

INDIGROW STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN 2023 - 2025



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What is IndiGrow?

IndiGrow is Indigo Shire Council's economic advisory Committee. Through IndiGrow, local business leaders provide strategic advice to Council to drive sustainable economic growth.

IndiGrow comprises members of Council and Indigo's business community who meet quarterly to identify economic opportunities that improve the financial, social and environmental capacity of Indigo's businesses.

Purpose and Objectives

IndiGrow have set their own agenda in defining their objectives and priorities as a Committee. Six objectives help guide IndiGrow's decision making and prioritisation:

- Build a communications structure for a two-way dialogue between Council, Industry and other levels of Government
- Provide advice and expertise to support and inform Council's economic policy development and State and Federal Policy agendas
- Identify future and emerging strategic opportunities for priority allocation of resources
- Identify and recommend priority areas for grant funding support from various government and non-government sources
- Identify and recommend future budget priorities for Council
- Develop Industry through identifying critical gaps in skills and knowledge and prioritising developmental initiatives

IndiGrow Members 2023

Councillor representatives

Cr. Diane Shephard (Chair), Cr. Roberta Horne, Cr. Emmerick Teissl

Business community representatives

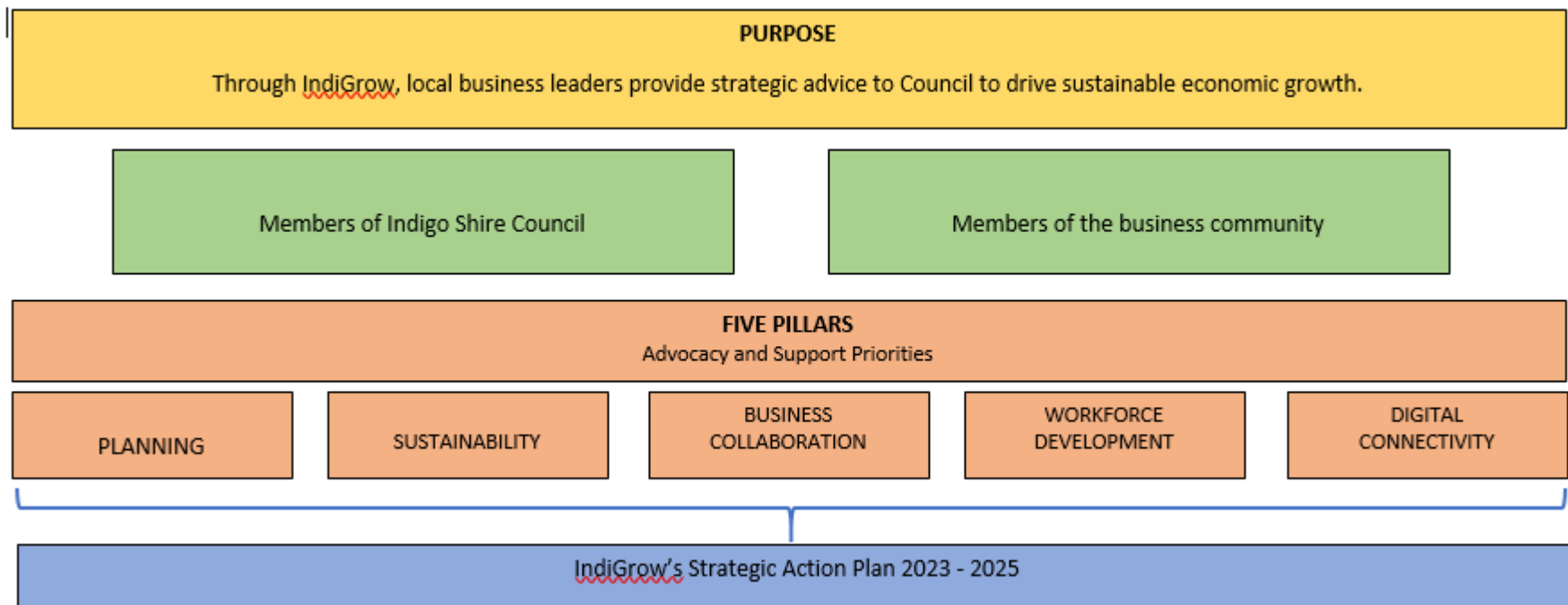
Natalie Ajay (Deputy Chair), Bev Hoffmann, Nerida Kerr, Darren Carr, Rob Hawkings, Alastair Clay, Steven Vandenberg, Narelle James, Mervyn Rea, Neil Funston, Lisa Turner

IndiGrow Strategic Action Plan

In a series of workshops held during 2021 – 2022, the members of IndiGrow came together to set their objectives and to outline a series of actions aligned to key priority areas.

In order to achieve IndiGrow’s promise of driving sustainable economic growth for local businesses, it was vital that the Committee were clear on what focus areas needed attention for development and advocacy, and what actions they could take as a Committee to drive positive outcomes.

The following actions have been designed to create meaningful outcomes and steps forward on five priorities for the Committee. The action plan covers 2023-2025, and will be reviewed in the last quarter of 2025.



Advocacy and Support Priorities

For each priority area the Committee identified, a series of important deliverables were outlined. The Committee then collaborated to develop an action plan to support each deliverable for the five advocacy and support priorities.

1. Planning

- 1.1 Inform policy development and review and inform Council policy and planning processes including place-based strategies
- 1.2 Understand the possibilities of what IndGrow can influence in terms of Council decision making regarding planning
- 1.3 Monitor and share concerns expressed by business regarding planning processes

2. Sustainability

- 2.1 Ensure IndiGrow is aware of economic opportunities for the shire as identified by the Environment Committee
- 2.2 Advise Council on trends/opportunities/challenges for business sustainability, including government initiatives for Indigo Shire

3. Business Collaboration

- 3.1 Identify ways to make Council engagement with the business sector less intimidating
- 3.2 Provide strategic, place based advice to Council regarding business collaboration
- 3.3 Encourage business sector to be part of the conversation re. Indigo Shire economic development

4. Workforce Development

- 4.1 Encourage “grow your own” approach to staffing challenges in Indigo Shire ie. build expertise of emerging workforce
- 4.2 Monitor policy changes/incentives at federal and state level that can influence Indigo and share with Council
- 4.3 Monitor and share innovative examples of solutions to staffing challenges for consideration by Indigo Shire businesses

5. Digital Connectivity

- 5.1 Identify safety and business impacts of poor connectivity and feed up to Council to support advocacy for improved connectivity

Action Plan Item 1. Planning

Priority	Actions	Outcome	Measure	Who	When
1.1 Inform policy development and review and inform Council policy and planning processes, including place-based strategies	1.1.1 Provide a calendar of when each relevant policy is coming up for Council 1.1.2 Build good relationships with senior leadership team at Council and Councillors	1.1.1 Committee is part of the conversation and recommendation process for relevant policies 1.1.2 Improved relevancy and expertise in this space with Council decision makers including IndiGrow members in conversations and decisions	1.1.1 Policy review dates and meeting times are provided by Council and implemented into Committee agendas 1.1.2 IndiGrow is the default economic advisory body and is included in strategic planning discussions and relevant consultations.	1.1.1 Eco Dev 1.1.2 Eco Dev	New 23/24 calendar - add to agendas
1.2 Understand the possibilities of what IndiGrow can influence in terms of Council decision-making regarding planning	1.2.1 Invite the planning manager and Director of Planning and Corporate Services to meet the Committee annually 1.2.2 Support Council's advocacy for changes and improvements to state-based planning legislation	1.2.1 Understanding of what information Planning require, to understand the current planning environment and find out how we can collaborate effectively 1.2.2 Improved outcomes and opportunities for ISC and the local economy. To support Council's work in a united approach	1.2.1 Annual attendance at Committee meeting 1.2.2 IndiGrow to receive Council's Advocacy Plan for visibility and to support and endorse where required. Committee to discuss priorities and an advocacy approach	1.2.1 Eco Dev / Planning 1.2.2 Eco Dev / Planning	Ongoing
1.3 Monitor and share concerns expressed by businesses re. planning processes	1.3.1 Provide written and verbal case updates to the Committee regarding business related concerns 1.3.2 Publicise the existence of IndiGrow to residents in ISC 1.3.3 Promote and share good news and outcomes relating to business and planning	1.3.1 Sharing of the issues locals are facing, identification of common themes and decisions on advocacy for better outcomes 1.3.2 IndiGrow is the trusted economic advocacy body to Council. Inform residents of our purpose and how they can engage with the Committee in a collaborative way 1.3.3 Build trust and clout, publicise positive outcomes and develop a community of collaboration and positivity	1.3.1 Officer update to be attached to Agenda with issues raised at meetings and minutes from Committee meetings 1.3.2 Page on ISC website introducing Committee members. Posting regularly about our work and outcomes on social pages. Quarterly updates from Committee in ISC news. Updates in business newsletter each quarter 1.3.3 Quarterly update in Indigo Weekly and to business community. Schedule networking events	1.3.1 Eco Dev / IndiGrow members 1.3.2 Eco Dev 1.3.3 Eco Dev / Planning	Ongoing Planning case studies - Standing agenda item Promote IndiGrow - business newsletter

Action Plan Item 2: Sustainability

Priority	Actions	Outcome	Measure	Who	When
2.1 Ensure IndiGrow is aware of economic opportunities for shire identified by Environment Committee	2.1.1 IndiGrow and Environment Committee to share minutes of meetings	2.1.1 Members of each Committee are aware of key priorities and actions	2.1.1 Four sets of minutes per year minimum	2.1.1 Eco Dev/ Sam Niedra	Ongoing
2.2 Advise Council on trends/opportunities/challenges for business sustainability including government initiatives for Indigo Shire	<p>2.2.1 Members to provide written and verbal updates during IndiGrow meetings to Councillors and Council staff on opportunities we are aware of through our networks</p> <p>2.2.2 Review Environment Advisory Committee minutes as a standing item on our agenda</p> <p>2.2.3 IndiGrow to identify key progress groups and organisations covering sustainability in our area</p> <p>2.2.4 Advocate for and recommend that ISC facilitate business sustainability audits</p>	<p>2.2.1 IndiGrow acts as the conduit between business and Council and providing Council with valuable insights, details of initiatives, support for growth opportunities that can be further supported through the Shire</p> <p>2.2.2 Identified interest and appetite for sustainable projects (such as better packaging) and how IndiGrow can participate and support</p> <p>2.2.3 IndiGrow members are well connected to influential groups and can find opportunities to collaborate or support sustainable initiatives</p> <p>2.2.4 Businesses choose to transition to more sustainable practices and materials</p>	<p>2.2.1 Opportunities to be noted in the minutes of IndiGrow minutes</p> <p>2.2.2 Deputy chair to make contact via email</p> <p>2.2.3 Comprehensive list of organisations and contacts for the Committee to use to initiate conversations and advocacy</p> <p>2.2.4 Economic Development Committee representative advocates for a sustainability audit</p>	<p>2.2.1 IndiGrow members</p> <p>2.2.2 IndiGrow members</p> <p>2.2.3 IndiGrow / Eco Dev</p> <p>2.2.4 Eco Dev / Sam Niedra (Kausal)</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Standing item on agenda</p> <p>Prepare and share stakeholder list</p> <p>Sam as guest speaker – March 2024</p>

Action Plan Item 3: Business Collaboration

Priority	Actions	Outcome	Measure	Who	When
3.1 Identify ways to make Council engagement with the business sector less intimidating	3.1.1 Support the development of a Business Welcome Kit from ISC including a “who’s who” flyer to help businesses navigate Council 3.1.2 Support the New Business page on the ISC website to help individuals navigate ISC	3.1.1 Businesses feel welcome and included with access to vital contacts and resources from day one 3.1.2 ISC business webpage page lists resource downloads, relevant contacts and links through to important business information	3.1.1 Kit inclusions to be defined and available to send to businesses 3.1.2 Page is set up and available with all relevant information	3.1.1 Eco Dev 3.1.2 Eco Dev	Revise, align with new Eco Dev strategy and and promote 2024
3.2 Provide strategic place-based advice to Council re. business collaboration	3.2.1 IndiGrow and ISC to engage with town-specific and industry groups that act as conduits to the Committee from each area in the shire.	3.2.1 Formal and non-formal groups in each region advocate and support small business growth and collaboration, and feed information and priorities back to the IndiGrow Committee	3.2.1 IndiGrow to list all relevant groups active in the Indigo Shire and work with Economic Development team to engage with them regularly. Set up 1-2 networking events per year with business networks	3.2.1 Eco Dev / IndiGrow members	Ongoing Standing agenda item
3.3 Encourage business sector to be part of the conversation re. Indigo Shire economic development	3.3.1 Engage regularly with our networks and community groups to advocate and support ISC opportunities and initiatives 3.3.2 Attend where possible existing community forums/ business networking events and workshops 3.3.3 Support the development and increase readership of the Economic Development newsletter	3.3.1 Improved awareness of opportunities, initiatives and issues within the local business community and to extend and strengthen IndiGrow Committee member networks 3.3.2 Improved visibility of IndiGrow, its Committee members and help encourage two-way conversations within our business community to ISC 3.3.3 ISC business community informed of important information and issues and provides relevant and contextual information to particular business types/groups	3.3.1 Each individual member of IndiGrow will engage digitally or in person with relevant stakeholders and groups 3.3.3 Recurring agenda item for IndiGrow meetings to suggest content for newsletters. Economic development officer to confirm launch and timing of newsletters	3.3.1 Eco Dev / IndiGrow members 3.3.2 Eco Dev / IndiGrow members / networks 3.3.3 Eco Dev / IndiGrow Members / networks	Promote and use Engaged Indigo Monthly newsletter – member interviews Ongoing networking

Action Plan Item 4: Workforce Development

Priority	Actions	Outcome	Measure	Who	When
4.1 Encourage “grow your own” approach to staffing challenges in Indigo Shire i.e. Build expertise of emerging workforce in Indigo	4.1.1 Traineeship advocacy – engage early with young people to integrate them early to our local economy – Council, large employers, farms, etc	4.1.1 Businesses have access to local employee talent with ongoing commitment and give young locals and opportunity to try out different jobs and find opportunities that might suit them long term	4.1.1 Bev Hoffmann to meet with ISC on behalf of IndiGrow to discuss the potential of a pilot program which would include Council to demonstrate the benefits	4.1.1 Eco Dev Jobs & Skills / NELLEN / Sector organisations / Employment agencies	Ongoing
4.2 Monitor policy changes/incentives at federal/state level that can influence Indigo and share with Council	4.2.1 IndiGrow members and ISC to gather information relevant to staffing and employment, be a conduit to communicate the information via Council and our community	4.2.1 Publicise and promote opportunities for local businesses to benefit from programs and funding	4.2.1 Funding and program opportunities are brought to IndiGrow meetings and publicised through the economic development newsletter from ISC	4.2.1 Eco Dev/ IndiGrow members	Ongoing
4.3 Monitor and share innovative examples of solutions to staffing challenges for consideration by Indigo Shire businesses	4.3.1 IndiGrow members and ISC to bring innovative ideas and solutions to the Committee and discuss application in ISC context	4.3.1 Publicise and promote opportunities for local businesses to benefit from different approaches to staff management and education	4.3.1 Innovative staffing solutions, ideas and opportunities are brought to IndiGrow meetings and publicised through the economic development newsletter	4.3.1 Eco Dev/ IndiGrow members	Ongoing

Action Plan Item 5: Digital Connectivity

Priority	Actions	Outcome	Measure	Who	When
5.1 Identify safety and business impacts of poor connectivity and feed up to Council to support advocacy for improved connectivity	5.1.1 Encourage the Economic Development team to do a digital impacts survey	5.1.1 Data set developed to guide advocacy and conversation with government to lobby for better outcomes	5.1.1 Survey sent via the Economic Development team to all Indigo Shire businesses and data presented in a report (community survey utilising noticeboards, libraries and newsletters)	5.1.1 Eco Dev	Survey – Engaged Indigo DONE Aug/Sept 2023
	5.1.2 Engage with business network groups and industry representative groups on poor connectivity and identify blackspots	5.1.2 Understanding and definition of key hurdles businesses are facing in relation to internet and telecommunication connectivity	5.1.2 Survey sent via the Economic Development team to all ISC business and data presented in a report	5.1.2 Eco Dev	Survey Report 2023
	5.1.3 Liaise with ERV, ITAG, Ovens & Murray Digital Futures Group and telecommunications representatives to highlight the safety concerns regarding poor connectivity, business impacts and new technology impacts	5.1.3 Partner with and support organisations to advocate for better technology outcomes for ISC businesses	5.1.3 Attendance and continued representation at meetings and reports back to IndiGrow	5.1.3 Eco Dev	Ongoing advocacy and participation at forums
	5.1.4 Encourage and liaise with CBConnect to advocate for funding opportunities within ISC	5.1.4 Partner with and support CBConnect to lobby for funding for improved telecommunication outcomes	5.1.4 Identify and obtain funding for improved telecommunications infrastructure	5.1.4 Eco Dev / CBC	Ongoing Newsletter – Oct 2023