

Mayor's Report to the Community



General Rate

The Council at its meeting on 25 June passed an increase of 2.4% in general rate revenue for the 2018-2019 financial year. In setting the general rate, the Council has remained mindful of the cost of living pressures facing our community whilst also ensuring that we continue to provide core services at an affordable level. The challenge has once again been in balancing the competing priorities of services we must provide, services we would like to provide, the continuation of strategic actions, maintaining a sound financial position and keeping rate increases to an acceptable level.

The rates this year reflect changes in the operations of the Council and increases in costs from suppliers. The major areas of increase are in waste management, roads and parks. It is important to note that there are continuing pressures on the overheads of the Council, commonly referred to as the cost of doing business. Unless the Council maintains a realistic approach to the development of its Estimates and therefore the levying of its rates, then the overheads will start to bite into the level of works and services traditionally provided by the Council.

Service rates and charges

The Waste Management Service Charge has increased from \$198 to \$203 per tenement which reflects a 2.53% increase over last year. This \$5 increase is to cover the cost of the regional contracts for the provision of the household garbage collection and kerbside recycling services and is charged to each household that receives a kerbside recycling and garbage collection service. There is also an increase in the Fire Service Levy which is collected by the Council on behalf of the State Government.

Rating policies

The Council has agreed to continue with the 5% discount for early payment of rates, with payment to be made in full by 31 August 2018 for the discount to apply. The Council will again offer the availability of approved regular instalments, and offers rate remissions of \$35 for eligible pensioners who live alone.

Capital works

A total capital works program of \$11.74m. is planned for this year. Major capital works include \$1.81m. for urban roads, \$1.94m. for rural roads, \$200,000 for footpaths, \$855,000 for bridges, \$118,000 for car parks, \$310,000 for drainage, \$235,000 for waste management, \$726,000 for parks and amenities, \$158,000 for aged-persons home unit refurbishments, and \$747,000 for recreation ground and sports centre upgrades. The program is also supported by borrowings of \$1m. towards the replacement of our street lights to LED lighting.

Strategic issues

Our Strategic Plan identifies Council's priorities for 2014-2024 and sets the future direction for the Council in determining how best to direct its resources and efforts to achieve the vision and aspirations of our local community. It summarises the key objectives, strategies and actions that the Council plans to pursue over the coming 10-year period and guides the Council's Annual Plan which details the initiatives and actions to be funded each year to achieve the long-term objectives.

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Strategic issues cont.

Some of the major initiatives and actions in the Annual Plan for 2018-2019 are:

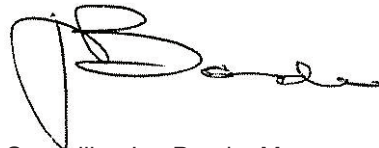
- Complete planning of the former Penguin Recreation Ground redevelopment and investigate funding/developer opportunities
- Continue to develop the Central Coast shared pathways network: completing the Turners Beach to Leith Shared Pathway, the safe road-use project along Penguin Road between Robertsons Road and Seaside Crescent, and progressing funding opportunities for the Penguin to Sulphur Creek Shared Pathway
- Complete a development plan for the remediation of the Penguin foreshore and investigate funding opportunities
- Create further placemaking opportunities in Penguin and Ulverstone to make our central business districts vibrant community hubs for locals and visitors alike
- Finalise and commence implementation of the Perry-Ling Gardens Master Plan
- Complete the construction of the Reibey Street/ Crescent Street/Kings Parade/Queen's Garden area

- Undertake a feasibility study assessment for an annual adventure festival for Central Coast
- Undertake design work for the Cultural Precinct (Ulverstone History Museum, Visitor Centre, Art Gallery and Planetarium), if funding application is successful

Local government elections

Local government elections will take place in October this year and I encourage everyone to take an active interest in who you would like to represent you on Council over the next four years to ensure that your community continues to grow and thrive in the way you envision it could.

Our community is made up of people with a great diversity of interests, skills, ideas, needs and expectations and it is important that Council also has that same diversity when making important decisions which affect our liveability and lifestyle. If you know someone who would make a great contribution on Council, please encourage them to nominate in the upcoming election.



Councillor Jan Bonde, Mayor

July 2018