THE FLINDERS RANGES COUNCIL

COMMUNITY WELLBEING & REGIONAL HEALTH PLAN 2021- 2025

CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION

The Flinders Ranges Regional Public & Community Welfare Plan 2021-2025, is the second Public Health Plan for the area and was developed in accordance with the requirements of The South Australian Public Health Act 2011 and in harmony with the four priorities of the State Public Health Plan 2019 – 2024;

1. **PROMOTE**: Build stronger communities & healthier environments
2. **PROTECT**: Against public & environmental health risks and respond to climate change
3. **PREVENT**: Chronic disease, communicable diseases & injury
4. **PROGRESS**: Strengthen the systems that support public health & wellbeing

Public Health in the 21st Century can be defined as a reflection of all the factors that affect the health and wellbeing of people, individually and as a group, like;

- The Earth,
- The Natural Environment,
- The Built Environment,
- The Things People Do,
- The Economy,
- The Community, and,
- The Choices People Make.

In general terms, Public Health can be measured by examining a series of determining factors across five distinct areas:

1. **Medical:** Access to and / or availability of, Healthcare Services, Self-Health Literacy;
2. **Genetics & Biology:** History of Blood Pressure / Cholesterol issues, Heredity;
3. **The Physical Environment:** Air & Water Quality, Built Amenity, Allergens, Food Safety;
4. **Social Circumstance:** Crime rates, employment status, language & literacy levels, family & cultural norms, quality of community, social & family support, income & finance management skills, racism & racial tolerance, education level; and
5. **Individual Behaviour:** Tobacco, Alcohol & drug habits**,** personal integrity, stress, anxiety & depression levels, sleep patterns, eating & exercise habits, disposition towards kindness & compassion, negative thought tendencies, high risk tendencies, motor vehicle behaviour, sexual activity & behaviour.

From this perspective, relevant information is gathered from ABS Census data, Healthcare Providers, the Council and many other Organisations & Community Groups, through the Local Government Association of South Australia, to compile a detailed Regional Public Health Profile.

The Public Health Profile is the cornerstone for assessing the current state of public health in the Region and becomes the foundation for relevant future public health planning, given the insight it provides into the People of the Region.

This Plan is presented in two parts;

Part A identifies public health priorities and provides background context, an audit of Council facilities and an assessment of the 'state of health'.

Part B summarises the findings and highlights the linkages between Council's strategic and operational planning in addressing the issues.

2. THE ROLE OF THE COUNCIL IN PROMOTING HEALTH AND WELLBEING

The Council undertakes a range of initiatives that foster improved social, environmental and economic environments for health and wellbeing. They contribute to the health of the community through their various functions including planning, infrastructure, regulatory

services, environmental management, libraries and community programs. The nature of this role is not always understood and this Plan can help to increase community awareness and understanding.

Public health planning also recognises that a broad spectrum of other stakeholders impact on health and wellbeing, as well as Councils. Various government organisations, non-government agencies, private organisations and local groups have a role to play and recognises the contribution of various stakeholders in promoting community health.

3. THE PLANNING CONTEXT

At the National, State and Local Government level it is recognised that more supportive environments for better health and wellbeing are needed, to tackle the rising rate of chronic diseases associated with weight gain, obesity and other lifestyle issues. The report of the National Preventative Health Taskforce identifies obesity, tobacco and the excessive consumption of alcohol as the key modifiable risk factors driving around 30% of the burden of disease in Australia, especially in Regional areas.

3.1 Regional and Local Context

The existing strategic and corporate plans for The Flinders Ranges Council contain many priorities and strategies that promote and support improved health and wellbeing. Part B of the Plan details how the Objectives and Strategies of The Flinders Ranges Council Community Plan 2019-2028 address local health and wellbeing issues, as well as how they align with the priorities of the State Public Health Plan.

The Council's commitment to improving the health and wellbeing of the Community is outlined below, in Table 1. The initiatives are grouped according to three pillars; Social, Environmental and Economic - and highlight how they link in with each of the four priority areas of the State Public Health Plan.

Council's strategic priorities are supported and implemented by the policies and strategies contained within other Council plans including the Annual Business Plan, Community Emergency Risk Management Plan, Infrastructure and Asset Management Plan and Master Plans etc. The Community Wellbeing and Regional Public Health Plan (RPHP) provides a key planning framework for the review of the Council's suite of plans. This integrated approach helps to maximise health and wellbeing outcomes for the community.

Council's plans and policies also take into account the objectives of regional and local organisations with whom the Council collaborates. These include:

•   Regional Development Australia Far North (RDA Far North);

•   Central Local Government Region of SA Inc.;

•   Northern and Yorke NRM Region;

•   Country SA Primary Care Network;

•   Regional Health Advisory Councils; and

•   Zone Emergency Management Committee - Far North.

The Council is partners with other Councils in the region for the provision of services, including Public and Environmental Health and Community Transport.

Table 1 – Flinders Ranges Council Public Health & Community Wellbeing Initiatives Summary

STATE HEALTH PLAN	SOCIAL / COMMUNITY	ENVIRONMENT	ECONOMIC
PROMOTE: Build stronger communities & healthier environments	Library Services Community programs Community Events / Festivals Volunteer opportunities Youth activities Northern Passenger Network Community transport Community consultation Community Grants program Men's Shed Social and Dance Nights Dog walking areas Australia Day events ANZAC Commemorations History Week activities Stockyard Arena Annual Horse Events A Brush with Art Festival Hire and use of Council facilities Every Generation Festival/Events	Development Plan policy Cycling and walking facilities Enhancing open spaces. Wetland development Access to community grown food Volunteer environment and revegetation groups.Support for school environment programs. Environment Management Program Roads Program Flora reserve Public space solar lighting Security cameras	Business development and support e.g.: website and newsletter features. Precinct planning and development. Main street events Visitor Information Centre Pichi Richi Railway Hawker and Quorn Residents' Guides Quorn Market – Craft and Produce Support for Agricultural Shows Business support for film nights
PROTECT: Against public & environmental health risks and respond to climate change	Adaptation Planning Shade sails in playgrounds/open spaces Community engagement and awareness Newsletter promotions Risk management Education re heat stress for most Vulnerable, including older and isolated residents. Protection of heritage sites	'Green Sheet' Monthly Newsletter Central LGA Vulnerability Assessment Plan Community & Emergency Risk Mgt. Plan. Biodiversity – new plantings e.g. Powell Gardens Energy reduction initiatives in Council buildings and facilities e.g. solar public lighting Cycling and walking infrastructure. Protection of remnant native vegetation Protection of trees and streetscapes.	Business incentive programs Support for home based business
PREVENT: Chronic disease, communicable diseases & injury	Exercise programs Skill development Non–smoking policies Gymnasiums Sporting and recreational clubs Community Sports centre Swimming pools Fitness facilities in parks and along trails Public toilets Community Events e.g. Pichi Richi Marathon Shaded facilities Newsletter features School use of sport/recreation facilities	Parks, Reserves, Playgrounds Sporting ovals Cycling facilities and walkways Footpath maintenance and upgrades Interpretative signage Plaques and memorials Walking trails Master Plans for sporting facilities Street tree shading in summer Recreation Areas e.g. Warren Gorge	Business support of community events Food producers Liquor Licensing Outdoor Dining Policies Newsletter features and advertising Quorn Market
PROGRESS: Strengthen the systems that support public health & wellbeing	Monitoring of communicable diseases Immunisation Community education Drinking water fountains	Regulation of cooling towers and warm water systems,public swimming pools and spas, skin penetration systems, waste control systems. Waste Oil and green waste drop off facilitiesNewsletter features Community & Emergency Risk Mgt. Plan.	Business monitoring Awareness raising Information/Education Newsletter promotions Food inspections

4. OVERVIEW OF THE REGION

With acknowledgement of the indigenous people who first occupied the region, especially the Adnyamathanha People, the Flinders Ranges Council is known for its natural environment, rich legacy of historic towns and properties and as the Gateway to the Flinders Ranges. The area is 330-400 kilometres north of Adelaide and encompasses the towns of Hawker, Quorn

and Cradock. It extends from Mount Brown Creek and Pichi Richi Pass in the south to Arkaba in the north, a distance in excess of 100 kilometres.

The Council area covers 4,198 square kilometres, with a population of approximately 1,673 residents, the majority of whom live in Hawker (237 people) and Quorn (1,230 people). Much of the Council area is within a 30-minute drive from Port Augusta.

A map of the Council Area is included in Appendix A.

The Council area is located within the sphere of the Flinders Ranges and the area is a popular tourism destination for visitors. The area also attracts residents and visitors because of the unique charm of localities and heritage character dating back to the farm settlement in the 1850's.

The area offers a range of services including major hospitals, health care and professional services, Area Schools, Libraries, Aged Care facilities, a variety of community and culture associations, events and well supported sporting clubs.

The primary agricultural commerce is the production of cattle and sheep meat, wool and food and agricultural commodities, mostly undertaken on large land holdings.

The demographic changes within the Flinders Ranges Council Area between 2014 - 2020:

INDICATOR	2014	2019	FRC Variance	Regional SA	Regional Variance
Total Population	1702	1673	-29	-	-
Indigenous Population %	10.7	16.4	+5.7 %	5%	+11.4
People With Profound or Serious Disability % 0-64 yrs	1.6	3.7	+2.1 %	3.8%	-0.1%
People With Profound or Serious Disability % over 64 yrs	15.5	12.9	-2.6%	12.3%	+0.6%
Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage*	955	935	-20	945	-10

The Council is committed to reversing the declining population trend by promoting the good lifestyle and quality of life which the area offers as well as facilitating the development of new employment opportunities and attracting new residents, particularly retirees to the lifestyle developments on offer.

It is important to note that the Index of Relative Social Disadvantage (IRSD) has fallen since 2014, indicating a higher level of relative disadvantage in the Council Region and in comparison to regional South Australia overall. The implications of this will be discussed in greater detail in Section 6.2 of this Plan.

5.   THE PLANNING AND REPORTING PROCESS

As a part of the planning process, the Council conducted a comprehensive consultation program with local residents and a range of local and regional agencies, beginning in 2017. An initial audit of local needs was undertaken as the basis for discussion about current initiatives, key issues and gaps and further opportunities for promoting health and wellbeing.

A key aim of the RPHP is to improve partnerships across groups and organisations working in the region, to facilitate better health outcomes. The Plan also serves to clarify relevant stakeholders for various health and wellbeing initiatives.

Pursuant to the South Australian Public Health Act 2011, there is an obligation to report the progress of the RPHP every two years and a review of the Plan will be undertaken every five years. The Council's Community Plan, which also contains significant public health commitments, it is sensible to review the RPHP in association with the broader, strategic planning review requirements under section 122 of the Local Government Act 1999. The Council consistently seeks to facilitate the alignment of public health priorities within the scope of broader strategic planning.

6. STATE OF HEALTH - Preventing Chronic & Communicable Disease & Injury

The Regional Public Health Profile provides the context for identifying key public health issues and opportunities. The data provided is a composite 'snapshot' of the most current information available and will be reviewed and updated as part of the five-year cycle for regional public health planning.

Table 2 summarises the community's state of health and potential public health priority issues under four pillars related to wellbeing: Personal Health, Social Health, Economic Health and Environmental Health. Key Council and other identified local initiatives, gaps in service provision and other issues arising from the community consultation program.

Table 3 – State of Health Framework

Personal	Social Health & Wellbeing	Economic Health & Wellbeing	Environmental Health & Wellbeing
Lifestyle health	CommunityStrengths	Local Economic Activity	Physical/built environment
Childhood andYouth Health	Culture andHeritage	Home based employment	Natural resources – water quality
Mental health	Community participation	Education	Waste & resource management
Ageing andhealth	Sport and recreation	Broadband	Climate change
Access	Community safety	Socio-economic factors	Open spaces / walking / cycling Trails
Immunisation		Housing	Emergency Management
Environmental Health Protection			

6.1 PERSONAL & SOCIAL HEALTH

This section provides a snapshot of the health status of the regional population as well as health risk factors linked to preventable and lifestyle related diseases like, cardiovascular illness, certain forms of cancer, arthritis, obesity, physical inactivity and an overabundance of energy-dense nutrition-poor foods.

There are no quick solutions to the complexity of these problems but Local Government is in a unique position to collaborate with a range of stakeholders to address these issues and work towards the vision of healthier and more active communities.

INDICATOR – Physical Health	2014	2019	FRC Variance	Regional SA	Regional Variance
Self-assessed health as fair or poor %	19	21.3	+2.3	15.6	+5.7
Type 2 Diabetes %	3.7	5.5	+1.8	4.7	+0.8
Smoking %	26.8	20.6	-6.2	18.0	+2.6
Women Smoking During Pregnancy %	28.9	33.0	+1.1	21.1	+11.9
Obesity – males %	19.4	36.1	+16.7	34.2	+1.9
Obesity – females %	18.3	40.3	+22.0	38.1	+2.2
Physical Inactivity %	41.1	71.3	+30.2	73.2	-1.9
Fruit Consumption – adults %	48.5	43.5	-5	46.2	-2.7
Fruit Consumption - 5 – 17yrs %	53.8	60.5	+6.7	*na*	*na*

The general rise in key physical health indicators, Type 2 Diabetes and Obesity, are a reflection of poorer lifestyle choices being made by adults in the community and should be the focus of public information and education. These factors could be linked coincidentally to the availability of the National Broadband Network (NBN) in the area in 2017. Previously digital services had been unreliable or non-existent in the Council area and the availability of the NBN in the area may have contributed significantly to the indicators.

Increases in physical activity and fruit consumption in younger people may be attributable to increased school-based education, the school garden, established through the Stephanie Alexander program and the Indigenous Bush Foods Garden.

INDICATOR - Mortality	2014	2019	FRC Variance	Regional SA	Regional Variance
Median age at death: males	75.0	77.0	+2.0	78.0	-1.0
Median age at death: females	83.0	83.0	0.0	84.0	-1.0
Premature mortality: males	377.4	403.7	+26.3	332.3	+71.4
Premature mortality: females	239.1	248.6	+9.5	197.9	+50.7
Premature mortality: 15 to 24 yrs	92.4	55.3	-37.1	56.2	-0.9
Premature mortality from suicides	0.0	9.5	+9.5	14.0	-4.5

Children's Health and Wellbeing

The analysis of children's health and wellbeing in the FRC area is complicated because a data was not presented in a majority of the relevant parameters in the 2019 Regional Public Health Profile. Therefore, is it not possible to measure any changes or impacts that the previous RPHP may have had on those areas of interest other than to generalise the 2014 statistics in comparison to the averages of Regional South Australia in 2019

INDICATOR - Children's health & wellbeing	2014	2019	FRC Variance	Regional SA	Regional Variance
Children in low income, welfare-dependent families %	24.2	na	na	27.6	-3.4
Obesity: four year old boys %	8.3	na	na	7.0	+1.3
Obesity: four year old girls %	4.7	na	na	7.2	+2.8
Fruit consumption: children aged 5 to 17 years %	53.8	na	na	66.4	-12.6
Infant death rate %	5.4	na	na	3.9	+1.5
AEDI: Children developmentally vulnerable on one or more domains % (Australia Early Development Index)	25	na	na	25.3	-0.3
Immunisation 1 yr of age %	94.6	95.3	+0.7	94.9	+0.4
Immunisation 5 yrs of age %	91.5	95.9	+4.4	94.5	+1.4

It is encouraging to note that local immunisation rates continue to increase per capita and to exceed those of regional South Australia. The Council continues to promote local immunisation services, as provided by the hospitals and ancillary services

Mental Health

It is estimated that almost 17% of the population have high or very high levels of psychological distress, which has increased 3% since 2014. This is similar to the increase in the number of people who self-assess their state of health as 'fair or poor'.

Since 2014 there has been a dramatic 10% increase in both males and females experiencing mental health issues, which is above average for regional areas in South Australia. Equally concerning is a 9.5% increase in suicide rates within the FRC area since 2014.

INDICATOR – Mental Health	2014	2019	FRC Variance	Regional SA	Regional Variance
Self-assessed health as fair, or poor	19.0	21.3	+2.3	17.0	+4.3
High/ Very high levels of psychological distress	13.8	16.8	+3	13.0	+3.8
Mental health problems: males	12.7	22.8	+10.1	19.3	+3.5
Mental health problems: females	13.7	24.2	+10.5	21.2	+2
Premature mortality from suicides	0.0	9.5	+9.5	14.0	-4.5
Clients of community mental health services	1,169.0	3,438.4	+2269	3,104.6	+333.4
Children and young people who are clients of CAMHS *(Children & Adolescent Mental Health Services)*	5,995	1,330	-4,665	1,304	+26

The Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) provides services for children and young people with emotional, behavioural or mental health problems and their families. Although there has been a notable decrease in the number of children (0-17yrs) who are clients of CAMHS since 2014, this could be a reflection of the number of children who have turned 18 since 2014, especially give the even greater increase in the number of Community Mental Health Services clients. This highlights the importance of mental health services in regional South Australia.

It is of concern that members of the regional community have higher than average mental health problems and access to the appropriate assistance is not considered adequate. The number of people experiencing mental health issues are a significant challenge to local service providers who describe a lack of qualified staff and inadequate facilities at regional and local levels during the consultation.

The Council will continue to lobby for adequate services, taking in to consideration that the impact of mental health on families, the community and the region can be significant and that the potential lack of anonymity in smaller communities may discourage many residents from seeking help.

Access and Use of Local Health Services

Within the FRC area there are hospitals in Hawker and Quorn. They provide acute care beds used for short term recovery such as post-surgery, post-natal and general medical care, ambulance services as well as community beds which are generally used to capacity.

The hospitals also provide, or coordinate, a number of community services including Flinders House Aged Care, Doctor's Medical Clinic, Men's Shed, Home and Community Care (HACC) and Meals on Wheels.

The Hospital and Health Service are part of the Country Health SA Far North group operating from Port Augusta. The priorities in the Implementation Plan remain mental health along with drug and alcohol services. Country SA Primary Care Network is also active in the area with a regional base in Pt Augusta.

Despite an increasing demand, there has been a 35% reduction in the number of people who have 'difficulty accessing health care' services since 2014 along with a reduction in the number of avoidable admissions into hospitals.

Council will continue to support calls for continued and expanded services for the hospitals and the support agencies that are affiliated with them.

A key challenge in the coming year will be the replacement of the current long term and well respected GP in Quorn.

Also, in light of the distances from Adelaide it is difficult for residents to access a number of health and other services due to a lack of transport options. This can result in less participation by those in need. Access and availability to services is also an important consideration in attracting new and especially older residents to the region.

Ageing and Health

Since 2014, the proportion of the FRC population aged 64 or older increased 5% to 25%. This has a significant potential to impact upon the planning and provision of Council services and infrastructure, especially whilst trying to support and encourage older people to be active and participative members of the community.

The Home and Community Care (HACC) continue to provide support services and programs through local hospitals to help older people maintain their independence and remain living safely in their own home. Services can include housework, gardening, personal care, maintenance, social support and transport.

Summary of Priorities and Opportunities for Prevention of Chronic & Communicable Disease & Injury

Priority	Opportunity
Increased physical activity	Seek support from peak bodies eg Heart Foundation Walking Groups; COTA SA Healthy Lifestyles program. Planning Policy: healthy and active communities
Healthier eating habits	Review Council catering policy. Investigate establishment of Community Gardens on Council land/schools/hospital grounds. Access OPAL resources (SA Health). Investigate options to improve access to fresh food.Heart Foundation resources.
Personal Health Smoking Alcohol & Drug Abuse Diabetes	Increase community awareness Distribution of promotional materials Support for Information Displays/Events Support for school and library programs Options to attract more staff.
Mental Health	Advocate for increased access to services Identify other programs needed in consultation withhealth services
Statistics - Premature deaths	Advocate for State Government to investigate with localhealth services
Child and Youth Health	Implement actions from regional youth survey (subject to resources) Continue to promote take up of immunisationLiaise with schools and local health services to investigate needs of children particularly from lowerincome families.

Community and Cultural Strength

Community strength is a key measure of health and wellbeing. Social and civic participation, perception of the local community and the way people relate to each other, are key aspects of community strength.

Promoting connections between people also fosters vibrancy as well as a positive attitude, a sense of happiness and support, particularly in times of difficulty and stress. Since 2014 there has been a 2% increase in the number of people within the FRC area that felt they were able to get support in times of crisis, (93.5% total).

Sporting activities play a significant role in fostering a sense of connectedness within the community. There are many active clubs and associations in the area and the Council offers significant support for sport and recreation facilities including ovals, swimming pools in the main towns, sports hubs, bowling greens, netball and tennis courts.

The rate of volunteering is a good indication of trust, support and social network strength, as well as community participation.

Unfortunately, there has been a 9% decrease in the number of people who say they feel safe walking alone in local areas at night, despite the installation of solar public lighting and security cameras by the Council.

The Council recognises that seeking out and providing opportunities for involvement in community and civic life is important for strengthening community capacity and resilience. Opportunities include continued consultation and engagement, funding and in-kind support for community groups and volunteer programs, such as library programs and support for the Men's Shed.

The Council acknowledges that involving young people in particular is critical to facilitating activities which are effective, meaningful and relevant to them and to encourage them to remain in the area. Recent Youth Surveys have identified a number of issues including the need to mentor young people into volunteer roles, expand the range of roles available and increase confidence to participate etc.

The Council continues to promote and facilitate a range of community events and programs that encourage social interaction, more vibrant community spaces and improved community wellbeing. Council also aims to preserve and protect historical community assets.

Community and public art programs help to strengthen local identity, sense of place, liveability and wellbeing, particularly if they are developed in conjunction with the community. The Council is sincerely committed to fostering creativity and artistic expression within the community. Acknowledgment of cultural heritage and diversity can be celebrated and preserved through visual arts, music, theatre, dance, digital arts and local history projects.

Although it is a distinct minority, it is estimated that 5% of the population of FRC area disagree/ strongly disagree with the acceptance of other cultures. This aspect may require more focussed attention in the future.

Summary of Priorities and Opportunities for Social Health

Priority	Opportunity
Community interaction	Continue support for community events Planning Policy: Age friendly communities and childfriendly communities Community/sporting hub development Public and community art initiatives
Community Safety	Investigate further initiatives to boost perceptions of safety.
Celebrating culture & heritage	NAIDOC Week activities - Cultural events/festival Library resources in languages other than English

6.2   Economic Health – Strengthening the Systems That Support Public Health & Wellbeing

The Local Economy

Primary production has historically been the principal industry in The Flinders Ranges Council with the predominant land use being broad acre grazing for the production of wool and sheep. The decline of the pastoral industry has had an adverse effect on the economic viability of towns and the area in general. However, more recently, the development of the tourism industry in the Flinders Ranges, has led to the towns of Hawker and Quorn becoming service centres for tourists who visit the area.

Quorn is the home of the Pichi Richi Railway, one of Australia's best known, historic, steam train journeys. The state's two key walking trails; the Heysen Trail and Mawson Trail, also pass through the area.

The FRC area continues to experience steady growth in solar and alternative energy production, tourism and quality aged care facilities. A diverse mix of retail shopping outlets are available and the full potential of tourism as an economic generator for the region has yet to be realised. The continued development of tourism and associated support industries will increase opportunities for employment and strengthen the economic base of the region along with facilitating an increase in the number of home-based businesses and creative industries.

The Council continues to collaborate with industry and government to ensure that opportunities can be supported with sound planning and investment in regional infrastructure.

Socio-economic Indicators

The association between socio-economic status and risk factors for chronic diseases such as self-reported smoking, alcohol misuse, physical inactivity and obesity are well documented. It is therefore important to consider that Government support has been the main source of income for 51% of the population over the last 2 years, (37% Regional SA average), and that this level of low income can have important implications when developing systems that target the health habits of that population.

Education is also a crucial determinant of health and wellbeing. Education increases opportunities for choice of occupation and for income and job security, and also equips people with the skills and ability to control many aspects of their lives. These are key factors that can influence wellbeing throughout a persons' life. The acquisition of a university qualification increases work and employment opportunities and increases the likelihood of financial security.

Schools, local community groups, Councils and other agencies play an important role in providing informal training and education opportunities for a range of age groups. Council libraries and community facilities continue to provide many skills development programs and classes. Accessibility to the internet also influences education and information provision opportunities and highlights the importance of accessing the National Broadband Network.

79% of young people in the FRC area are either learning or earning and only 6% of 16 year old's are not participating in full time secondary educational programs.

Housing

The proportion of the housing stock in the region rented from Housing SA has increased 2% from 5.3% to 7.3% which is basically on par with 6.1% for the rest of regional South Australia.

The proportion of low income households in the region that were assessed as being under mortgage stress has decreased from 11.1% in 2014 to 9.7% in 2019, which is almost identical to the current regional South Australian average of 9.4%

The level of rental stress across the region has increased from 11.5% in 2014 to 20.1% in 2019, although this increase is still below the regional South Australian average of 26.7%.

The availability of suitable and affordable accommodations continues to be the foundation of the Councils commitment to attracting new, long term residents to the area, including retirees.

Summary– Strengthening the Systems That Support Public Health & Wellbeing

Priority	Opportunity
Access to Internet	Advocate for rollout
Vibrant public places	Continue support for community events/festivals Support for cultural and heritage initiatives. Produce Market/Fair
Employment Opportunities Encourage new businesses, Home based businesses Cultural & Creative businesses Health related businesses Expand Tourism Opportunities	Grant funding & regional promotions Planning policy Joint programs with Government and Regional agencies Investigate funding sources Investigate local/regional Economic Development Plan Sealing landing strip at airport
Population growth Attracting new residents. Retaining young people and attracting them back.	Investigate options - newly arrived migrants, retirees Promote low cost of housing and availability, goodlifestyle and community spirit. Work with peak bodies - Council on the Ageing, Australian Retired Persons of Australia etc Advocate for retention of hospital and health servicesAdvocate for timely delivery of infrastructure.
Housing choice & availability	Advocate with Housing SA for improved serviceprovision in the Council area.

6.3   Environments for Health

The natural and built environment influences how people live, how they interact with their community and their ability to adopt active and healthy lifestyles. The South Australian State Public Health Plan recognises the important role that Councils play in promoting physical environments for health.

Promoting environmental sustainability in the region is fundamental to the future health of the community and resilience to environmental impacts such as climate change and water security.

The Flinders Ranges Council area is characterised by a largely unspoilt natural environment and the spectacular aesthetic environment of the Flinders Ranges. The potential of the natural environment has been developed through walking and cycling trails and conservation parks and reserves including Mount Brown and Dutchman's Stern Conservation Parks. Further development of natural attractions is underway through projects such as the Warren Gorge Management Plan.

The Council maintains and upgrades facilities in line with plans and policies such as the Roadside Vegetation Management Plan, Community Land Management Plan and the Greening Roads Program. Volunteer environment and revegetation groups, such as the Powell Garden Group and the Hawker Revegetation Group, play a significant role in promoting sustainable green environments.

Significant development projects, master planning projects and the location of key services and facilities offer the opportunity to achieve better health and liveability outcomes through improved accessibility, land use mix and vibrancy of public spaces. State and local planning policies aim to encourage population and employment growth, building on strengths whilst balancing the need to protect existing character, amenity and tourism values.

Water Resources

The major water users in the FRC area include agriculture, general industry, municipal watering, tourist facilities and domestic users. Current water resources are reaching their

sustainable limits and overuse of water resources is resulting in falling groundwater levels and rising salinity. The Council continues to advocate rainwater collection and increased water efficiency in the community. Also, ensuring the provision of safe and reliable drinking water by the State Government is a priority for the Council. Bore water at Quorn is considered unfit to drink.

The Councils Community Land Management Plan 2019-2027 commits the Council to manage and maintain community land parcels for the purpose of collection and storage of water and to use the water in the water reserves in an environmentally acceptable manner according to site conditions and operating criteria.

A desalinisation plant was constructed in Hawker in 2014 to ensure that recycled water can be used for broader community purposes. The Council continues to explore to the further development of recycling processes for stormwater and grey water.

Responding to Climate Change

Climate change mitigation and adaptation is a priority for the Council as well as regional partners, as outlined in the Far North and Outback SA Climate Change Adaptation Plan 2016.

Declining rainfall, increased threat of bushfire and higher evaporation rates pose risks to urban water security in the region. Adverse impacts on agricultural land may also occur due to the decrease in fertility caused by declining rainfall. Other potential impacts of climate change include costs to agriculture from increased pest plants and animals, diseases and the impact on tourism due to lost eco-tourism amenity values.

The potential health and wellbeing impacts of climate change caused by direct changes in climate such as increased temperature, as well as indirect impacts such as mental health issues caused by the problems associated with drought.

The Flinders Ranges Council Community Plan 2019-2028 promotes 'green' credentials for the Council area, including the use of renewable energy and strengthening resilience and adaptability of ecosystems and biodiversity.

Also, the Councils Community Emergency Risk Management Plan (CERMP) considers the increasing risk of more frequent and intense natural events such as bushfires, heatwaves, flood and drought. The Council manages critical infrastructure for responding to these events including sewage, rubbish disposal, roads, drains and communications and the airstrips. The CERMP emphasises the need for coordination and community mobilisation during emergency situations, including access to generators. However, the Council continues to face a declining volunteer base, especially due to the ageing of the population and administrative constraints. The Plan also highlights that up to 5% of residents require mobility assistance and special planned care in the event of an emergency.

Protecting Against Public and Environmental Health Risks

The Council provides a range of public and environmental health protection services. The Environmental Health Officer responds to a range of environmental health issues across the areas of notifiable disease control, sanitation, vector control, air and water quality and hazardous substances management.

Council's role also includes managing the health risks inherent to recreational water use and wastewater management. There are two public pools in Quorn and one in Hawker as well as a caravan park swimming facility, that are routinely monitored to ensure that water quality complies with the legislative requirements and operational guidelines. Compliance with On-Site Wastewater Works and High Risk Manufactured Water Systems (HRMWS) and Community Wastewater Management Systems (CWMS) also require monitoring.

The safety of the FRC area food supply is a paramount responsibility of the Council and food safety inspections are conducted routinely and pursuant to the Australia New Zealand Food Safety Standards and the requirements of the South Australian Food Act 2001 in all 43 food businesses in the area.

The Council also maintains an Animal Management Plan for dogs, cats and birds.

Council is committed to keeping the district clean and hygienic by providing waste management services including kerbside waste collection, recycling and access to waste depot and transfer stations. Hard waste pick-up is available for older people, self-funded retirees and people with disabilities. Free vouchers are provided for the disposal of green waste and hard waste. Some local recycling businesses collect scrap steel, whitegoods, vehicle batteries, cooking oil, cans and other containers. These measures help to reduce illegal dumping.

Transport, Walking and Cycling

The majority of households have access to at least one motor vehicle. However, for those without a car, there are difficulties in accessing health, welfare and other community services which are not available locally. Public transport to access services in larger centres is limited and use of the ambulance is not favoured as it results in the service being absent from the community.

The Northern Passenger Transport Network is a return service to Adelaide, coordinated by the District Council of Mount Remarkable, but available to a total of six Council regions;

- The District Council of Mount Remarkable;
- The District Council of Orroroo/Carrieton;
- the District Council of Peterborough;
- Port Pirie Regional Council;
- Northern Areas Council; and
- The Flinders Ranges Council.

The service is a joint Local, State and Federal Government, Home and Community Care initiative that is available to residents those who are frail, aged, transport isolated or have a 'functional disability', meaning that they are able to move independently with no lifting needed from a volunteer.

The Council provides a local community bus and the hospitals generally have access to a community car but both services usually rely on the availability of a volunteer driver.

Footpath maintenance and upgrading is important for safe walking particularly the prevention of falls among older residents and also for those with other mobility problems and users of motorised devices.

The FRC continues to lobby for a sealed landing strip at the Quorn airport given the advantages for tourism as well as the decreasing number of volunteer drivers for the Ambulance service. It would also help to ensure the retention of the Ambulance in the district rather than having to take patients to distant medical services.

Summary of Protecting Against Public and Environmental Health Risks

Priority	Opportunity
Natural Resources Water Biodiversity	Continue support for volunteer groups. Investigate further options for capture, storage and reuse of stormwater. Tourism opportunities.
Climate Change	Implement the Far North & Outback SA Climate Change Adaptation Plan Investigate opportunities for heat havens Continue awareness program for vulnerable residents.
Active Transport Increasing safety and access Increasing cycling and walking	Confirm priority sections for sealing of footpaths Development Plan policy Continue support for walking and heritage trails Improve linkages between trails and destinations
Public Transport Limited options East –West linkages Access for those with mobility issues	Explore further opportunities for regional cooperation to increase community transport Advocate for improved options
Environmental Protection	Community awareness- safety of food storage andhandling at events Business education and follow –upPromote further recycling Safety of produce market/s
Emergency Management	Implementing actions of CERMP Seek resources to seal the landing strip at Quorn airport