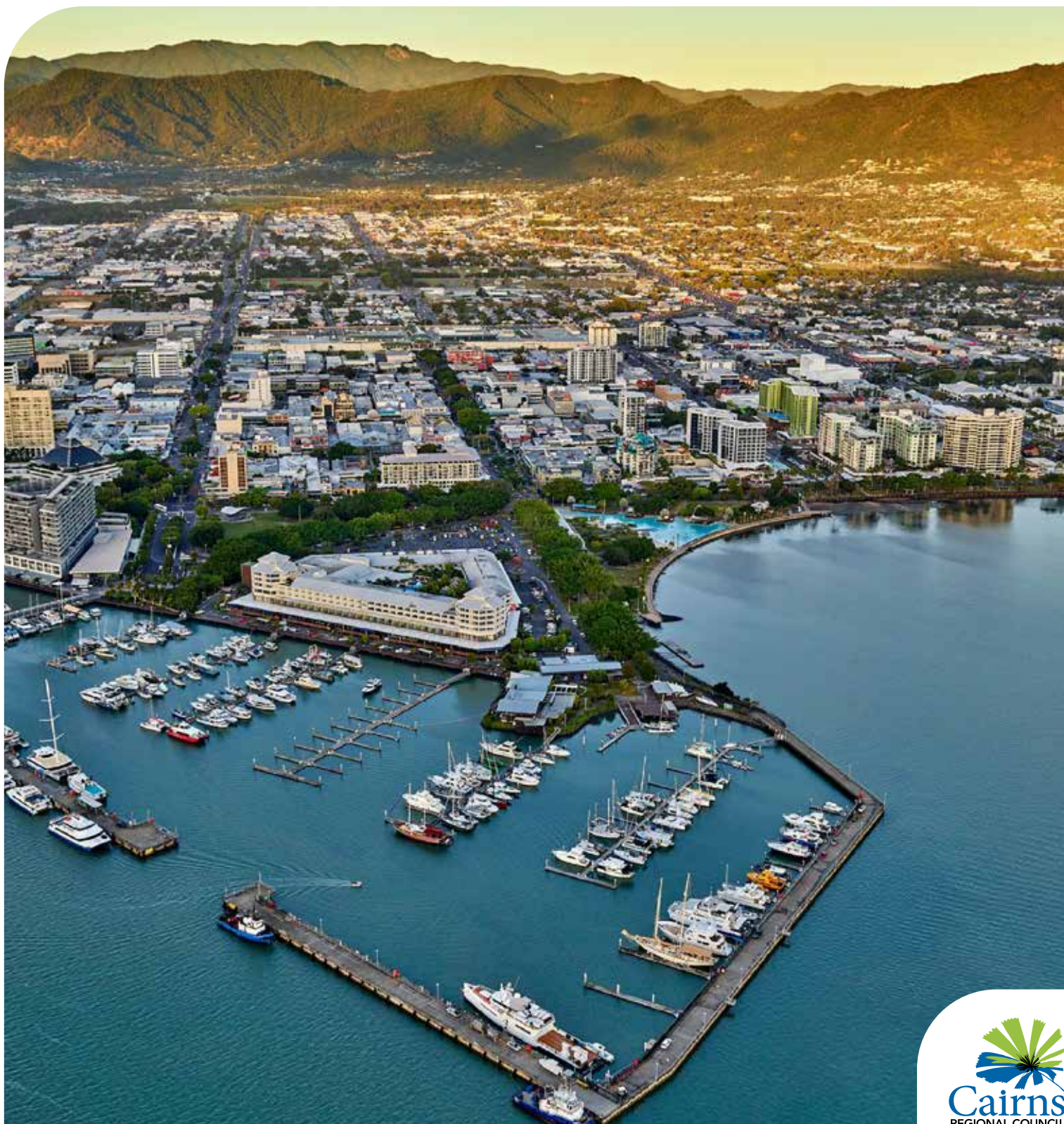


# Licensing & Compliance Framework

Version 1 2024



A lush, green forest scene with moss-covered rocks and various ferns and plants. The image is a vertical photograph with a rounded top right corner. It shows a dense forest floor with large, flat rocks covered in thick green moss. The surrounding vegetation includes numerous ferns of various sizes and shapes, along with broad-leafed plants and thin tree trunks. The lighting is soft and diffused, creating a rich, verdant atmosphere. The text is overlaid on the upper right portion of the image.

# Acknowledgment of Country

Cairns Regional Council acknowledges the First Peoples within our region who are the Traditional Custodians of this country: the Djabugay; Yirriganydji; Bulawai; Gimuy Walubara Yidinji; Mandingalbay Yidinji; Gunggandji; Dulabed and Malanbara Yidinji; Wanyurr Majay; Mamu and NgadjonJii peoples.

We pay respect to elders past, present and future and extend that respect to all other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians within our region.

# Foreword

Our operating environment is continually changing and presents us with many challenges. To meet these challenges, we need effective policies, processes and capabilities that are able to anticipate and respond in ways that support our aspirations for a safe, environmentally responsible and efficient Local Government regulatory sector.

Our regulatory approach is encapsulated in this framework, serving as a roadmap for achieving exceptional regulatory practices across the diverse functions we oversee.

The Licensing & Compliance Framework is designed to bring clarity to our mission, define our role within the community, and establish priority areas for enhancing our operational efficiency. Its primary objective is to instil a culture of risk-based compliance within our community, with a strong emphasis on education, self-correction, guided correction, and, if necessary, enforcement.

Overall, the Licensing & Compliance Framework will establish a clear path for the Licensing & Compliance team to deliver operational and policy improvements that will ensure Council's licensing and compliance functions are contemporary, reflect best practice and create a positive culture for ongoing organisation improvement and regional growth.

The implementation of this framework delivers a more streamlined, efficient, and cost-effective regulatory approach that aligns with the inherent risk and prioritises community wellbeing, all while safeguarding our region's distinctive environment for both present and future generations.



## Our purpose

To safeguard the community by educating, providing guidance and managing the risk and impact of regulated activities throughout the region, ensuring our priority values are preserved into the future.

## Our vision

We aim to be a stronger and customer-focused regulator that is efficient, contemporary, responsive, proportionate, transparent and collaborative in response to regulating our community.

## Our role

Our role in the community encompasses the following key objectives:

1. We cultivate a culture of enhanced voluntary compliance through education and guidance.
2. We support the community in meeting their legal responsibilities, within the Cairns Regional Council's jurisdiction.
3. We enforce standards tailored to mitigate specific risks to the community.
4. We actively engage with stakeholders to foster transparent and constructive communication.



# Strategic alignment

The Licensing & Compliance Framework reflects a broader strategic planning structure, including:

## Corporate Plan

Provides direction for Council to achieve a sustainable future for the region and optimum social, economic and cultural benefits for residents. It translates identified community needs and expectations into clear goals and measurable objectives to be achieved over the five years from 2025 to 2030.

## Operational Plan

An annual planning document which outlines the key activities and actions Council will undertake for the financial year in accordance with the adopted Annual Budget. Together with the Corporate Plan and Annual Budget, it guides Council in delivering outcomes for the community.

## Licensing & Compliance Framework

In unison with the corporate objectives above, Council's Licensing & Compliance Framework guides and underpins the design and execution of our regulatory initiatives.

## Branch guidelines and decision matrices

These documents serve as crucial pillars supporting the Licensing & Compliance Framework, offering clear direction to the Licensing & Compliance Branch in handling daily operational tasks and making decisions that uphold the principles of the Framework.

## General Policies and Administrative Instructions

Establish standardised operational protocols and directives, aligning with organisational goals to ensure efficient and compliant practices across departments.



# Our principles

Licensing and compliance at Council are underpinned by the following principles:

## **Solution orientated**

We are committed to being outcome-focused and solution-oriented. Our approach prioritises achieving positive results over punitive measures. Instead of simply issuing fines, we aim to address and resolve issues. We believe in offering opportunities for timely and suitable corrective actions by transparently communicating requirements and collaborating closely with stakeholders to ensure that compliance is not only attainable, but also reasonable.

## **Targeted**

We will direct our compliance and enforcement efforts towards mitigating the most significant risks or potential harm. This will be done in situations where adequate educational mechanisms, such as clear signage and public awareness campaigns, are already in place to inform individuals about compliance requirements.

## **Proportionate**

Our approach to compliance and enforcement will be based on proportionality. We will tailor our actions to the specific issue, considering both the severity of the problem and the level of responsibility attributed to the offender. Prosecution will typically be considered a last resort, primarily reserved for serious offences or in cases where all other compliance measures have been unsuccessful. Council recognises the limitations of its human and financial resources and will avoid pursuing cases that are trivial (i.e., pose minimal risk), frivolous, vexatious or contrary to the public interest.

## **Consistent**

We aim for consistency in the outcomes of our compliance and enforcement activities. We are committed to ensuring that similar situations, instances of non-compliance, and reported incidents result in uniform outcomes.

## **Transparent**

We will enforce procedures and standards transparently, upholding a commitment to clear, open communication and action. Furthermore, we will share information and disseminate lessons learned as part of our transparency commitment.

## **Inclusive**

We will actively collaborate with the whole community to facilitate education and increase awareness, all geared toward fostering a culture of voluntary compliance.

A photograph of a wooden boardwalk with a metal railing overlooking a lush tropical forest. The boardwalk is made of dark wood planks and has a railing with vertical posts. The forest is dense with various green plants, including ferns and trees. A stream with rocks is visible in the background. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

We focus on devising ways to safeguard our region's distinctive environment for both present and future generations

# Our branch

The Licensing & Compliance Branch of Council is dedicated to enhancing the community's experience by setting and upholding the standards that preserve the unique qualities and attributes that make Cairns an exceptional place to live, work and enjoy.

Our versatile branch oversees a comprehensive range of services, encompassing diverse assessment processes and rigorous adherence to statutory regulations. In addition to promoting and enhancing the region, our responsibilities encompass vigilant oversight of food safety, public health, environmental protection, building and planning regulation and the efficient management of land tenure matters. Our branch also plays a central role in shaping the region's Local Laws, providing the authoritative framework and regulatory response to a broad spectrum of community needs.

We are wholeheartedly committed to providing clear guidance to applicants and conducting assessments in a timely manner. Our risk-based approach is integrated into our assessment activities to ensure a consistent and equitable evaluation of applications.

The Licensing & Compliance Branch is currently undergoing a transformative evolution in its service delivery model. This transition is designed to ensure that our service offerings remain dynamic, agile, adaptive and responsive to the factors driving the region's growth.

It is our commitment to reflect community expectations, employ contemporary business practices, and align with broader organisational initiatives.





## Property and Environmental Health

### Property Services

is responsible for facilitation of land tenure arrangements for Council owned or controlled land. They also assist with land acquisitions, disposals, road permits, easements and various other leasing and land tenure matters across Council.

### Environmental Health

is responsible for licensing and regulation of food businesses, personal appearance services, shared facility accommodation and temporary entertainment events. They also investigate complaints relating to these businesses as well as noise and light nuisances, and various public health risks.

## Local Laws, Compliance and Appeals

### Local Laws

is responsible for processing local law permits , ensuring compliance and investigating alleged breaches of Council Local Laws and other relevant State legislation.

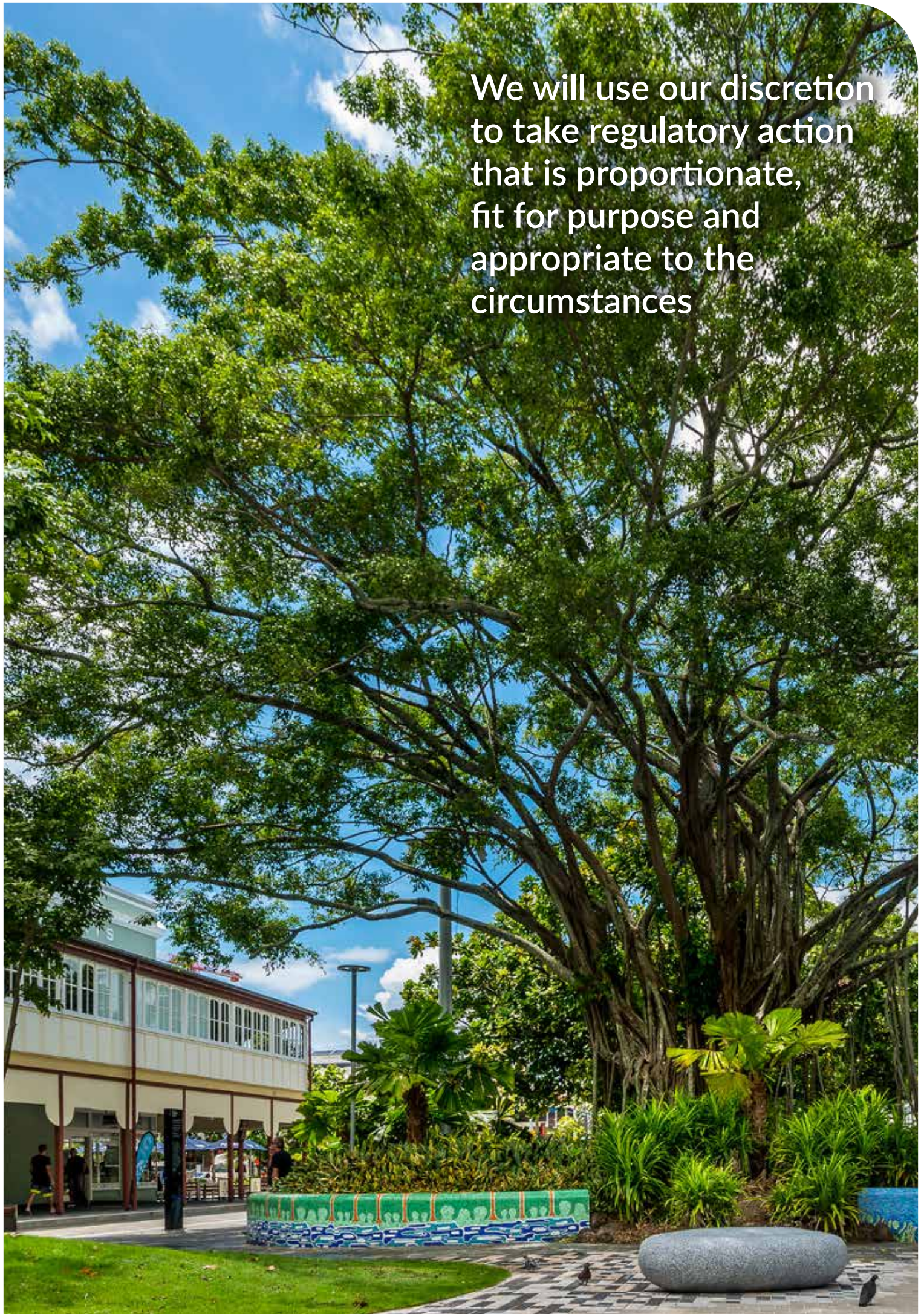
### Regulatory Compliance

is responsible for ensuring compliance with Planning approvals and Engineering Works approvals. They also investigate allegations of unlawful building works and developmental works, swimming pool fence compliance matters and environmental protection concerns including water pollution.

### Compliance & Appeals

is responsible for the review of decisions and appeals concerning infringements and any legislative notices issued by Council. They also provide advice on a variety of compliance and regulatory related matters across Council.

We will use our discretion to take regulatory action that is proportionate, fit for purpose and appropriate to the circumstances



# Elements of a risk based framework

A well-structured and efficient compliance program plays a pivotal role in supporting both the community and the industry in actively embracing compliance with legislative mandates and industry regulations.

Our risk-based Licensing & Compliance Framework is founded upon three fundamental elements:

## Well-designed

Our approach is characterised by well-thought-out planning and execution, ensuring it is robust and adaptable to the dynamic regulatory environment.

## Collaborative and accountable

Collaboration and accountability are central to our framework, as we foster partnerships and ensure that all stakeholders, including ourselves, are answerable for their actions and decisions.

## Effective and outcome-focused

Our approach is results-oriented, emphasising effectiveness in achieving regulatory outcomes and ensuring that our efforts produce tangible benefits for both the community and the environment.



# Our risk based framework

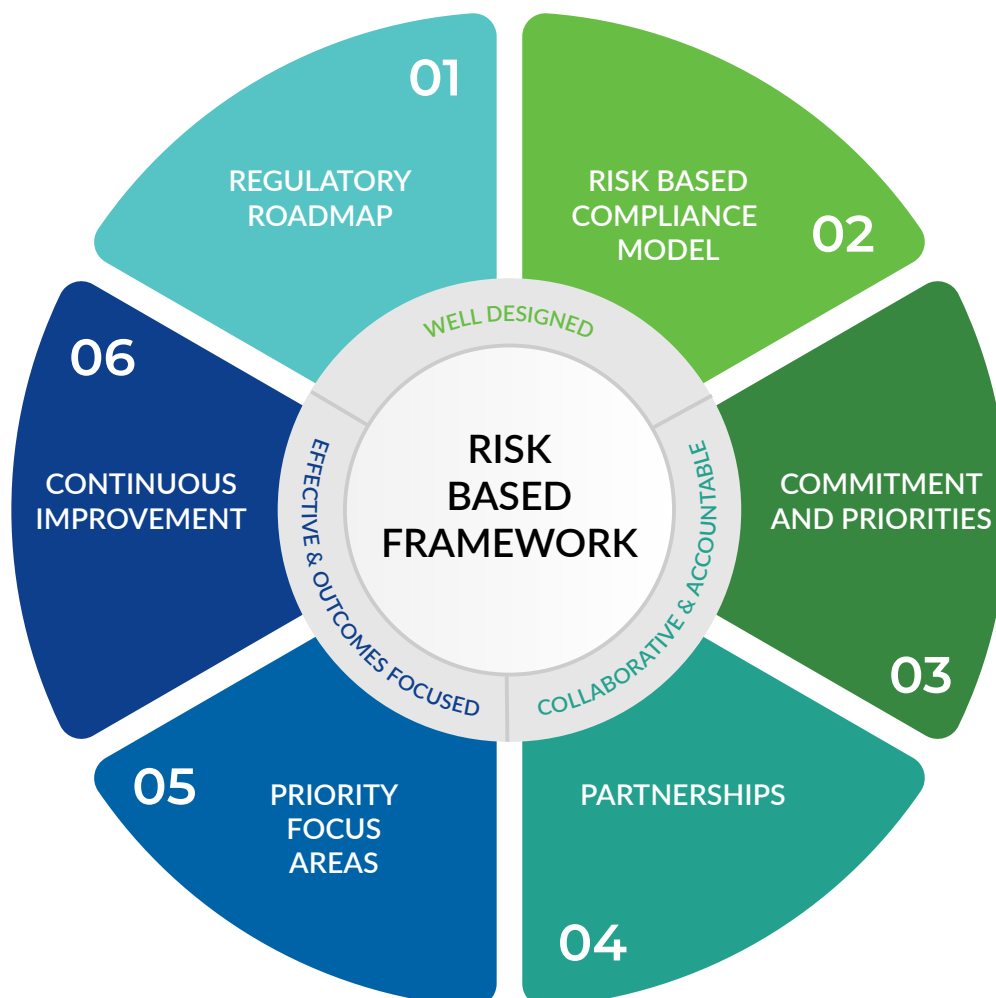
**Our model** is a comprehensive and flexible approach to maximising compliance by actively considering each of these elements. The goal is for the community to understand their obligations under the law resulting in the benefit of reduced monitoring and regulatory intervention. In designing our model, we have aimed to strike a balance between the obligation to protect the community or public interest, while at the same time not imposing unnecessary requirements or costs on those we regulate, or indirectly, the broader community.

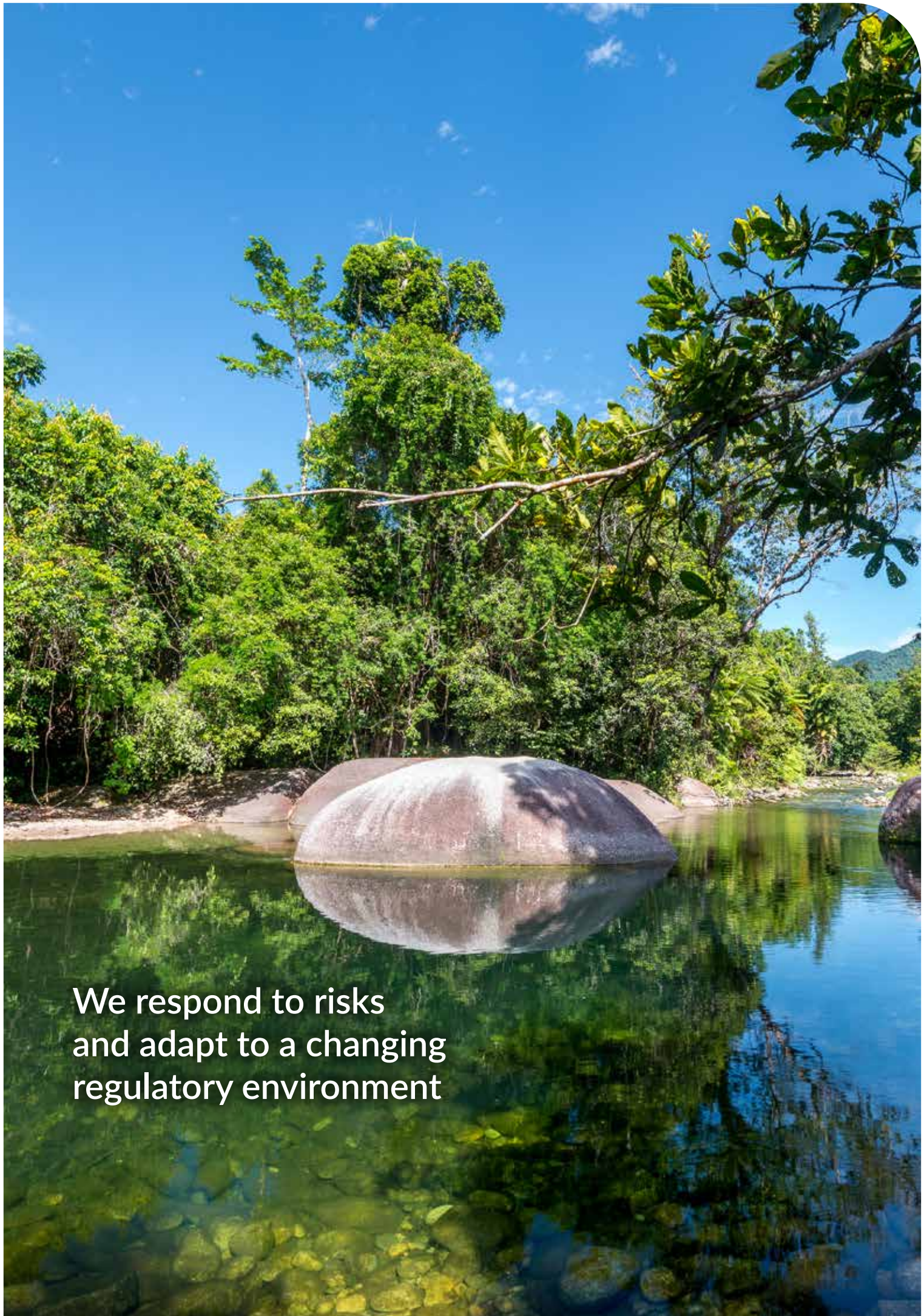
**Our approach** is tailored to be fit-for-purpose. In all our activities, our primary aim is to assess the significant risks and address the most substantial impacts on human health and the environment. To achieve the best outcomes, we focus our efforts intently.

**Our commitment** as a Local Government regulator, is to effectively regulate within our jurisdiction. This commitment entails the adoption of best practices and tailored approaches that:

- Minimise regulatory burdens through risk-based compliance targeting
- Prioritise accountability and transparency in our decision-making processes
- Continually monitor and evaluate both our performance and the regulatory outcomes achieved.

We will apply our risk-based model to our compliance and assessment activities to deliver best practice services, whilst focusing on achieving real-world outcomes for the environment and our community. This means carefully balancing the priorities of the government, community and businesses in our regulatory approach and decision-making.





We respond to risks  
and adapt to a changing  
regulatory environment

# Well designed



## 01 Regulatory roadmap

We are dedicated to an efficient, risk-based approach. We focus our interventions on high-risk, low-voluntary compliance cases, offering support to our regulated community by providing timely, relevant and accurate information to encourage voluntary compliance.

Our framework is a clear and definitive roadmap, demonstrating our firm commitment to leadership, consistency, natural justice and integrity. We prioritise these obligations, ensuring robust controls and tracking for evolving laws and regulations.

We are committed to complying with legislative duties and obligations and recognise that Local, State and Federal Legislation underpins our framework. Legislative compliance involves understanding the legislation and regulations that apply to Council and using a framework to ensure Council is compliant. We are aware that non-compliance risks penalties, legal liabilities, financial harm and damage to our reputation.

Legislative obligations are of significant strategic and operational importance to Council. Consequently, these obligations are prioritised to ensure the processes and controls that support them are robust and effective. General legislative obligations are documented to assist staff and business areas to understand their responsibilities more broadly.

To remain agile and responsive, our Licensing & Compliance Framework incorporates tracking mechanisms to prepare for changes in legislation and regulations that impact our operations enabling swift response to emerging regulatory requirements.



## 02 Risk based compliance model

Our model allows us to assess how a regulated entity engages with its regulatory obligations and tailor our response to suit—by supporting compliant behaviour or by taking proportionate regulatory actions where appropriate.

Council's approach to its regulatory responsibilities is based on encouraging voluntary compliance and discouraging non-compliance. In honouring its responsibilities, we use a suite of regulatory tools, including risk-based regulation, education, incentives, licensing (permits, approvals etc.), auditing and enforcement in an integrated manner.

Council actively pursues partnerships with industry and the community which facilitate beneficial outcomes for the region and residents.

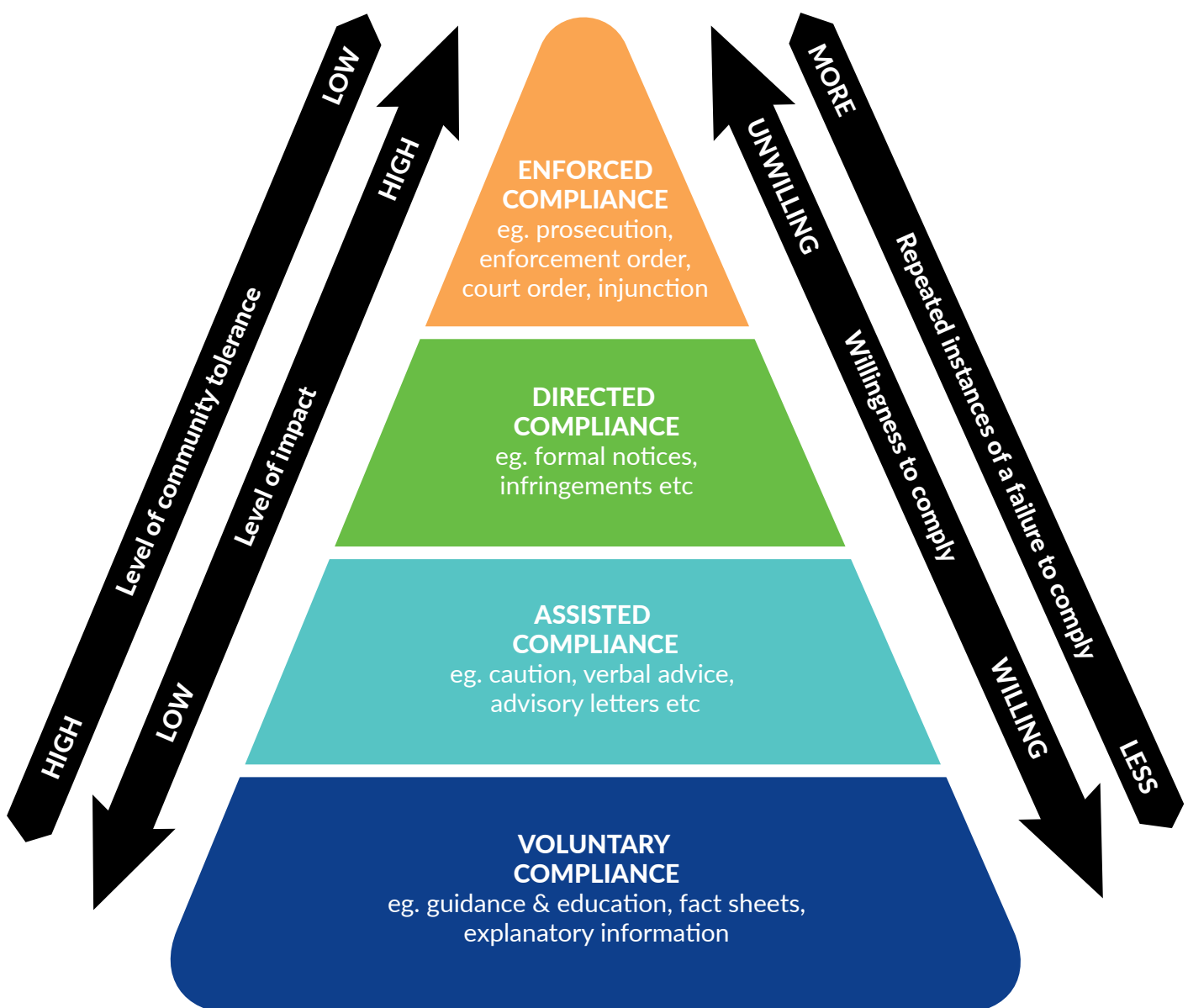
*A consistent and justifiable  
enforcement approach across the  
Licensing & Compliance Branch*

We commit to an efficient, risk-based approach using a robust compliance model.

Where enforcement action is required, Council's response will be proportionate to the severity of the non-compliance, history of non-compliance and willingness to comply. The level of enforcement action also relies on the available evidence and takes into consideration any mitigating circumstances.

Enforced compliance will generally not be initiated unless the following apply:

- Immediate or likely life-threatening situations
- Permanent or irreversible damage to the natural or built environment
- Immediate risk to public health, safety or wellbeing
- Persons where a pattern/repeated instances of behaviour and failure to adequately fix the problem, has been established
- Penalty infringement notices (PIN) issued.



## RISK BASED COMPLIANCE MODEL

## Compliance tiers

### Voluntary compliance

This compliance tier recognises that the community largely endeavours to operate within the law and strives to be compliant. The Licensing & Compliance Branch will assist the community by providing high quality explanatory guidance materials, streamlined processes and points of contact for assistance with issues or concerns.

Information about compliance obligations is built in to our systems and processes, which aids in facilitating voluntary compliance. Our website serves as a valuable resource, offering a wide range of compliance-related information to assist the community and industries in navigating the regulatory landscape.

The information provided covers all related compliance activities and areas of significance to the community, including information about how to report compliance issues.

*Examples include: Education, website content, fact sheets, explanatory information, guidance, conversations with customers.*

### Assisted compliance

When non-compliance results from errors or challenges in meeting obligations, our aim is to provide guidance and education to support the return to compliance. This can include providing expert advice or direction on how to meet regulatory obligations or referral to other agencies and services who may be able to assist.

Inspection and monitoring activities may also be initiated to identify and address compliance issues.

It's important to note that while the initial emphasis is on educating about compliance obligations, this tier recognises the need for escalating seriousness, which may lead to proportionate enforcement actions. Assisted compliance is not meant to enable avoidance of regulatory obligations.

*Examples include: Advisory letters, inspections and monitoring, verbal directions, conditions of permits/approvals.*

### Directed compliance

Directed Compliance will be undertaken where voluntary and assisted compliance has not achieved the required outcome, or where there is a significant risk, history of non-compliance or unwillingness to comply. Our regulatory activities in this category may involve varying, suspending or revoking approvals, issuing infringement notices or accepting enforceable undertakings. Referral of matters to the next compliance tier (for prosecution or other court ordered direction) may also be considered, dependent upon the level of risk, history of non-compliance and willingness to comply.

*Examples include: Penalty infringement notices, enforceable undertakings, vary, suspend or revoke approvals.*

### Enforced compliance

In cases involving deliberate or repeated serious non-compliance, we are prepared to employ the full range of enforcement options provided by the law, including prosecution. Decisions made within this compliance tier are influenced by the compliance history and responses to prior interactions.

*Examples include: Enforcement order, Court order, injunction.*

## Our model

Our risk-based compliance model serves as the cornerstone of our regulatory approach, demonstrating the following key attributes:

- It mirrors our regulatory philosophy and approach.
- It delineates a responsive hierarchy of compliance actions in direct correlation with escalating risks and non-compliant behaviours.
- It illustrates the clear link between non-compliant behaviour and the corresponding regulatory response from Council.
- It steers our compliance and enforcement activities while nurturing community collaboration.
- It affords the flexibility to address emerging non-compliance challenges and risks as they unfold.

Our dedicated team operate under the belief that most individuals aspire to do the right thing. As such, we employ a range of measures to inspire voluntary compliance and proactively engage with individuals to help them achieve compliance objectives.

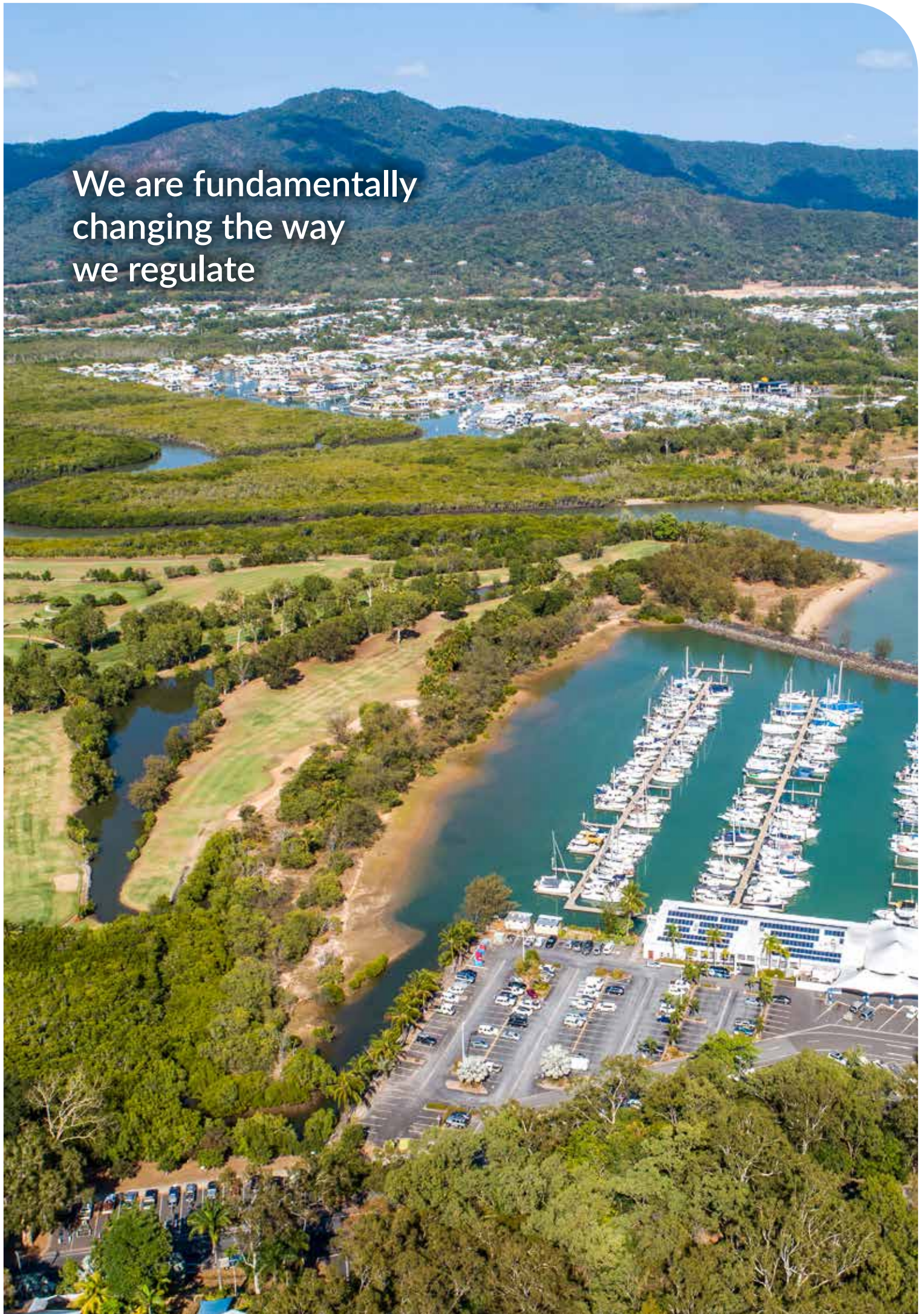
The risk-based compliance model provides the ability for the team to tailor responses and evaluate the most appropriate regulatory actions, ranging from fostering voluntary compliance and cooperation at the foundation to active enforcement measures at the top.

Underpinning this model is the core principle of risk-based regulation, where the choice of compliance action is guided by the level of risk and the enduring impact of non-compliance on our community.

*We strive to make requirements accessible, efficient, and surprisingly helpful for all those we interact with.*



We are fundamentally  
changing the way  
we regulate



# Collaborative & accountable



## 03 Commitment & priorities

### Our commitment

We are committed to:

1. Deploying integrated compliance solutions that align with legislative responsibilities.
2. Maintaining strategic alignment with our broader corporate performance, planning, and reporting framework, including our Corporate and Operational Plans.
3. Consistently demonstrating and upholding the intent, objectives and principles of this framework.
4. Upholding the principles of procedural fairness, also known as 'Natural Justice,' ensuring a procedurally fair hearing and unbiased decisions.

Our commitment extends to ensuring fairness for all parties involved in a complaint or compliance process, whether they are the complainant, respondent or other relevant party. This commitment encompasses:

**Applying the Fair Hearing rule** – Council officers will provide individuals with the opportunity to be heard before making a decision.

**Exercising discretion** – Decisions on enforcement necessitate the application of professional judgment and discretion to assess varying circumstances. Council is proactive in using discretion to effectively manage compliance.

**Adhering to the Rule Against Bias** – Council officers are unwavering in their commitment to remaining impartial, ensuring no bias that might compromise the objectivity and impartiality of their decisions.

**Reviewable decisions** – In situations where concerns arise regarding the process by which enforcement actions were administered, it is important to note that most of the legislation enforced by Council provides for reviewable decisions and/or appeal provisions. This mechanism is in place to safeguard the integrity and fairness of the process.

Council officers will be transparent about the review/appeal options available within any specific process.

*We will take a proactive, protective approach to ensure our land, air and water are future-proofed and enhanced for generations to come.*

## Our priorities

Council has statutory obligations for the investigation and management of regulated activities. Council is committed to working with individuals and businesses to provide education with a goal of achieving voluntary compliance without having to resort to regulatory intervention.

Enforcement and formal regulation are Council's least preferred method of achieving compliance.

There are times where formal regulation and enforcement are required, for example:

- Circumstances where the risk posed to the community needs to be addressed swiftly. Legislative frameworks require certain actions (such as the issuing of a written notice)
- Education and informal requests for compliance do not achieve compliance with legislation
- Times where there are other education mechanisms in place (such as adequate signage for example prohibited conduct signage etc.).

Council remains resolute in its commitment to employing enforcement processes that are not only lawful but also ethical, safe, fair, practical, consistent, customer-focused and responsive to individual circumstances and risks.

It is crucial to acknowledge that managing compliance and enforcement can entail considerable costs. To address this, Council diligently endeavours to ensure that the expenses related to compliance activities are borne by those responsible for non-compliance. The principle of cost recovery for non-compliance serves as a driving force behind the ongoing enhancement of our Licensing & Compliance Framework, ultimately aimed at fostering voluntary compliance across our community.

In alignment with our priorities, we are dedicated to streamlining our end-to-end services to improve our assessment and application functions. We will provide clear, competent and timely guidance and advice, and ensure support is accessible and tailored to meet the needs of the target audience. To fulfill these objectives, we are committed to the application of our core principles, thus guaranteeing an outcome-focused and solution-oriented approach, marked by consistency in every interaction. We will investigate and implement suitable business improvement activities with an aim to reduce timeframes and embed a continuous improvement approach in everything we do.





## 04 Partnerships

Our collaborative partners in delivering this service include:

### Community

We work alongside and empower the community, fostering their understanding of environmental, public health and safety issues that impact our region. Our aim is to assist individuals in realising what steps they can take to protect the environment and human health and safety, and to underscore the significance of these actions for the well-being of the people of Cairns, both now and in the future.

### Other regulators

We form partnerships with other regulatory bodies such as Queensland Health, the Department of Environment, Science and Innovation, the Department of Workplace Health and Safety, and the Queensland Police Service. These collaborations serve to enhance our knowledge, enrich our insights, extend our outreach and collectively devise compliance solutions that are tailored to our region's needs.

### Businesses

We recognise our pivotal role in educating and upskilling both the community and industries to prevent and mitigate harm to the environment, human safety, health and overall well-being. Our goal is to empower decision-makers to take compliance outcomes into account within their business practices and contribute to the betterment of our region through informative and awareness-raising initiatives. We provide guidance to businesses on how meet their legal obligations.

### Other local governments

Our commitment is reinforced through collaborative efforts with other local governments. By benchmarking compliance practices against industry standards and best practices in partnership with peer jurisdictions, we ensure our regulatory actions remain well-founded and contemporary. Through shared research, analysis and knowledge exchange, we identify areas for improvement and implement strategies to align with evolving norms. This collaborative approach not only strengthens our regulatory frameworks but also fosters a culture of innovation and continuous improvement across local governments.

### Government agencies

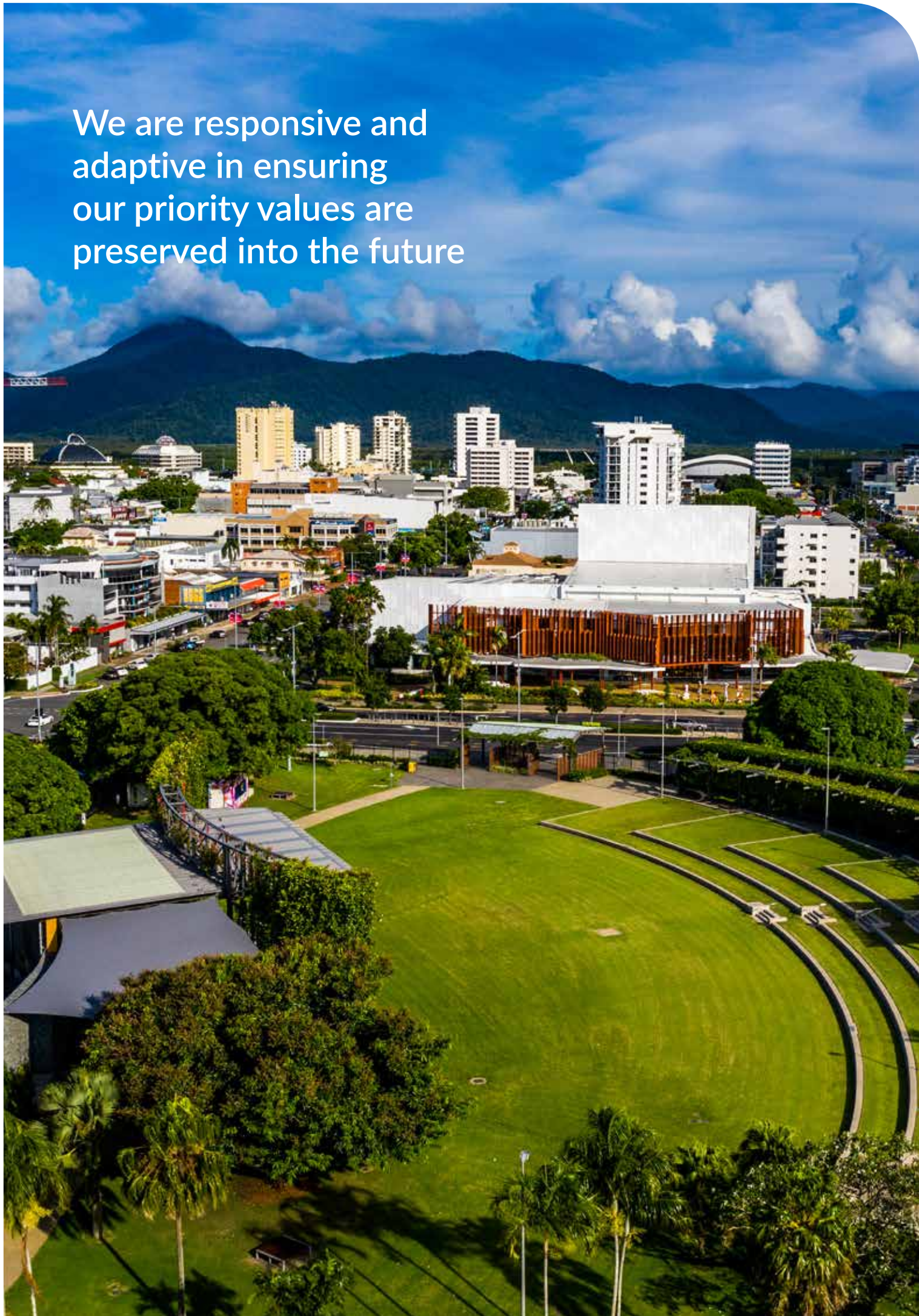
Our service hinges on collaboration with various stakeholders, including Queensland Fire and Emergency Services, the Department of Resources, the Department of Transport and Main Roads, and the Department of Housing. Through active engagement with these stakeholders, we aim to gain a deeper understanding of their perspectives and concerns, allowing us to take informed actions that promote enhanced human health and safety, as well as superior environmental outcomes.

### Intra-Council

Our commitment to effective regulation extends beyond just the boundaries of the Licensing & Compliance team. We emphasise close collaboration and cooperation across various teams and departments within Council to maintain a unified and best-practice approach. We understand that compliance activities often intersect with the responsibilities of other permits or notices issued by different Council directorates. In recognition of this, we actively engage in cross-team collaboration to ensure a seamless and holistic approach to regulation and compliance. By working together with other directorates, we can access internal expertise, making our regulatory processes more informed and effective.

Additionally, we contribute our expertise to policy reviews that intersect with compliance activities, ensuring that these measures are not only appropriate to the level of risk and community needs but are also enforceable in line with the principles outlined in this document. This collaborative approach is fundamental to achieving consistent, effective, and community-focused outcomes in compliance and enforcement within the Cairns region.

We are responsive and adaptive in ensuring our priority values are preserved into the future



# Effective & outcomes focused



## 05 Priority focus areas

This Licensing & Compliance Framework outlines our strategic commitment to fulfilling our vision and responsibilities as a trusted regulator.

Within this framework, we have identified 4 Priority Focus Areas, each tailored to guide the actions of our Licensing & Compliance teams.

These priority areas provide clear direction and ensure that our regulatory efforts are both effective and outcomes focused.

### 1 PRIORITY ACTION AREA

#### Educate, communicate & partner

##### Empowering customers and adapting communication

Our unwavering commitment lies in ensuring that all our customers, including applicants, existing operators, interested community members and the broader public, possess an understanding of their legislative obligations.

Recognising the paramount significance of enhancing the community understanding, especially in an ever-evolving information landscape, we consider it vital to adapt our education and communication methods to cater to the diverse needs of the community.

Our goal is to create a more inclusive and accessible regulatory environment that fosters understanding, collaboration and shared responsibility.

### 2 PRIORITY ACTION AREA

#### Proportionality

##### Balancing compliance & education

We are committed to achieving minimum standards in civic behaviour, public health, safety and environmental protection primarily through education and guidance. Infringements and prosecutions play a minor role in our overall compliance activities.

Central to our regulatory vision is the implementation of robust risk-based regulation, which guides our assessment and compliance endeavours. In practical terms, we assess risk through comprehensive analysis and by considering the likelihood and consequences of potential hazards.

This focus ensures the scale of compliance action is proportionate to the level of risk associated with the non compliance.

### 3 PRIORITY ACTION AREA

#### Community confidence

##### Building trust through compliance

This priority focus area is dedicated to nurturing and boosting community confidence in our regulatory actions by creating a culture of voluntary compliance. Our approach is marked by the consistent use of clear and concise communication throughout persuasive and compliance-oriented enforcement methods which articulates the risks identified and the reasons for decisions.

Our goal is to empower our community to make well informed decisions in relation to compliance matters. This not only strengthens the community's trust in our actions but also stresses the importance of community awareness of responsibilities associated with legislative compliance.

### 4 PRIORITY ACTION AREA

#### Consistency

##### Consistency in decision-making

At the core of our operations is the unwavering commitment to consistent decision making.

By basing decisions on facts, available evidence and the level of risk, we ensure appropriate and consistent enforcement actions are undertaken on all decisions are justifiable.

This commitment to consistency is the foundation upon which trust and accountability are established, reinforcing our role as a regulator of the utmost integrity.

## Our strategic initiatives

### 1 PRIORITY ACTION AREA

*Educate, communicate & partner*

- Enhance community awareness regarding our regulatory role and the community's role in safeguarding our region.
- Create user-friendly educational materials for the community and other Council directorates, providing guidance on application procedures, compliance with legislative standards, and enforcement actions.
- Improve the communication of compliance priorities, actions and results.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of educational initiatives and adjust them to address compliance gaps more effectively.

### 2 PRIORITY ACTION AREA

*Proportionality*

- Implement new policies and/or administrative directives aligned with our guiding principles to streamline processes.
- Proactively oversee and handle risks through a variety of compliance, investigation and enforcement initiatives.
- Establish a risk/response matrix for compliance activities to provide guidance for decision-making.

### 3 PRIORITY ACTION AREA

*Community confidence*

- Implement methods for quantifying the ongoing enhancements in application processing times and community compliance.
- Empower customers to access precise and pertinent information, facilitating well-informed decision-making while ensuring a clear understanding of legislative requirements and their associated responsibilities.

### 4 PRIORITY ACTION AREA

*Consistency*

- Enhance risk-informed decision-making by leveraging existing insights and focusing efforts on identified risks.
- Consistently apply robust yet proportionate enforcement measures.
- Optimise regulatory efficiency by allocating resources to higher-risk activities.
- Conduct periodic audits of regulatory actions to identify and rectify inconsistencies, ensuring that similar situations receive consistent enforcement.

# 06

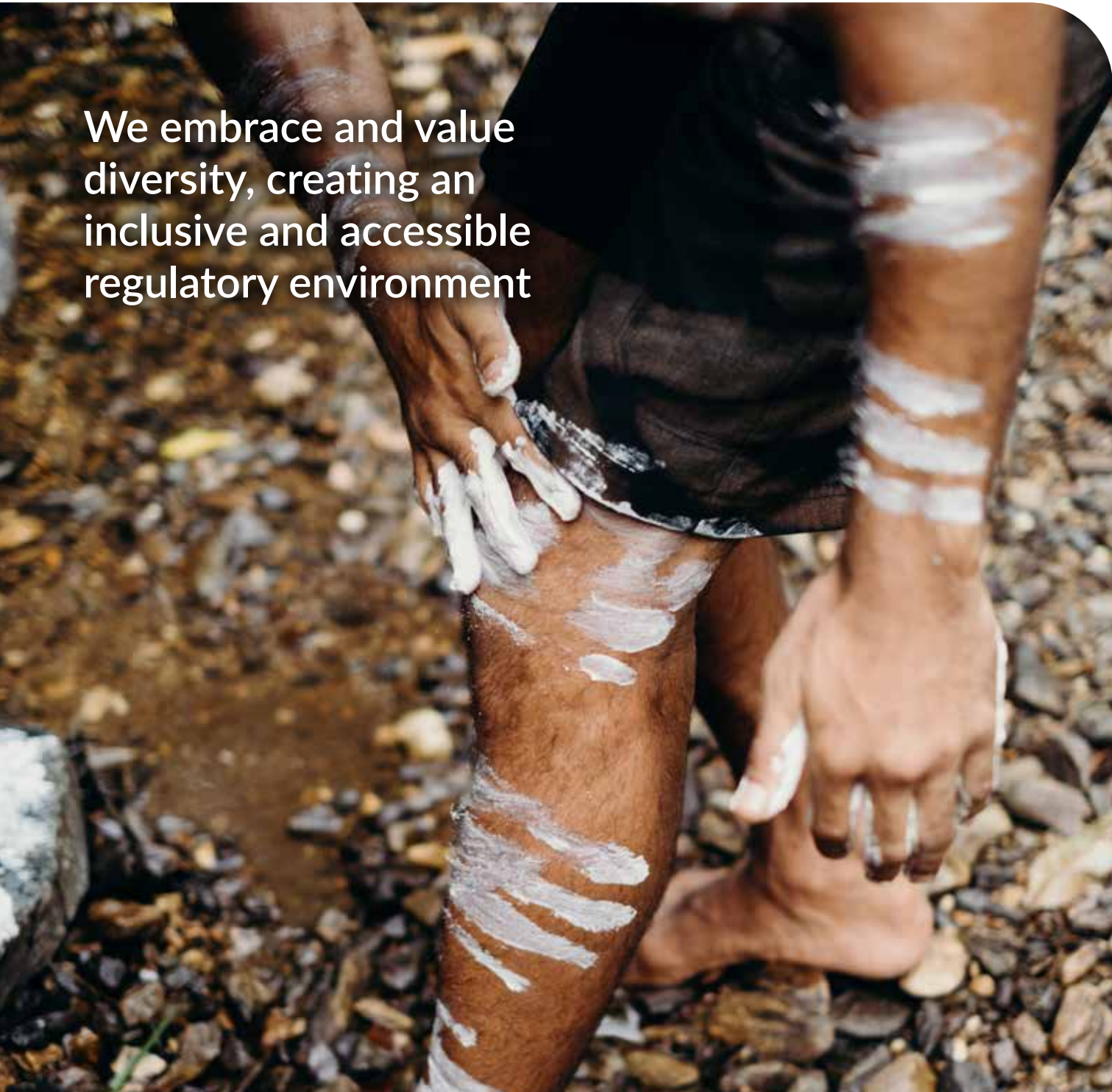
## 06 Continuous improvement

This framework is underpinned by a culture of and commitment to continuous improvement.

We do this by:

- Applying regulations openly, including sharing information and actively involving the community in education and awareness efforts as part of Council's commitment to transparency.
- Regularly auditing compliance outcomes to maintain proportionality, consistency, transparency and accountability, in harmony with our principles.
- Leveraging our partnerships to ensure we are meeting or exceeding expectations and maintaining efficient, effective and compliant regulatory processes.

This culture not only strengthens our regulatory endeavours but also aligns them with our core principles, promoting a regulatory environment that is responsive, effective and efficient.

A close-up photograph of a person's legs and hands. The person is applying thick, white, clay-like body paint to their lower leg and hand. They are wearing a dark, patterned wrap around their waist. The background is a ground covered in small, smooth, light-colored pebbles.

**We embrace and value diversity, creating an inclusive and accessible regulatory environment**

## Our measures of success

Our success in implementing this policy can be gauged by several key indicators, each of which reflects our commitment to achieving our regulatory goals. These indicators serve as benchmarks to assess the Framework's effectiveness:

### Education tools and programs

One significant indicator of our success is the development and delivery of education tools and programs aimed at addressing key areas of non-compliance. By proactively identifying and responding to areas where compliance may be lacking, we demonstrate a commitment to education and prevention.

### Decrease in reviewable decision applications

A reduction in the number of reviewable decision applications is another vital indicator. It signifies that stakeholders have a clearer understanding of regulatory requirements, resulting in fewer disputes and appeals. This reduction indicates improved compliance and a smoother regulatory process.

### Decrease in referrals to external organisations

A decrease in the number of referrals to external organisations is an indicator of our ability to resolve matters internally. It demonstrates our capacity to handle issues effectively, minimising the need to involve third parties for dispute resolution.

### Upheld officer decisions in external reviews

The rate at which officer decisions are upheld during external reviews is a crucial measure of the quality and validity of our regulatory actions. A high rate of upheld decisions signifies that our regulatory actions are well-founded and in line with legal and compliance standards.

### Increase in customer satisfaction surveys

A notable increase in customer satisfaction survey scores is a key indicator of success. It reflects that our regulatory processes are not only effective but also user-friendly and responsive, contributing to a higher level of satisfaction among our stakeholders.

### Reduction in Compliance Notices / PINs

An important measure of our success is the decline in Compliance Notices/PINs (Penalty Infringement Notices). Tracking this metric allows us to assess the effectiveness of our regulatory enforcement and stakeholders' compliance levels. A decrease in Compliance Notices/PINs indicates improved awareness and adherence to regulatory requirements. This reduction reflects our dedication to achieving regulatory goals through cooperation, education and prevention strategies.

**These measures of success underscore our dedication to promoting a regulatory environment that is not only compliant but also characterised by education, efficiency and community-centricity. They provide a comprehensive view of how our policies and actions align with our overarching regulatory goals.**

# Supporting documents

At their core, these documents are designed to align with our overarching goal of adopting a risk-based, facilitative and outcomes-oriented approach. They operate concurrently with the Licensing & Compliance Framework and underpin the Framework's fundamental principles.

These documents include:

- Property Charter
- Risk-based Compliance Decision Matrices

These documents are specifically tailored to address the key areas of compliance management and land tenure management, focusing on areas with the greatest risk exposure.

By adhering to these documents, we endeavour to establish a holistic approach that not only mitigates potential risks but also cultivates a culture of continual improvement and operational excellence.

The implementation of compliance-focused decision matrices serves as a valuable reference tool for Council staff, particularly when considering compliance monitoring and enforcement actions in the Cairns region.

These documents assist in making informed and consistent decisions, promoting the best environmental, health and safety outcomes for our community. They outline a structured process for receiving, acknowledging, assessing and investigating reports of alleged unlawful activities, guiding appropriate responses that prioritise education, assistance in achieving compliance, or enforcement where necessary.

The Property Charter explains how Council administers its property and land to support community and organisational goals. It sets out the key principles we follow when managing assets such as leases, tenancies, licences, easements and other land arrangements.

We are relentlessly  
accountable for clear  
outcomes that focus on  
the effective delivery of  
public value



