

Mayor's Report to the Community



General Rate

The Council at its meeting on 20 June 2022 passed a 4.05% increase in general rate revenue for the 2022-2023 financial year.

In setting the General Rate, the Council has been mindful of the cost of living pressures facing our community and ensuring that we continue to provide core services at an affordable level.

The rates this year reflect changes in the operations and continuing pressures on the overheads of the Council with the major areas of increase being in waste management and parks.

The Council has endeavoured to once again deliver a responsible budget which balances the competing priorities of services we must provide, services we would like to provide and the continuation of strategic actions whilst also maintaining a sound financial position.

This year saw a three-year valuation adjustment factor applied by the Valuer-General. These adjustment factors were inconsistent throughout the municipal area ranging from 10% to 60% in primary production.

In recognition of these fluctuations, and also that valuation adjustment factors are based on an average adjustment through land classes, the Council this year has elected to introduce a variation to the General Rate for industrial and commercial land and primary production. This will have the effect of ensuring more consistent increases throughout the municipal area of all land use classes. The impact of these increases will not be the same across the whole municipal area due to some properties receiving different services. For instance, residential properties will see average increases ranging around 4.08%, rural properties increasing by around 4.9% and commercial and industrial properties increasing by around 3.6%.

Service rates and charges

The Waste Management Service Charge has increased from \$270 to \$280 per tenement and is charged to each household that receives a kerbside recycling, FOGO and waste collection service.

There is also a small 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. Payment is to be made in full by 31 August 2022 for the discount to apply. The Council is also pleased to continue its practice of not charging penalties for late payment of rates. The Council will again offer the availability of approved regular instalments and offers rate remissions of \$35 for eligible pensioners who live alone.

Conservation Covenant Rate Rebate

The Council has adopted a Conservation Covenant Rate Rebate Policy, whereby a rate rebate is to be provided to ratepayers that have registered conservation covenants within the municipal area of Central Coast under either the Private Forest Reserves Program or the Private Land Conservation Program. You will need to apply for the rebate on an annual basis.

Waste Levy

The State Government has introduced a Waste Levy of \$20 per tonne for waste going into landfill this coming year which is a key action from Tasmania's draft Waste Action Plan.

The levy will provide an incentive to divert waste from landfill and funding for innovative waste and resource recovery initiatives to help build a circular economy in Tasmania, supporting the creation of new jobs and businesses.

This levy will be recouped by the Council through an increase in the Waste Management Charge which is a separate line item on the Rates and an increase in fees at the Resource Recovery Centre.

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Capital Works

A total capital works program of \$24.69m is planned for this year. This is a large program for the Council due to major strategic works that are planned to happen over the year. Major capital works this year include \$6m for the Coastal Pathway and \$2.8m for staged reconstruction of Ironcliffe Road. Other capital works include \$1.375m for urban roads, \$4.62m for rural roads; \$594,000 for footpaths; \$804,000 for bridges; \$15,000 for car parks; \$320,000 for drainage; \$795,000 for waste management; \$1.67m for parks; \$465,000 for public amenities, \$415,000 for cultural activities; \$248,000 for public halls and buildings and \$2.19m for recreation ground and sports centre upgrades. The program is also supported by borrowings of \$2.7m to contribute to the Coastal Pathway.

Strategic issues

Our Strategic Plan identifies the 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 ten-year period and guides the Council's Annual Plan which details the initiatives and actions to be funded each year in order to achieve the long term objectives.

Some of the major initiatives and actions in the Annual Plan for 2022-2023 are:

- Undertake the redevelopment of the former Penguin Recreation Ground
- Investigate and prepare preliminary designs for a shared pathway/roadway between Watcombe Beach and Rockliffs Road
- Liaise with local indigenous Australian community groups to develop an understanding of areas of cultural significance
- Develop a Community Health and Wellbeing Plan
- Undertake a review of the impact of homelessness in Central Coast and include an action plan
- Finalisation of Camping By-law to allow freedom camping within Central Coast
- Undertake redesign work on Reibey Street
- Complete implementation plan for the Perry-Ling Gardens
- Develop Landscape Guidelines for nature strips (Greening Central Coast Strategy)
- Undertake a detailed climate change assessment on the Council's assets

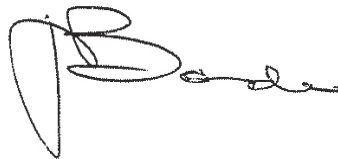
- Investigate with Stadiums Tasmania the use of the Dial Sports Complex
- Complete the Fairway Park Master Plan
- Undertake a comprehensive review of the Arts and Culture Strategy, including creative arts
- Public art projection at HIVE (on the large wall facing Ulverstone War Memorial)
- Conduct a review of the Ulverstone Civic Centre to improve community outcomes.

Local Government Elections

Local Government elections will take place in October this year and for the first time, voting will be compulsory. I encourage you to take an active interest in who will represent you on the 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 interest, skills, ideas, needs and expectations and it is important that the 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 the Council, please encourage them to nominate. Further information will be available on the Local Government Association Tasmania website.

Lastly, it is with mixed emotions that I write my last Mayor's Report to the Community. After 12 years in the role, it is time for me to step down. It has been a privilege to serve this community and I am proud of the many achievements we have shared over this time. There is still so much to be done and I wish the new Council well over the next four years. Thank you for the trust you have shown in my leadership and for allowing me the honour of serving as your Mayor.



Councillor Jan Bonde, Mayor

July 2022