

Mayor's Report to the Community



A Message from the Mayor

On behalf of Council and as your Mayor, it is a pleasure to report to you on Council's plans for our community for the coming year.

The newly elected Council has been working well together. We are committed to a continuous improvement approach. We are also focused on investing to achieve great things for our community's future.

Council's Finances

Council at its meeting on 19 June 2023 adopted its Annual Budget Estimates and Long-term Financial Plan.

The Long-term Financial Plan demonstrates that Council is in a strong financial position and meets the targets and philosophies of sound financial management in the medium to long-term.

Council has been mindful of ensuring that the services provided can be maintained in a sustainable manner. Just like households, Council's costs have been increasing.

While the Consumer Price Index (CPI) is not particularly relevant when applied to the operations of local government, we understand the impact on cost of living for residents. CPI for Hobart for the year ended March 2023 was 6.9%.

The Local Government Association of Tasmania publishes a Council Cost Index to better reflect the cost increases associated with the delivery of Local Government services. The Council Cost Index for this year is 8.11%.

Council's underlying operating surplus is a modest \$52,000 compared with an underlying surplus of \$656,000 last year. Whilst a reduction in profit, the result does remain financially sustainable, and Council considers this appropriate in the current climate particularly as households try to manage increased costs of living.

Council's net worth as of 30 June 2024 is estimated to be \$621m and includes:

- \$544m property, plant, and infrastructure
- Cash on hand of \$9.925m
- Total borrowings of \$11.226m

The \$29m capital program is supported by up to \$2m in borrowings and \$11m in grants. Council's debt remains at a manageable level.

Rates and Charges Increases

Despite soaring inflation levels, the impact of the changes to rates and charges will result in bills receiving an overall increase of between 3.2% and 4% depending on your property's value.

The general rate has increased by 4.4%.

Council's Waste Management Service has not increased. The Charge remains at \$280 for those that receive a kerbside recyclables, FOGO, and waste collection service.

Council has continued with the 5% discount for early payment of rates. Payment is to be made in full by 31 August 2023 for the discount to apply.

The Council will again offer the availability of approved regular instalments for those ratepayers that wish to use this option.

Waste Management Costs

The community's good work in using FOGO and reducing the level of waste to landfill is now providing better environmental outcomes and has assisted in managing Council's costs for waste services.

Other communities in our region that have not yet implemented FOGO are faced with increasing costs and higher charges to their communities.

Councillors

CHERYL FULLER (*Mayor*)
PO Box 220, Ulvstn, 0458 888 040

JOHN BESWICK (*Deputy Mayor*)
PO Box 220, Ulvstn, 0418 140 143

GARRY CARPENTER
PO Box 220, Ulvstn, 0407 376 256

AMANDA DIPROSE
PO Box 220, Ulvstn, 0400 173 045

CASEY HISCUTT
PO Box 220, Ulvstn, 0447 002 216

SOPHIE LEHMANN
PO Box 220, Ulvstn, 0423 570 928

MICHAEL SMITH
PO Box 220, Ulvstn, 0419 986 918

PHILIP VINEY
PO Box 220, Ulvstn, 6425 5388

KATE WYLIE
PO Box 220, Ulvstn, 0488 410 853

Management

BARRY OMUNDSON
General Manager

PAUL BREADEN
Director Infrastructure Services

SAMANTHA SEARLE
Director Corporate Services

DARYL CONNELLY
Director Community Services



CENTRAL COAST COUNCIL

PO Box 220
19 King Edward Street
Ulverstone Tasmania 7315
Tel 03 6429 8900

www.centralcoast.tas.gov.au

Pensioner Support

Eligible pensioner concession cardholders can get a remission on their rates for their principal place of residence.

The Tasmanian Government fund this discount and in 2023/24 the remission is capped at \$368 for customers who are also customers of TasWater and \$542 for customers that are not TasWater customers.

In addition to the usual Tasmanian Government funded pensioner remissions, Central Coast Council also funds additional support to eligible pensioners living alone of \$35.

Any pensioner who has not previously received a remission is encouraged to contact Council and one of our Customer Service Team will support you in completing an application.

Key Projects and Focus for 2023/2024

In addition to its core business, Council sets specific goals and actions each year. Council's Annual Plan and Capital Works Budget outlines key initiatives planned to be delivered in 2023/2024.

Council will develop a new 10-year strategic plan in consultation with the community as our current plan ends on 20 June 2024. This will help shape the future for our community and will determine Council's focus over the coming years.

Council will be heavily engaged in the Future of Local Government Review over the coming months and will advocate on behalf of and in the best interest of the community. Council feels strongly that our community's social and financial health and well-being must be maintained as a part of any reform process.

Council's capital works budget for 2023-24 is \$29m and includes a continued focus on asset renewals to maintain the existing asset base to community expectations. The program includes renewal expenditure of \$8.850m and \$20.195m in upgrades and new infrastructure assets.

Major projects include:

- Flood damage remediation projects
- Stage one of upgrading Ironcliffe Road at Penguin
- Continuation of the coastal shared pathway at Turners Beach and Turners Beach Esplanade
- Reconstruction of the Heybridge Recreation Ground clubrooms following the fire in 2021 and
- A major upgrade of the Bertha Street drainage outfall at West Ulverstone

Flood remediation projects include work at Gunns Plains Road, Lowana Road, and the replacement of the Leven River bridge at Loongana.

In the planning and building of its infrastructure renewals, Council looks for opportunities to improve the community's resilience for flood events by building stronger infrastructure more able to withstand floods and weather events that we know will inevitably occur.

The commencement of the Ironcliffe Road upgrades, funded by the Australian Government, will also be a key project for 2023-2024. Ironcliffe Road is well utilised by the community and visitors alike. The upgrade work will improve safety and build capacity of the road for users accessing services including the school, and the Dial Range walking and mountain bike tracks.

Council will utilise Local Roads and Community Infrastructure funding from the Australian Government to continue expanding the coastal pathway at Turners Beach including the Turners Beach Esplanade. The pathway to date is demonstrating its value in providing increased connectivity, fostering better health and well-being of the community, and attracting visitors to Central Coast's beautiful coastline and beaches.

In the year ahead, I look forward to progressing these initiatives and working with elected members, staff, and the community.

Keeping you, and us, up to date

Council is always interested in finding better ways to communicate and engage with the community.

Council will continue its community conversations which are held monthly in locations throughout the municipal area. It's a great way to meet the Councillors and senior staff and helps us to understand local issues and connect with the community we serve.

In addition to our usual forms of communication, Council has also recently opted to use an App (Antenno) to help keep the community informed about important news updates like kerbside collection changes, events, and emergency incidents (such as fallen trees and road closures).

One major upside to the App is that it's not just one-way traffic. Users can tell us things too -like if they've spotted a pothole or graffiti. A brochure is enclosed with more information.



Councillor Cheryl Fuller, Mayor

July 2023