



District Council of Cooper Pedy

Strategic Plan 2013/14 – 2017/18

March 2013

District Council of Coober Pedy

Draft Strategic Plan 2013/14 – 2017/18

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1. Introduction

This draft plan takes into account:

- a review of the ***Coober Pedy Strategic Plan 2007-2012***
- Regional Development Australia Far North's Strategic Plan 2012 – 2015
- the actions included in the South Australia Strategic Plan
- other plans, documents and studies.

The content of the draft plan is based on the results of broad consultation with groups, organisations and individuals including the following:

- Council's Elected Members, CEO and senior officers
- The Coober Pedy Senior Officers' Group
- A representative Regional Development Australia Far North
- Representatives of the Coober Pedy Retail Business & Tourism Association
- Representatives of the major mining companies operating in the region
- A representative of Coober Pedy Miners Association and Miners Cooperative
- Other key stakeholders

The Coober Pedy community was also provided with an opportunity to be involved.

The key features of the draft plan include:

- There are many challenges facing Coober Pedy and it is important to focus on the critical issues
- The Council has limited human and financial resources and this is recognised in the proposed actions
- Ensuring the long term future of Coober Pedy is the primary responsibility of the Council but other organisations and agencies need to share the responsibility and challenges.

The draft Strategic Plan should be considered in conjunction with Council's Draft Long Term Financial Plan and Assets Management Plans.

Review of the Coober Pedy Strategic Plan 2007-2012

The Coober Pedy Strategic Plan 2007-2012 provides a good framework for the new strategic plan, and many of the strategies and actions are relevant for the new plan.

Appendix A presents the results of a review of the 2007-2012 Plan, and proposes specific actions for the aims included in that Plan. Many of the aims are addressed in the RDAFN's Strategic Plan 2012 – 2015.

Where relevant, the previous aims are included in the new Strategic Plan.

2. Overview of the Coober Pedy community

The results from the 2011 Census provide an insight into the nature and makeup of the Coober Pedy community.

As highlighted in the following table, the key features of the Coober Pedy community include:

- Declining population
- High proportion of Indigenous Australians
- Relatively high unemployment level.

Key results from the 2011 Census

Statistic		Coober Pedy	South Australia
Population		1,695	1,596,572
% population change 2011 & 2006		-11.4	+5.4
Gender	% Male	56.2	49.3
	% Female	43.8	50.7
Age distribution	% 0-14	16.7	18.0
	% 65+	19.5	16.1
Country of birth	% overseas	26.6	22.1
Indigenous Australians	%	16.2	1.9
Household composition	% lone persons	47.8	27.9
Unemployment	%	8.6	5.7

Issues for the Strategic Plan

- Council is concerned with accuracy of the figures - Council to work with the ABS on options for improving the collection methods and procedures for the 2016 Census
- Declining population (irrespective of the accuracy of the figures) – there is a need for a population growth strategy
- High proportion of Indigenous Australians - there is need to ensure for the ongoing appropriate and integrated service provision
- Relatively high unemployment level – there is a need for a local economic development strategy

3. Vision

The vision statement included in the ***Coober Pedy Strategic Plan 2007-2012*** is still relevant for the new Strategic Plan. Only the date required changing.

“Our ambition for Coober Pedy

In 2020—

- *With our heart in a strong mining industry ... we will be a pivotal provider of services to the mining community.*
- *As the most prolific opal region in the world ... we will have nurtured the opal mining industry to meet demand from national and international markets.*
- *As a globally unique tourist destination ... we will offer a satisfying outback experience with transport links to other Australian icon destinations.*
- *As a home town to our local community ... we will have created an environment where our residents have a sense of personal safety and social wellbeing, and are able to access health, housing, education, child care, policing, sporting facilities and recreation services that meet the expectations of young people, young families and an ageing population, ensuring a high standard of living in a prosperous local economy.*
- *As a remote township ... we will have a culture of proud independence, freedom and autonomy, while working together across the community for the common good.*
- *As one of Australia’s most ethnically diverse populations ... our inclusive attitude, seen in our social programs and community governance, will be a model to all.”*

4. Goals

The goals contained in the *Coober Pedy Strategic Plan 2007-2012* are still relevant for Council's new Strategic Plan:

- (1) Enhance the economic prosperity of Coober Pedy
- (2) Improve the social wellbeing of Coober Pedy
- (3) Upgrade the visual amenity of Coober Pedy without compromising its character
- (4) Increase community participation in the leadership of Coober Pedy
- (5) Sustain local government services

The new Plan addresses each of these goals and the supporting strategies and actions are summarised in sections 6 and 7.

5. Responsibility for implementation

Sections 6 and 7 of this Plan proposes various stakeholders as the primary organisations responsible for the implementation of specific strategies and actions.

(1) District Council of Coober Pedy (Council)

The Council is the custodian of the Plan and will be responsible for monitoring and reporting its progress. Resourcing the Council to take on this role, and also address those strategies and actions nominated as the Council's responsibility is a major issue for the Council and this matter is considered under Strategy (5.8).

(2) Regional Development Australia Far North (RDAFN)

(3) Coober Pedy Retail Business and Tourism Association

(4) Coober Pedy Senior Officers Group (SOG)

The strategies and actions from the Strategic Plan will inform the Coober Pedy SOG Action Plan. Other priorities being addressed by SOG include transitional accommodation, the Coober Pedy Alcohol Strategy Plan, and service provision in the Coober Pedy region.

(5) Mining companies operating in the region

The mining companies also have a shared responsibility for some actions.

6. Summary of strategies and actions

The details are provided in section 5.

Goal	Strategy	Action	Responsibility	Target date
(1) Enhance the economic prosperity of Coober Pedy	(1.1) Council determine its role and responsibility for local economic development	(1.1.1) Council examine the options for its role and responsibility for economic development	Council	2013/14
		(1.1.2) Council prepare a local economic development policy/plan	Council	2014/15
	(1.2) Optimise the tourism potential of Coober Pedy	(1.2.1) Review all relevant tourism plans and strategies and consolidate actions relevant to Coober Pedy	Retail Business and Tourism Association (RB&TA)	2013/14
		(1.2.2) Formalise the working relationship between Council and the Retail Business and Tourism Association	Council and the RB&TA	2013/14
		(1.2.3) Give consideration to preparing a Coober Pedy tourism development strategy	RB&TA	2014/15
		(1.2.4) Ensure the Breakaways Reserve agreement is successfully introduced and the tourism opportunities are fully realised	Council	2013/14

Goal	Strategy	Action	Responsibility	Target date
	(1.3) Facilitate the ongoing development of the opal industry	(1.3.1) Work closely with all stakeholders to ensure the sustainability of the Coober Pedy opal industry	Regional Development Australia Far North (RDAFN)	2013/14
		(1.3.2) Continue to support the annual Gem Trade Show	Council	Ongoing
	(1.4) Position Coober Pedy as a 'regional centre'	(1.4.1) Investigate the feasibility of Coober Pedy being classed as a regional centre	RDAFN	2014/15
	(1.5) Foster mining developments in the Coober Pedy region	(1.5.1) Fully assess the draft Far North Regional Mining and Infrastructure Plan and provide comments to the State Government at the time the Plan is released for consultation	RDAFN/Council	2013/14
		(1.5.2) Take advantage of any 'value add' opportunities presented by the Far North Regional Mining and Infrastructure Plan to strengthen mining development in the region	RDAFN/Council	2014/15
		(1.5.3) Keep informed of the mining activities in the region	RDAFN/Council	Ongoing

Goal	Strategy	Action	Responsibility	Target date
	(1.6) Aim to ensure the longer term sustainability of Coober Pedy post mining	(1.6.1) Work with the mining companies in the preparation of the 'mine closure plans'	Council and the mining companies	Ongoing
	(1.7) Give consideration to developing Coober Pedy as a 'regional mining hub'	(1.7.1) Conduct a feasibility study on Coober Pedy being classed as a 'regional mining hub'	Council and RDAFN	2014/15
	(1.8) Ensure the long term viability of Coober Pedy Airport	(1.8.1) Review/update the Airport Master Plan	Council	2013/14
		(1.8.2) Take an active role in the LGA Regional Airport working group	Council	2013/14 & 2014/15
	(1.9) Seek solutions to limited local labour market	(1.9.1) Give consideration to becoming involved with the Regional Migration Agreement process as a means of addressing perceived labour shortages	Council and RDAFN	2013/14
(2) Improve the social wellbeing of Coober Pedy	(2.1) Continue to foster town pride and community spirit	(2.1.1) Provide greater assistance to community associations	Council	Ongoing
		(2.1.2) Give greater recognition to the role of volunteers	Council	Ongoing
		(2.1.3) Consideration be given to engaging a 'special events officer' to manage and run the 2015 Coober Pedy Centenary subject to community consultation	Council	2013/14 & 2014/15

Goal	Strategy	Action	Responsibility	Target date
	(2.2) Further develop meaningful relationships with the mining companies for the benefit of the town and the community	(2.2.1) Work with all stakeholders to action the recommendations contained in the report “ <i>Local Government, mining companies and resource development in regional Australia – Meeting the governance challenge</i> ” (Centre for Social Responsibility in Mining)	Council	On-going
		(2.2.2) Develop and maintain a strong ‘community partnership’ with the mining companies for the benefit of the community	Council/RDAFN	2013/14 & then on-going
		(2.2.3) Gain a full understanding of the impact on the community, of the presence of the mining companies in the region and inform all stakeholders	Council, the mining companies, and RDAFN	2013/14
	(2.3) The challenges presented by the transient and homelessness population	(2.3.1) Service providers and businesses to seek solutions to the challenges presented by the transient and homelessness population	SOG, Council, Coober Pedy businesses, and funded service providers	2013/14
		(2.3.2) Develop partnerships with the Aboriginal councils – APY, Oodnadatta, and Coober Pedy	SOG/Council	2013/14 & then on-going

Goal	Strategy	Action	Responsibility	Target date
	(2.4) Improving the social fabric of Coober Pedy	(2.4.1) Complete the dry zone review and alcohol management strategy, and aim to implement the recommendations	Council	2013/14
		(2.4.2) Facilitate the preparation of a social development strategy (including a socio-economic database to detail the nature of the demographic changes)	Council	2013/14
		(2.4.3) Prepare a population growth strategy	Council	2014/15
		(2.4.4) Increase Aboriginal involvement in community decision making	Council	On-going
(3) Upgrade the visual amenity of Coober Pedy without compromising its character	(3.1) Continue to progress the Urban Design Project and introduce other initiatives which aim to improve the visual amenity of Coober Pedy	(3.1.1) Review the priorities nominated in the Urban Design Project and actively seek funding partnership opportunities, and give consideration to increasing Council's financial contributions to the works	Council	On-going
		(3.1.2) Encourage business owners to improve the appearance of building facades	Council	On-going
		(3.1.3) Introduce a 'building heritage' scheme	Council & Historical Society	2013/14

Goal	Strategy	Action	Responsibility	Target date
(4) Increase multicultural, retail, business, mining industry and Traditional owner representation on SOG	(4.1) Develop and foster community leadership	(4.1.1) Develop the SOG Terms of Reference to include those groups relevant to achieving Goal (4)	Council/SOG	2013/14
(5) Sustain local government services	(5.1) Financial management	(5.1.1) Manage Council's financial position in accordance with the Long Term Financial Plan	Council	On-going
	(5.2) Asset management	(5.2.1) Manage Council's assets in accordance with the Asset Management Plans	Council	On-going
	(5.3) Ensure the continued availability of water at a sustainable long-run cost	(5.3.1) Assess the feasibility of additional solar units for water production	Council	2014/15
	(5.4) Ensure the continued availability of electricity at a sustainable long-run cost	(5.4.1) Review the results of the KPMG grid investigation study and plan accordingly	Council	2013/14
		(5.4.2) Continue to lobby the State Government to improve electricity arrangements	Council/RDAFN	On-going
		(5.4.3) Commence negotiations with En Gen regarding the possibility of allowing electricity to be fed back into the electricity grid	Council	2014/15

Goal	Strategy	Action	Responsibility	Target date
	(5.5) Improve the waste management service	(5.5.1) Consider the introduction of a service charge for the waste service	Council	2013/14
		(5.5.2) Conduct feasibility study to introduce recycling(in conjunction with the mining companies)	Council and the mining companies	2013/14
		(5.5.3) Continue to pursue the land fill issue	Council	On-going
	(5.6) Community Wastewater Management System (CWMS)	(5.6.1) Continue to progress the Community Wastewater Management System project	Council	2013/14 & 2014/15
	(5.7) Council will continue to provide its existing range of services at their current levels	(5.7.1) Invest in sport, recreation and leisure infrastructure and programs	Council	2014/15 and beyond
		(5.7.2) Review the sports field centres master plan ready to apply for grant funding when available	Council	2014/15
		(5.7.3) Seek funding opportunities for the Town Hall 'master plan'	Council	2014/15
		(5.7.4) Review the future ownership and use Council owned dug outs	Council	2015/16
		(5.7.5) Increase child care availability and upgrade facilities	Council	2015/16

Goal	Strategy	Action	Responsibility	Target date
		(5.7.6) Review the children services programs including child care services and the Child Links program	Council	2014/15
	(5.8) Organisational development and continuous improvement	(5.8.1) Develop and implement a workforce development plan	Council	2013/14 & then ongoing
		(5.8.2) Develop an Occupational Health and Safety and Injury Management Strategic Plan	Council	2013/14
	(5.9) Practice good governance	(5.9.1) Council will continue to make improvements to ensure achievement of good governance	Council	On-going
		(5.9.2) Council will work with the ABS on options for improving the collection methods and procedures for the 2016 Census	Council	2013/14 & 2014/15

7. Detailed strategies and actions

Goal (1) Enhance the economic prosperity of Coober Pedy

Strategy (1.1) Council determine its role and responsibility for local economic development

Context

Council's role and responsibility for local economic development is primarily exercised through Regional Development Australia Far North (RDAFN). RDAFN has an officer posted in Coober Pedy. This arrangement is satisfactory. However it is timely to review the arrangement. As part of this review, consideration should be given to a formal resource agreement and developing key performance indicators to measure the effectiveness of the service provided by RDAFN.

Economic development is critical for the future of Coober Pedy and Council needs to be in the most effective position to meet the current and future challenges (for example, the relatively high unemployment level).

Presently Council does not have a formal 'economic development strategy'. Appendix B outlines some elements which would be addressed in an economic development strategy

Actions

(1.1.1) Council examine the options for its role and responsibility for economic development

(1.1.2) Council prepare a local economic development policy/plan

Goal (1) Enhance the economic prosperity of Coober Pedy continued

Strategy (1.2) Optimise the tourism potential of Coober Pedy

Context

Tourism is one of the primary economic drivers for the town. High level of tourism numbers is critical for the future of Coober Pedy – the tourism spend helps the local economy and provides employment opportunities for local people.

A number of plans and strategies have been prepared which address tourism in the region including:

- “The Outback Destination Action Plan 2012-2015”
- “The Flinders Ranges and Outback Integrated Strategic Tourism Plan”

“The Outback Destination Action Plan 2012-2015” states that *“each stakeholder (includes the District Council of Coober Pedy) agrees to prioritise its resources and activities to support the completion of the projects.”*

There are a range of stakeholders involved in the development and implementation of these plans and strategies. RDAFN play a key role in this matter.

The lead role for tourism in Coober Pedy is played by the Coober Pedy the Retail Business and Tourism Association. The Association acts as the local “chamber of commerce”. Its purpose is to

- Promote Coober Pedy nationally and internationally (eg production of promotional material)
- Represent businesses to peak bodies (eg SATC)
- Provide a support network
- Represents Coober Pedy on the Tourism Working Party

Currently it has 52 members and this represents about 90% of the town’s businesses. It has generally a good working relationship with Council and receives significant financial support from Council. For example, annual grants of \$20,000 for marketing and \$25,000 for the Opal Festival. Currently the Association is not accountable to Council on how effectively this money is invested.

The Coober Pedy Visitor Information Centre provides a valuable resource to tourists. The Centre is managed by a committee chaired by Council’s CEO, and it meets as required.

Goal (1) Enhance the economic prosperity of Coober Pedy continued

There is a need to bring together the specific actions for Coober Pedy proposed in the various externally prepared plans and strategies, improve the coordination between the activities of the Retail Business and Tourism Association and Council, and identify funding opportunities. The impact of other Council initiatives (eg Urban Design Project, and the proposed airport master plan/improved links) also need to be taken into account.

Appendix C provides more detail on an approach for developing a Coober Pedy specific tourism plan.

The District Council of Coober Pedy and the Antakirinja Land Council have entered into an agreement to jointly manage the **Breakaways Reserve**. The Agreement provides for the protection of the Breakaways Reserve, and for new employment opportunities for local Aboriginal people in eco-tourism ventures. Commercial activities (eg movie production) are key part of the initiative.

The Management Plan and Joint Management Agreement will ensure the ecologically sustainable management of the Reserve and protect sites of significance. Aboriginal rangers are involved in the running of the Reserve.

This reserve will be co-managed by representatives from the Antakirinja Land Council, two Council Members and one State Government representative.

Actions

(1.2.1) Review all relevant tourism plans and strategies and consolidate actions relevant to Coober Pedy

(1.2.2) Formalise the working relationship between Council and the Retail Business and Tourism Association

(1.2.3) Give consideration to preparing a Coober Pedy specific tourism development strategy

(1.2.4) Ensure the Breakaways Reserve agreement is successfully introduced and the tourism opportunities are fully realised

Goal (1) Enhance the economic prosperity of Coober Pedy continued

Strategy (1.3) Facilitate the ongoing development of the opal industry

Context

Coober Pedy is recognised nationally and internationally for its opals, and is a key driver for its tourism industry and the local economy. The key stakeholders are:

- National Opal Miners Association (NOMA)
- SA Opal Miners Alliance (President Paul Reynolds)

NOMA is considering:

- Application for two rolling grants
- A Productivity Commission submission regarding obstacles to exploration (aim to forward by March 2013)

Chinese tourism is becoming the biggest market for opals so it is important to maintain production of opals.

The Gem Trade Show is a major annual event for the opal industry and represents a significant opportunity for miners to sell directly to buyers. There is a large proportion of overseas buyers present at the event, and is conducted in Coober Pedy over the Easter weekend. The mining companies are significant sponsors for this event.

Austrade has a responsibility for facilitating opal exporting (as part of its wider economic development functions).

There have been a number of studies/reports into Australia's opal industry including:

- "Submission to the Inquiry into Resources Exploration Impediments" (Northern Regional Development Board)
- "A Strategic Assessment of the Australian Opal Industry" (Northern Regional Development Board)
- "National Opal Industry Strategy Background Paper" (The Australian Jewellery and Gemstone Industry Council Inc.)

The former Northern Regional Development Board sought funding for a "Strategic Plan for the Opal Industry", and the result of this application is unknown.

Goal (1) Enhance the economic prosperity of Coober Pedy continued

There are many challenges facing the opal industry including:

- Increasing operating costs
- Tighter licensing regulations
- High A\$
- Industry in decline, falling markets, slow down in production (reduced demand and reducing number of miners)
- Young people are not interested in opal mining (attracted to other mining opportunities)
- Competition from synthetic opals
- Production of cheaper opal
- Cheap opal from Africa
- Old machinery.

Actions

(1.3.1) Work closely with all stakeholders to ensure the sustainability of the Coober Pedy opal industry

Review the previous opal industry studies and consult with all stakeholders regarding next steps

(1.3.2) Continue to support the annual Gem Trade Show

Strategy (1.4) Position Coober Pedy as a ‘regional centre’

Context

Coober Pedy is classed as a town but functions as a regional centre

- Major tourism destination
- Regional airport
- Hub for the mining industry
- Focus point for the opal industry
- Services the road transport between Port Augusta and Alice Springs (a major stop on the Stuart Highway)

The uniqueness of Coober Pedy and its issues are not fully understood by the key decision makers (“they do not travel past Port Augusta”)

Goal (1) Enhance the economic prosperity of Coober Pedy continued

Action

(1.4.1) Investigate the feasibility of Coober Pedy being classed as a regional centre

The study would consider the advantages and disadvantages of the proposal.

If successful, it would change the 'mind set' of the businesses and people of the town. Council may decide to change its name the Regional Council of Coober Pedy.

Strategy (1.5) Foster mining developments in the Coober Pedy region

Context

The Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure has recently appointed Deloitte to prepare Regional Mining and Infrastructure Plans for the following regions:

- Far North
- Eyre and Western
- Yorke and Mid North.

The focus of the Plans is gaining a full understanding of current infrastructure capability, and potential gaps and solutions in meeting future infrastructure requirements. Community consultation on the draft plans is scheduled to be conducted in April-May 2013.

Actions

(1.5.1) Fully assess the draft Far North Regional Mining and Infrastructure Plan and provide comments to the State Government at the time the Plan is released for consultation

(1.5.2) Take advantage of any 'value add' opportunities presented by the Far North Regional Mining and Infrastructure Plan to strengthen mining development in the region

Goal (1) Enhance the economic prosperity of Coober Pedy continued

Context

Currently there is substantial mining activity in the region, and it is important that Council and RDAFN continue to “keep their finger on the pulse”.

The Department for Manufacturing, Innovation, Trade, Resources and Energy (DMITRE) provide a vast range of information on mining activities particularly through the South Australian Resource Information Geoserver.

Action

(1.5.3) Keep informed of the mining activities in the region

This would involve:

- Regular reviews of the DMITRE website
- Monitoring media articles etc
- Receiving regular briefings from the mining companies
- Developing and maintaining a strong working relationship with the relevant State Government Departments
- Regular reports to Council

Goal (1) Enhance the economic prosperity of Coober Pedy continued

Strategy (1.6) Aim to ensure the longer term sustainability of Coober Pedy post mining

Context

Mining activity is expected to wind-down over the next 3 to 5 years, and the mining companies will be preparing 'mine closure plans' at the appropriate time. The plans will have an environmental (land rehabilitation) focus (a statutory requirement) but there is an expectation that the plans address community issues.

It is in Council's interest to work with the mining companies in the development of the plans. The work will review the experience of other mining towns post mining.

Action

(1.6.1) Work with the mining companies in the preparation of the 'mine closure plans'

Strategy (1.7) Give consideration to developing Coober Pedy as a 'regional mining hub'

Context

To some extent Coober Pedy currently functions like a 'regional mining hub', and there are some advantages (and disadvantages) in making this a more formal arrangement. The mining companies had mixed views on this proposal.

Action

(1.7.1) Conduct a feasibility study on Coober Pedy being classed as a 'regional mining hub'

Council in association with the mining companies would explore the feasibility of this concept.

Goal (1) Enhance the economic prosperity of Coober Pedy continued

Strategy (1.8) Ensure the long term viability of Coober Pedy Airport

Context

Council owns the Coober Pedy Airport, and manages it under licence and as such is responsible for its maintenance and care. Airports provide an important range of functions including transporting people to major centres for medical, educational and other services, general travel, business, tourism and emergency services.

Regional Express (REX) currently runs passenger services in and out of Coober Pedy. There are various charter services (eg Alliance) for the mining companies. REX has experienced a significant increase in passenger numbers over recent years. Council enjoys a good working relationship with REX.

An Airport Master Plan was prepared in 2008.

Currently the runway is in good order and no major work is required in the medium term. The new terminal building was recently completed, and Council is currently negotiating with a third party regarding a lease for the old terminal building.

The LGA recently published a report on the future of SA's regional airports. The report found that regional airports face considerable long-term challenges from changing industry and economic factors. It recommends several strategies to secure the long term financial viability of regional airports.

Actions

(1.8.1) Review/update the Airport Master Plan

The Master Plan will provide the Council, the Commonwealth and State Governments, the local community, aviation industries and interests, commercial users and investors with confidence to plan for the future development of the airport, its environment and the broader community. It provides the basis for planning of aviation activities, land and commercial development, environmental management and infrastructure delivery in an integrated and timely manner. The master plan would take account of the proposal to position Coober Pedy as a destination for flights between Alice Springs/Uluru and the Australian capital cities (see tourism).

Goal (1) Enhance the economic prosperity of Coober Pedy continued

(1.8.2) Take an active role in the LGA Regional Airport working group

The group comprises representatives from the LGA and those Councils which manage/operate a regional airport, and is currently reviewing the LGA Regional Airport Report. There are significant advantages to be gained by being involved in the group (eg funding opportunities).

Strategy (1.9) Seek solutions to limited local labour market

Context

There is an apparent need to address issues surrounding the filling of positions within Coober Pedy and other areas North of Port Augusta and West of Lake Eyre. For example, (i) positions under the current programs do not adequately cater jobs in the hospitality, tourism and residential care industries (ii) although there is relatively high unemployment in the town, the skills of the unemployed people do not match the skills required to fill the positions to be filled.

The Regional Migration Agreement (RMA) allows variations to the minimum salary levels and the type of occupations accessible. The program could provide Coober Pedy and its surrounding areas with an opportunity to address problems encountered with the local labour market.

Issues for consideration include:

- Is there a demonstrated need for this type of migration program within Coober Pedy?
- Is it Council's responsibility to fund the program – are there other funding partners such as the RDA Far North or local businesses who can contribute?

Action

(1.9.1) Give consideration to becoming involved with the Regional Migration Agreement process as a means of addressing perceived labour shortages

Continue discussions with the SA Outreach Officer, the local business community and RDAFN

Goal (2) Improve the social wellbeing of Coober Pedy

Strategy (2.1) Continue to foster town pride and community spirit

Context

There is evidence of a strong community spirit and residents/businesses are proud of the town. However improvements can be made.

Volunteer involvement is decreasing, membership of some clubs is decreasing etc (this is partly due to increasing demands on people's time).

Tourism will also benefit from an improved 'look and feel' of the town.

Coober Pedy will be celebrating its Centenary in February 2015 and it is important that the celebration is successful.

Actions

(2.1.1) Provide greater assistance to community associations

(2.1.2) Give greater encouragement and recognition to the role of volunteers

(2.1.3) Consideration be given to engaging a 'special events officer' to manage and run the 2015 Coober Pedy Centenary subject to community consultation

Note: The strategies and actions proposed under ***Goal (3) Upgrade the visual amenity of Coober Pedy without compromising its character*** will also contribute town pride and community spirit.

Strategy (2.2) Further develop meaningful relationships with the mining companies for the benefit of the town and the community

Context

The Centre for Social Responsibility in Mining has recently published a report on the governance challenges posed by large scale resource development in mining-intensive regions of Australia. The report identified three key issues:

- Community concerns around the adverse impacts of resource development
- Specific challenges faced by local governments in addressing these impacts
- The role of state governments.

Goal (2) Improve the social wellbeing of Coober Pedy continued

The report made 13 recommendations and these are included at Appendix D. Most of the recommendations deal with improved collaboration between state governments, mining companies, and local councils. The findings and recommendations from the report which have a local focus are addressed by the strategies and actions presented under Goal (2) of this Plan.

Those recommendations which have a state-wide perspective will require coordinated actions being initiated by the Local Government Association. Council is to write to the Local Government Association to seek information on how the recommendations contained in the report are to be actioned.

Actions

(2.2.1) Work with all stakeholders to action the recommendations contained in the report “*Local Government, mining companies and resource development in regional Australia – Meeting the governance challenge*” (Centre for Social Responsibility in Mining, July 2012)

Context

The local mining companies are committed to assisting the local community in accordance with their respective community engagement models, policies and practices.

Currently the mining companies support the community in a range of ways (eg various sponsorships, donate hospital equipment, work with the school)

The individual companies have requested a number of community organisations for more specific direction on ways the companies can assist but the responses from the organisations has been piece-meal and spasmodic.

The companies tend to engage with community independently of each other and have indicated a willingness for coordinated approach.

Action

(2.2.2) Develop and maintain a strong ‘community partnership’ with the mining companies for the benefit of the community.

It is proposed to invite the local mining companies to establish with the Council a “sustainable Coober Pedy committee”.

Goal (2) Improve the social wellbeing of Coober Pedy continued

Context

Currently there is a limited understanding of the impact on the community of the presence of the mining companies in the region, and perceptions and views are based on this limited understanding.

Action

(2.2.3) Gain a full understanding of the impact on the community of the presence of the mining companies in the region

Council (with funding support from SOG, RDAFN and the mining companies) conduct a 'social and economic impact study' to gain a full understanding of the impact on the community of the presence of the mining companies in the region

Goal (2) Improve the social wellbeing of Coober Pedy continued

Strategy (2.3) The challenges presented by the transient homelessness population

Context

- Significant impact on all service providers when people from the APY Lands visit Coober Pedy (to the detriment of local residents)
- Increased social issues
- Alcohol is available to visitors from the APY Lands (APY Lands is a Dry Zone)
- There is not a close working relationship with the APY executive
- Negative impact on tourism

Actions

(2.3.1) Service providers and businesses to seek solutions to the challenges presented by the transient and homelessness population

This will involve:

- Conducting an audit of services provided in the town
- Reviewing the SA homeless strategy
- Establishing the full impact on all service providers when people from the APY Lands visit Coober Pedy
- Considering the limitations of no freehold land
- Developing strategies to address the impact and incorporate in funding applications by all service providers

(2.3.2) Develop partnerships with the Aboriginal councils – APY, Oodnadatta and Coober Pedy

Specific actions will include:

- Engage with the APY executive to seek solutions to the issues related to the visitors (eg improved coordination)
- Understand the funding arrangements for the APY Lands and identify potential financial opportunities to assist with addressing the impact of the visitors

Goal (2) Improve the social wellbeing of Coober Pedy continued

Strategy (2.4) Improving the social fabric of Coober Pedy

Context

The social fabric of Coober Pedy is about its basic structure with all its customs and beliefs that make it work.

Coober Pedy is experiencing:

- A declining population with significant barriers inhibiting this growth (the exact population number is uncertain)
- Changing demographics
- Lack of opportunities for youth (numbers are not sufficient to justify establishing facilities)
- Social issues caused by alcohol abuse and gambling addiction
- Deceasing number of sporting clubs (contributing factors include high cost of public liability insurance and remoteness of the town)
- Primary and secondary education has suffered with the high turnover of principals
- TAFE services have been reduced
- Lack of suitable housing for professional workers
- SAPOL not able to justify a 24 hour per day police station

The local Aboriginal community is serviced by:

- Umoona Aboriginal Council Incorporated
- Umoona Tjutagku Health Service
- Umoona Aged Care Facility

Actions

(2.4.1) Complete the dry zone review and alcohol management strategy and aim to implement the recommendations

(2.4.2) Facilitate the preparation of a social development strategy (including the development of a socio-economic database to detail the nature of the demographic changes) *(Note: The socio-economic data base will be developed and maintained to meet the needs of all local organisations & funding would be sought from all service providers; the Port Augusta Social Development Strategy provides good model)*

(2.4.3) Prepare a population growth strategy

(2.4.4) Increase local Aboriginal involvement in community decision making

Goal (3) Upgrade the visual amenity of Coober Pedy without compromising its character

Strategy (3.1) Continue to progress the Urban Design Project and introduce other initiatives which aim to improve the visual amenity of Coober Pedy

Context

Council adopted the Urban Design Project in 2009. The project nominated a 10 year program. It covers the following precincts:

- Main Street
- Town Hall
- Triangle

The funding strategy includes:

- Partnerships
- Council capital works program

Progress has been restricted due to limited funding.

The successful delivery of the program will have a major positive impact on tourism and also town pride.

Actions

(3.1.1) Review the priorities nominated in the Urban Design Project and actively seek funding partnership opportunities, and give consideration to increasing Council's financial contributions to the works

(3.1.2) Encourage business owners to improve the appearance of building facades

Council to consider establishing an awards scheme.

(3.1.3) Introduce a 'building heritage' scheme

The Development Assessment Plan designates heritage zones and this would provide the focus for the scheme. Council would work closely with the Coober Pedy Historical Society, and Council would consider establishing the scheme to some extent.

Goal (4) Increase multicultural, retail, business, mining industry and Traditional ownership on the Senior Officers Group

Strategy (4.1) Develop and foster community leadership

Context

- There are many Commonwealth, State and other agencies/organisations providing valuable services in Coober Pedy and to its community
- There is limited funding and resourcing (not sufficient to meet the needs)
- The Senior Officers' Group (SOG) goes some way in coordinating the service provision and planning of these services but there tends to be some 'silo' barriers, gaps and duplications
- The Retail Business and Tourism Association in the main operates independently
- All organisations/agencies use their own socio-economic database for planning and service provision purposes which conflict and are unreliable
- It is difficult to meaningfully engage with the community

SOG is well positioned to take a lead role in improving community leadership as its members come from a wide range of key local organisations. The current membership is:

- District Council of Coober Pedy (Coordination)
- Umoona Community Council
- Families SA
- SA Police
- Housing SA
- Umoona Tjutagku Health Service
- Coober Pedy Area School
- Aboriginal Family Support Service
- Coober Pedy Hospital and Health Service
- Umoona Aged Care
- Regional Development Australia Far North
- Centrelink

Goal (4) Increase community participation in the leadership of Coober Pedy

Actions

(4.1.1) Develop the Terms of Reference for the Senior Officers' Group to include those groups relevant to achieving Goal (4)

By broadening the membership of SOG, it will position SOG to take on a more strategic role including

- Fostering strategic partnerships
- Coordinating service planning and provision
- Providing the forum for sharing and learning
- Considering opportunities for resource sharing.

Goal (5) Sustain local government services

Strategy (5.1) Aim to be financially sustainable

Action (5.1.1) Manage Council's financial position in accordance with the Long Term Financial Plan

Strategy (5.2) Ensure all Council's assets are managed efficiently and effectively

Action (5.2.1) Manage Council's assets in accordance with the Asset Management Plans

Goal (5) Sustain local government services

Strategy (5.3) Ensure the continued availability of water at a sustainable long-run cost

Context

Production

- Bore water filtered to remove chemicals (such as Magnesium and Iron) and then processed through a desalination plant
- Final clean water is stored in tanks ready for distribution to community
- Contaminants and brine are currently being flushed down a creek. There is a need to clarify this arrangement the EPA
- Pre-Treatment plant budgeted to be replaced in 2013

Supply and distribution

- Existing pipe and pumping network is Council owned
- A process is in place to replace entire lengths of piping as leaks appear rather than just repairing existing pipes
- A new computer system used to remotely manage the control of the water supply network

Currently water assets are used to 80% of capacity.

A major cost of water production and supply is electricity. Solar panels will help reduce this cost. Two 80kw solar units are included in 2012/13 budget.

Council received funding from the water for growth initiative. The aim of the project to replace 13kms of AC pipe from the bore into Coober Pedy for the town's water supply (approximate cost \$1.6m). Also included in the project is to replace/upgrade the irrigation system on the town oval and to expand the orchard located behind the oval. Council received \$600k from the State Government RDIF funds, \$910 Federal RDAF funds and will put \$300k in council funds – total \$1.81m. The project commenced in December 2012 and is due to be completed by June 2013.

Action

(5.3.3) Assess the feasibility of additional solar units for water production

Goal (5) Sustain local government services

Strategy (5.4) Ensure the continued availability of electricity at a sustainable long-run cost

Context

Generation

- En Gen produces the electricity on land owned by Council and leased to En Gen; the EN Gen contract is due to expire in seven years
- En Gen own power generating plant
- Council cannot encourage the use of solar electricity as it cannot be put back into the grid under the lease arrangements with En Gen
- En Gen receive \$500k pm from Council. 80% for reimbursement for the cost of diesel
- Funding agreement with the Minister for Energy to 'balance' the electricity budget allowing for receipts from customer tariffs

Distribution

- Council is responsible for distribution.
- Council own distribution assets (Stobie poles and wiring to households)
- Stobie poles and much of distribution network are on private land and needs to be relocated
- Need to be building a new distribution network whilst continuing to use existing network. Aim to commence this within the 10 year planning period being considered.

Levels are at near 100% capacity in peak times this creates a barrier to growth as new businesses industry has to be able to construct and maintain their own energy generation

A "Review of the Remote Areas Energy Supply Scheme" (KPMG for the Department of Transport Energy and Infrastructure) was conducted in June 2011 and concluded that "there are numerous complexities in achieving grid connection for Coober Pedy."

Council engaged KPMG in November 2011 to assess the options in more detail. At about the same time OzMinerals commenced its own planning consultancy and the results were to be provided to KPMG to allow them to complete their study. BHP has recently provided key data to OzMinerals and OzMinerals are intending to brief KPMG and Council in early 2013.

Goal (5) Sustain local government services

Actions

(5.4.1) Review the results of the KPMG grid investigation study and plan accordingly

(5.4.2) Continue to lobby the State Government to improve electricity arrangements

(5.4.3) Commence negotiations with En Gen regarding the possibility of allowing electricity to be fed back into the electricity grid from a designated renewable electricity generation

Strategy (5.5) Improved waste management service

Context

- Domestic waste collection
 - Single 240 litre bin and no recycling service
 - Longer term view to introduce recycling – long distances to recycling centres is a major issue
 - The mining companies have expressed an interest in a combined recycling service
- Waste disposal
 - Current land fill is licensed, new sealed access, and an estimated long life
 - There is a Native Title Claim over the site and Council is required to find a new landfill site. Negotiations are continuing with the relevant parties. Council is seeking a cost neutral outcome
 - Council is assessing alternative sites
 - Should Council be forced to move from its present site a land fill closure plan will need to be developed and implemented. Also planning and development of new landfill will be required

Actions

(5.5.1) Consider the introduction of a service charge for the waste service

(5.5.2) Conduct feasibility study to introduce recycling(in conjunction with the mining companies)

(5.5.3) Continue to pursue the land fill issue

Goal (5) Sustain local government services

Strategy (5.6) Community Wastewater Management System (CWMS)

Context

Main Street system

- Full sewer - treated wastewater used on school ovals, town ovals & other public space
- CWMS activities are self funding
- Council owned assets

Septic tanks

- Desire by Council to install more of these over time rather than using Shafts

Shafts

- Most prevalent method of wastewater disposal throughout Coober Pedy

Council has been successful has been successful in gaining seed funding for detailed design of a CWMS for the town, and the investigations commenced in November 2012.

Actions

(5.6.1) Continue to progress the Community Wastewater Management System (CWMS) project

Goal (5) Sustain local government services

Strategy (5.7) Council will continue to provide its existing range of services at their current levels

Context

The vast majority of the Council's resources and efforts are committed to the provision of its continuing services in an effective and planned manner.

These services are either directly provided or funded by Council, a prescribed regulatory activity or provided on a fee for service basis.

In providing these services the Council regularly reviews the scope and standard of the services in response to changing community and stakeholder needs, and subject to overall priorities and funding.

Actions

(5.7.1) Invest in sport, recreation and leisure infrastructure and programs

(5.7.2) Review the sports field centres master plan ready to apply for grant funding when available

(5.7.3) Seek funding opportunities for the Town Hall 'master plan'

(5.7.4) Review the future ownership and use Council owned dug outs

(5.7.5) Increase child care availability and upgrade facilities

(5.7.6) Review the children services programs including child care services and the Child Links program

Goal (5) Sustain local government services

Strategy (5.8) Organisation development and continuous improvement

Context

The Council's resources are continually challenged to meet the demands of its current range of services, and this will be compounded by the requirements associated with those strategies and actions nominated in this Plan as the Council's responsibilities.

Resource sharing and collaboration is not an option available to the Council given its remoteness and isolation.

A comprehensive workforce development plan is required which covers:

- Workforce development strategies
- Improved service levels (standards of service) and the resource implications (Is the Council using its resources in the most effective way?)
- Skills gaps
- Staff retention
- Succession planning
- Recruitment
- Training
- Mentoring.

The Council has recently accepted an invitation from the Local Government Association to participate in a workforce planning program at no cost to the Council.

Occupational Health, Safety, Welfare and Risk Management as important components of everyday Council business. Council will develop, implement and maintain an Occupational Health and Safety and Injury Management Strategic Plan to ensure an active commitment to continuous improvement and compliance with community, industry and legislated standards

Actions

(5.8.1) Develop and implement a workforce development plan

(5.8.2) Develop an Occupational Health and Safety and Injury Management Strategic Plan

Goal (5) Sustain local government services

Strategy (5.9) Practice good governance

Context

Council is committed to practising good governance. Continuing actions will include:

- (1) Policy development
- (2) The professional and personal development of Elected Members
- (3) Improving the communication between Council and the community
- (4) Make all residents and businesses aware of the Strategic Plan
- (5) Make Members of Parliament and government agencies aware of the Strategic Plan
- (6) Report progress annually to the community and stakeholders

Actions

(5.9.1) Council will continue to make improvements to ensure achievement of good governance

(5.9.2) Council will work with the ABS on options for improving the collection methods and procedures for the 2016 Census

Review of the Coober Pedy Strategic Plan 2007-2012 and proposed actions

Extract from Coober Pedy Strategic Plan 2007-2012				Proposed action
Goal		Aim	Lead agency	
1. Enhance the economic prosperity of Coober Pedy	1.1	Promote Coober Pedy as a remote mining hub	NRDB	Refer to RDAFN to review/action
	1.2	Encourage mining and mining service businesses to base operations in Coober Pedy	NRDB	Refer to RDAFN to review/action
	1.3	Encourage local entrepreneurs to tap into the opportunities created by mining activity	NRDB	Refer to RDAFN to review/action
	1.4	Improve the availability of trade skills	NRDB	Refer to RDAFN to review/action
	1.5	Boost employment by bridging skill gaps	NRDB	Refer to RDAFN to review/action
	1.6	Diversify tourism beyond opal, underground living and the outback experience	Coober Pedy Retail Business & Tourism Association	Council to develop a tourism plan (include in Council's Strategic Plan)
	1.7	Strengthen air transport links	DCCP	Council to develop a 'airport master plan'
	1.8	Reinvigorate the opal industry	Opal Industry Alliance	Council to work with the Opal Industry Alliance
	1.9	Encourage the development of Aboriginal businesses	NRDB	Refer to RDAFN to review/action
	1.10	Identify and develop opportunities for substantial Aboriginal cooperative and joint venture enterprises	NRDB	Refer to RDAFN to review/action

Extract from Coober Pedy Strategic Plan 2007-2012				Proposed action
Goal		Aim	Lead agency	
2. Improve the social wellbeing of Coober Pedy	2.1	Strengthen health and aged care services	Coober Pedy Hospital & Health Services Inc	
	2.2	Increase the housing stock	Senior Officers' Group	
	2.3	Construct a short stay accommodation facility	Senior Officers' Group	Refer to the Senior Officers' Group for review/action
	2.4	Ensure the future of the local TAFE campus	NRDB and DCCP	
	2.5	Increase child care availability and upgrade facilities	DCCP	
	2.6	Invest in sport, recreation and leisure infrastructure and programs	DCCP	
	2.7	Improve community safety and security	Senior Officers' Group	
3. Upgrade the visual amenity of Coober Pedy without compromising its character	3.1	Continue to upgrade the main street—thoughtfully	DCCP	
4. Increase community	4.1	Develop community leadership capability	Senior Officers' Group	

Extract from Coober Pedy Strategic Plan 2007-2012				Proposed action
Goal		Aim	Lead agency	
participation in the leadership of Coober Pedy				
	4.2	Increase local Aboriginal involvement in community decision making	DCCP	
5. Sustain local government services	5.1	Maintain the District Council's financial position	DCCP	
	5.2	Ensure the continued availability of electricity and water at a sustainable long-run cost	DCCP	
	5.3	Continue to provide essential local government infrastructure	DCCP	
	5.4	Continue to deliver essential local government services	DCCP	
	5.5	Develop a 10-year population masterplan	Planning SA	

Appendix B

What is a council's role in economic development?

Through years of consulting to local government on economic development matters, it has been observed that in strategy formulation there has been a lack of direction and understanding of respective councils' roles in economic development. This has resulted in a gap in strategy formulation and implementation.

The determination of a council's role in economic development, or a council's policy position, is an important precursor to economic strategy formulation and performance assessment. This is because councils generally have differing levels of commitment to economic development and differing risk profiles when it comes to economic initiatives. A common understanding between Elected Members, council staff, and external agencies of a council's preferred role in economic development is important for effective strategy development and implementation. There are no right or wrong policy options, rather selected positions based on each council's risk profile.

What is economic development?

Economic development technically occurs when a region's per capita output (economic activity or gross regional product) increases. The result is an increase in incomes and, subject to the distribution of that income, an increase in employment. The employment increase can occur in the local region (eg Coober Pedy) or be 'leaked' via the importation of goods and services from other regions, or the importation of labour.

Accepting this framework, there are undisputable 'drivers' of technical economic development that lead to income and employment growth:

- (1) Investment Attraction** – New investment in the Coober Pedy Region by existing businesses or by business from outside the Region, including interstate and overseas.
- (2) Export Growth** – Export of goods and services to regions outside the Coober Pedy Region, including interstate and overseas.
- (3) Local Demand Growth** – Increasing demand for Coober Pedy goods and services through population growth and/or higher visitation by tourists, shoppers, students, etc.

Strategic Options for Coober Pedy's Council's Economic Development Role

Council has a range of options for its preferred role in economic development. This is primarily a policy decision but it is against this defined role that its effectiveness can be measured in the future. Options range from a passive or non-interventionist role through to Council becoming financially involved in development projects that have major economic development outcomes (i.e. low risk to potentially high risk).

There are also geographical options for Council to consider. These range from focusing internally within the Region through to acting globally. A council should not be criticised for not participating in offshore/global economic development initiatives if this is contrary to the predetermined policy position.

The role of tourism in economic development

Tourism has been a fast growing economic sector on a global scale over the past few decades, (as many countries and people have become wealthier and transport easier, quicker and cheaper), to now be one of the worlds largest industries.

Tourism is a significant industry for Australia. In 2008–09, tourism contributed 2.6% (\$33 billion) to Australia’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and directly employed almost half a million people or 4.5% of the labour force. Tourism is also Australia’s largest services export industry, generating around \$24 billion in exports. It is also important to regional Australia, with 46 cents in every dollar of tourism expenditure being spent in regional Australia. (Tourism Research Australia – State of The Industry 2010 report)

The importance of tourism as an industry sector nationally, translates to the South Australian economy.

Tourism has emerged as one of South Australia’s most remarkable economic and social drivers of the present era. The industry now accounts for \$3.4 billion spending in South Australia and 10% of the State’s economic growth. The tourism industry employs more than 43,000 South Australians and many more through related industries and has a growth rate of 5.5 times the rate of other South Australian industries (SATC)

Even though the national economy over the past decade has grown by approximately 7.5% each year, the growth in tourism has only been 3.9% a year on average. There has been a decline in overall domestic travel both nationally and in South Australia. Reasons for this include changing household expenditure patterns (e.g. spending more on home entertainment equipment or home decorating/renovations); more Australians travelling overseas to take advantage of a strong Australian Dollar; increased household debt (equals less disposable income to spend on holidays); less regional holidaying as people take advantage of low cost air fares between capital cities (in comparison to the price of petrol/cost of driving); etc.

Still, from a ‘developing the local economy’ perspective tourism is highly valued, as this service industry is often labour intensive, employs locally and circulates expenditure throughout the local economy (thus creating more wealth and jobs locally). For example a tourist spends a couple nights at a local Bed and Breakfast. The business owner buys local food and wine to cater for tourists. The tourist spends money on fuel and takeaway food whilst sightseeing around the local district, etc. The tourist may do a load of washing at the local laundry. Many businesses and families are supported.

In addition the tourism industry can provide a buffer against a number of economic or environmental forces that may impact on rural economies. In comparison, in times of modest changes to the state and national economy people will generally still travel and have holidays. It follows that the development of tourism locally/regionally (where appropriate) is a common sense economic development strategy, i.e. diversify the local economy to guard/buffer the community against the failure of other industries.

Whilst recognising the importance of tourism to our State and many of Council's communities, we also acknowledge that as an industry it is not appropriate at all locations or may not be accepted by all communities. For example increasing visitor numbers may have negative effects on the physical environment, or not fit socially or with the culture of communities. A town may not possess adequate tourism assets nor have the capacity to develop or manage them. It follows that the environmental, socio-cultural, and economic aspects of sustainable tourism need to be jointly/equally considered in the development of sustainable tourism as part of a complete Coober Pedy economic development strategy.

Key considerations for the development of tourism strategy should include Council's existing and future partnerships with the community, existing visitor information outlets, regional tourism organisations and the SATC (South Australian Tourism Commission), and cultural tourism bodies (eg Breakaways Reserve Management Plan and Joint Management Agreement)

One issue which may be considered is an initial assessment of the feasibility of positioning the Coober Pedy region to nominate to become an Australian *National Landscape*.

Local government, mining companies and resource development in regional Australia – Meeting the governance challenge (SMICSRM, July 2012)

Recommendations

Planning and regulation

R1: Local council authorities are engaged much earlier in information sharing and decision-making processes by state governments and mining companies when new projects or major expansions are in the pipeline.

R2: State governments provide additional resources to councils to enable them to prepare their responses to EISs and SIAs in a timely manner.

R3: State governments give consideration to strategic regional assessments, rather than having resource companies develop environmental and social impact statements on a project-by-project basis.

R4: State governments collect baseline data to build a common knowledge base that is accessible to all stakeholders. A comprehensive baseline study, funded by project proponents and executed by local and state government in a given region could become a resource to aid future planning. The formula for contributions would need to be negotiated with all parties.

R5: State governments collect data on non-resident workforces. Other state governments may wish to consider the approach currently adopted by the Office of Economic and Statistical Research (OESR) in Queensland.

Council capacity

R6: Mining companies work with local councils to develop housing and accommodation policies that ensure availability of affordable housing and accommodation for council and other essential services employees.

R7: Companies support apprenticeships attached to local councils.

R8: Companies provide funding to support particular roles within council.

Collaborative approaches

R9: Mining companies, local councils and state government collaborate more at the regional level.

R10: State governments take responsibility for identifying lead agencies to manage collaboration at the regional level.

R11: Councils in mining-intensive regions may wish to consider the NSW Mining Related Councils model as one means of working together collaboratively to share information and leverage advantages. An alternative model is the Local Leadership Group in each Queensland resource region.

R12: Mining companies reassess their social spend and community engagement priorities and align them with Council community (development) and social infrastructure plans.

R13: Mining companies collaborate with each other and pool their social spend to support larger scale social programs that contribute to a lasting legacy for mining communities. This need not preclude 'branding' opportunities.