



Media Release

24 MAY 2019

COUNCIL RELEASES ITS 2019/20 BUDGET FOR PUBLIC DISPLAY

For immediate release.

At its meeting on 21 May 2019, Council considered and approved a draft Budget and Operational Plan for the coming twelve months. The draft Budget was prepared after extensive workshops with Council and management staff and reflects an overall forecast deficit of \$184,684.

The operational expenditure budget will see \$27,251,907 spent on services for the community and \$599,481 used to pay down debt. The total forecast expenditure budget is \$40,033,875, which includes an extensive Capital Works Program for 2019/20 totalling \$12,182,487.

Major works planned in 2019/20 include:

- Upgrade of the Shire Works Depot
- Commencement of renewal and upgrade of the Gilgandra cultural precinct
- Extensions to the Gilgandra Shire Library
- A new SES Headquarters
- Continuation of projects associated with the Stronger Country Communities Fund
- New disability housing accommodation
- Promotional signage renewal
- Projects associated preparing our community for Inland Rail construction
- Dental Surgery upgrade
- Caravan Park water supply
- Water Treatment Works business case preparation
- Sewer Pump Station No 1 construction of emergency by-pass
- Sewer Safe and Secure Program business case
- Lucas and Yarragrin Bridges renewal planning

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RATES & CHARGES

General Rates

The total General Rates that will be levied by Council in 2019/20 will be \$5,075,326 prior to concessions, which is an increase of 2.7%.

All rating categories (being farmland, residential and business) have had the increase applied evenly however ratepayers' individual accounts will vary according to any changes in land valuations.

Water & Sewer Charges

Council water charges for the Gilgandra township and the Tooraweenah village have been increased by 5%. Council sewer charges for the Gilgandra township have increased by 7%. The increases in the township water and sewerage charges is a reflection of costs to replace aging infrastructure.

Waste Management Charges

Council domestic waste, commercial waste and other waste charges for the Gilgandra township have increased by 3%. The rural waste charge has had no increase applied. The increases are required for the continued operations and future projects at the Gilgandra Waste Facility.

Stormwater Charge

The stormwater charge for the Gilgandra township has not increased and remains at \$25 per rating assessment.

In summarising the budget, Deputy Mayor, Cr Ash Walker says:

“Council’s budget this year continues to provide a wide range of services to the community with a focus on value for money. Council is also very conscientious of the need to maintain and renew essential public infrastructure to ensure it continues to meet the needs of the local community.”

Adding:

“Highlights of this year’s budget include ongoing significant Capital Works expenditure as a result of opportunities offered by the NSW State Government under its Stronger Country Communities, Regional Growth Fund, Regional Cultural Fund and Infrastructure grants. Projects associated with this funding include commencement of the renewal and upgrade of the Cooee Heritage Centre and surrounding cultural precinct, extensions to the Gilgandra Shire Library, a new SES headquarters and a funding allocation for projects to prepare Gilgandra for the Inland Rail construction phase in an effort to ensure the local community achieves maximum benefit from this project.”

“In addition, Council’s budget includes the planned upgrade of its Works Depot and an ongoing commitment to both lifting and maintaining the standard of our local road network including detailed planning for the replacement of Lucas Bridge in 2020/21.”

“Another exciting project planned for the year is the construction of further disability housing to the value of \$1.5m. Council also continues to address its renewal of its ageing water and sewerage network assets.”

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“Council will continue to invest significant funds, as we have done in previous years, to continue to maintain and renew our roads.”

“This is a responsible budget where there has been a focus on continuing to invest significant funds into projects within our shire to help stimulate our economy whilst being mindful of the impacts of this drought and the financial burden caused by the drought to our community.”

Cr Walker acknowledges the work that has been put into these plans:

“I would like to take this opportunity to thank both Councillors and staff for their efforts in putting this operational plan and budget together by way of workshops over a number of months in the lead up to the preparation of the draft documents.”

“I should point out that while Council is budgeting for a deficit this year of \$184,684, over the next ten (10) years of our Long Term Financial Plan Council is projecting an overall surplus of \$5.4m. I’m also pleased to advise the community that Council continue to operate in a financially sustainable manner, meeting all of its financial benchmarking ratios.”

Council invites written feedback from the community regarding these Budget and Operational Plans via mail (PO Box 23, Gilgandra), email (council@gilgandra.nsw.gov.au or by visiting Council’s website www.gilgandra.nsw.gov.au/Have-your-say).

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