develop and promote place-based programs for small business

Commitments	Performance self-assessment			
	● Not yet	● In progress	● Achieved	● Very well achieved
a) Identify, develop, promote and deliver at least two existing or new place-based programs to support businesses to start, grow and become more resilient.	☐	☐	☒	☐

Summary of key activities and achievements in relation to this element:

- MRC Mackay City and Waterfront team facilitates a placemaking grant program, *Activate My Place* that supports communities and businesses across the region to create and deliver inspiring, inclusive, and vibrant projects in shared public spaces.

- MRC Mackay City and Waterfront team also provides a *Façade Improvement Grant* program to encourage property owners and business operators to improve their exterior appearance of building and storefronts to increase visitation and foot traffic.

Simplify administration and regulation for small business (red tape reduction)

Commitments	Performance self-assessment			
	● Not yet	● In progress	● Achieved	● Very well achieved
a) Limit unnecessary administration and take steps to ensure continuous business improvement.	☐	☒	☐	☐
b) Make it easier for small businesses to comply with administrative and/or regulatory requirements.	☐	☒	☐	☐
c) Administer requirements in a consistent manner in collaboration with key stakeholders.	☐	☒	☐	☐
d) Regularly review and streamline administrative and/or regulatory arrangements to reduce red tape. (e.g., digitisation projects, process improvement).	☐	☒	☐	☐
e) Maintain a simple, timely and cost-effective internal review and complaints management system. (e.g., actioning feedback, reviewing practices).	☐	☒	☐	☐

Summary of key activities and achievements in relation to this element:

MRC conducted a Red Tape audit which highlighted specific projects within various internal programs for red tape reduction. The overarching goal is to streamline administrative and regulatory process for small businesses.

Ensure fair procurement and prompt payment terms for small businesses

Commitments	Performance self-assessment			
	● Not yet	● In progress	● Achieved	● Very well achieved
a) Implement a procurement policy that gives small businesses a 'fair go' to supply goods and services.	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Help small businesses find local procurement opportunities and make tendering quick and easy.	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Pay all valid invoices from small business suppliers within a stated reasonable period (e.g., 20 calendar days from receipt of invoice).	☐	☒	☐	☐

Summary of key activities and achievements in relation to this element:

- The MRC procurement team facilitate an annual workshop to ensure information about MRC procurement policy and tender opportunities is available and accessible for all local businesses.
- The MRC procurement team attend workshops and other relevant activities that involve small business operators to assist in promoting tender opportunities for local business.
- The MRC have continued to explore alternative avenues to support stakeholders in navigating government processes.

Support small business resilience and recovery

Commitments		Performance self-assessment			
		● Not yet	● In progress	● Achieved	● Very well achieved
a)	With support from statewide partners, deliver short, medium, and long-term activities to support small business recovery and resilience following significant business disruption and disasters.	☐	☐	☒	☐
b)	Implement policies and practices for managing business disruption (e.g., supporting and working with small businesses to minimise disruption during capital works projects, transformational change etc).	☐	☐	☒	☐

Summary of key activities and achievements in relation to this element:

- The MRC Invest Mackay Events funding program focusses on attracting business events and conferences to support the regional tourism and event industry.
- MRC Community Engagement team works across council departments to ensure timely and authentic engagement is maintained with businesses and disruption to operations due to capital works is as minimal as possible.
- MRC opened the Finch Hatton Mountain Bike Trail, which has shown positive impacts to the businesses in the Pioneer Valley.

Measure and report on our performance

Commitments		Performance self-assessment			
		● Not yet	● In progress	● Achieved	● Very well achieved
a)	Seek regular feedback from small businesses to help drive continuous business improvement (e.g., surveys, engagements, councillor walks etc.).	☐	☐	☒	☐
b)	Monitor our performance against this charter and ensure we are meeting our commitments.	☐	☒	☐	☐
c)	Publish a report about our performance in relation to this charter once every financial year.	☒	☐	☐	☐
d)	Complete the SBF Accelerator Pack within 6 months of signing the charter. (for new members after 28 April 2023).	☐	☐	☐	☐

Summary of key activities and achievements in relation to this element:

- MRC has a dedicated officer in the Mackay City and Waterfront (MCWF) team working with CBD businesses with regular one on one contact to receive feedback and identify issues/opportunities.
- The MCWF and Economic Development and Tourism team have multiple officers regularly attending Chamber of Commerce, Young Professional and other industry association networking functions talking directly to business operators, where they seek feedback on funding programs or current projects being undertaken.
- MRC assists the Mackay Region Chamber of Commerce on the promotion of any business-related pulse surveys.

Member requirements

Requirements		Performance self-assessment			
1.	Authorised representative and proxy nominated and current.	Yes ☒	No ☐		
2.	For new members - Submitted Accelerator Action Plan to the QSBC within 6 months of joining the program.	Yes ☐	No ☐	N/A ☒	
3.	Actively participated in at least four Roundtable meetings in the previous F.Y	0 ☐	1-2 ☒	3-4 ☐	>4 ☐
4.	Provided at least one Showcase submission to the QSBC in the previous FY.	0 ☐	1-2 ☒	3-4 ☐	>4 ☐
5.	Attended the Annual Conference in the previous FY.	Yes ☒	No ☐		
6.	Attended the Community of Practice workshops in the previous FY.	0 ☐	1-2 ☒	3-4 ☐	
7.	Submitted Annual Report to the QSBC by 30 September for the previous FY.	Yes ☒	No ☐		



Additional information

- Please see attached two SBF Showcase Programs.
 1. Finch Hatton MTB
 2. City Heart