



DISTRICT COUNCIL OF GRANT

MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

20 JUNE 2017

2017-18 BUDGET ADOPTION

Council's budget was adopted on 19 June 2017. The 2017-18 budget continues Council's focus on financial sustainability with the benefits arising from some hard decisions made by Council over the last few years starting to be borne out with a small operating surplus for the first time in over ten years.

District Council of Grant Mayor Richard Sage said that Council was conscious of the impact of the current financial climate on the general public as well as the need to maintain services to the community. "This budget is financially responsible. It has been developed in line with Council's Long Term Financial Plan and Asset Management Plans and we have been able to maintain a 2.5% general rate rise."

Mayor Sage said that as in other years, rates had been set by the Council to balance the level of services desired by the community, against the community's capacity and willingness to pay. "Despite rising costs, we have been able to keep rate increases to a minimum while continuing to ensure that valued services and infrastructure are maintained and key infrastructure projects are funded responsibly."

\$2.6 million has been allocated for new assets including \$320,000 for the sealing of a 2km section of Mingbool Road with 50% coming from grant funding. \$339,000 has been allocated for kerbing and channelling of township streets and \$113,000 for upgrades to Community Wastewater Management Systems.

Other major new initiatives proposed include \$585,000 for a major re-vamp of the Little Hunter/Jetty precinct in Port MacDonnell. The "Waterfront" which will be 50% funded through grant funding (pending a successful application) includes a boardwalk, creative public art, interpretive signage, passive rest areas and shelters, rehabilitated lawn and picnic facilities, landscaping, rationalization and upgrade of the playground area and linkages to other parts of the foreshore and township. Implementation of projects listed in the Port MacDonnell and River and Coastal Master Plans continues with an allocation of \$118,000 for the upgrade of the Donovans Boat Ramp.

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Council's 2017-18 budget will also provide continued financial support for those in the most need with a 60% rebate on rubbish rates for eligible concession card holders. The rebate is in addition to the State Government rate concession.

The Council's net financial liabilities, being the most comprehensive measure of indebtedness, is expected to decrease by \$450,000 in 2017-18 to approximately \$3.8M at 30 June 2018 – this is equivalent to a \$16,000 mortgage on a \$500,000 house.

Council continues to assess our future directions, operating practices and opportunities to improve our financial performance without compromising services or increasing rates beyond what the community will accept.

Full budget papers can be found at www.dcgrant.sa.gov.au/FinancialManagement and the Annual Business Plan can be found here www.dcgrant.sa.gov.au/AnnualBusinessPlan

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