

## MEDIA RELEASE

Thursday, June 16, 2022

Waratah-Wynyard Council delivers a balanced, responsible and community-focused Annual Plan and Budget for 2022-23

Waratah-Wynyard Council will consider a budget that reflects a strong and sustainable financial position and delivers a number of major projects for the community at their meeting on Monday 20 June.

Council will vote to endorse a recommended general rate increase of 3.81%, which is below the Council Cost Index of 4.06% and follows increases of just 1.9% and 0% over the last two years.

The budget proposes capital expenditure of \$11.411m, including \$4.833 for new infrastructure spending, \$4.435m in asset renewals and \$2.142m on upgrading existing assets.

General Manager Shane Crawford says the budget achieves the targets of Council's Financial Management Strategy and demonstrates financial sustainability in the medium to long term.

"Council is expected to show an underlying surplus of \$0.491m that will sufficiently cover future operational costs arising from new capital works projects committed to by Council in the current and next financial years."

Council has received new adjustment factors for properties this year. Overall property values are up significantly across the municipal area. Primary production properties have seen the most substantial increase in property values. Council does not collect more rates as a result of these changes, however, what does occur is a change in the distribution of the rate burden between properties. All properties are impacted differently as a result.

Mayor Robby Walsh says the budget sees the delivery phase of a number of key strategic plans and has a significant focus on the environment and sustainability practices and community recreation space upgrades.

"We are entering the third year of implementation of the award-winning Integrated Council Environmental Plan (iCEP), with the intention to establish an Environmental Advisory group to inform Council decision-making as we work through a number of key projects including erosion mitigation at Somerset and Sisters Beach, storm water upgrades for Boat Harbour and Somerset and biodiversity enhancements at Camp Creek and Fossil Bluff."

"It is also pleasing to see Council has reached its goal of full cost recovery for waste services whilst maintaining the very popular free use of the waste transfer station for ratepayers. We will also introduce kerbside recycling services in Waratah and two of our rural pockets that have expressed a desire for that service in the coming budget."

### Waratah Wynyard Council

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In addition, the annual plan for 2022-23 outlines a number of key priority projects including the completion of the ANZAC Park All-abilities playground at Somerset, Stage 1 of the Waratah Falls Walk at Waratah and progression of the Boat Harbour Beach Master Plan.

“The budget delivers on community expectations of both balanced and sustainable financial management and genuinely listening to our community and delivering outcomes that reflect their priorities” said Mayor Walsh.

Whilst acknowledging that ratepayers are never excited to receive a rate increase, Mayor Walsh says the community was front of mind when preparing the 2022-23 budget.

“I believe our community will see the value in the strategic plans we are delivering on and understand that there is a cost to delivering essential Council services and infrastructure.”

“Key projects such as Stage 1 of the Wynyard Sporting Precinct, enhancements at Table Cape lookout and the long-awaited Coastal Pathway between Cooee and Wynyard will help to build a community that is more attractive and liveable and that values, respects and cares for the health and wellbeing of residents and visitors alike.”

**Authorised for general media distribution by Shane Crawford, General Manager, Waratah-Wynyard Council on Thursday, June 16, 2022.**