

MEDIA RELEASE

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Council adopts budget delivering modest rate increase

Waratah-Wynyard Council adopted the 2019/20 Annual Plan and Budget Estimates at its Special Council Meeting held last night.

Mayor Robby Walsh said “Council is acutely aware of the financial pressures that members of the community are facing and have applied a modest general rate increase of **1.88%**. This is well below the recommended 2019 Council Cost Index of 3.38%”.

“Some residents may see a greater increase due to adjustment factors applied after recent property valuations by the Valuer General, however many will actually see a decrease in their rates. The overall average increase of just 1.88% is a pretty good result.”

Council’s operating budget includes projected income of \$19,531,322 and expenses of \$19,445,449 resulting in a small underlying surplus of \$85,873. The Comprehensive Result indicates a projected surplus of \$1,564,864 and the closing cash position will be approximately \$6.8 million, after all carry forward capital works have been completed.

General Manager Shane Crawford is pleased that as well as achieving a surplus operating position, the budget includes a number of service level increases and key projects that will have long term benefits for the community.

“The Annual Plan actions stated for next year will provide benefit for all areas of the community and include the development of a Cam River Masterplan, Recreation Plan for Sisters Beach, a feasibility study for Waratah Falls walks, and the finalisation of the Boat Harbour Beach Masterplan.”

Council’s capital works program of \$11.7m includes carry forwards, \$2.02m for asset renewals and new assets of \$5.98m.

“Our projects will focus on creating thriving, vibrant communities and include further progression of the Wynyard Waterfront developments, the upgraded Zig Zag Path and ANZAC Park in Somerset, public toilets in East Wynyard as part of playground improvements, changerooms at the Wynyard Recreation Ground, in-ground irrigation at sporting facilities in Somerset and Wynyard, pedestrian crossings and the completion of the CBD Plaza in Wynyard ” said Mr Crawford.

Improved safety in Wynyard and Somerset is also a focus for Council and CCTV will be rolled out in the new financial year.

Waste Management and the environment will be two key focus areas for Council in 2019/20 with a draft Waste Strategy to be considered by the community early in the financial year. The community have also been invited to participate in the development of an Environmental Plan.

Authorised for general media distribution by Shane Crawford, General Manager, Waratah-Wynyard

Council on Monday 24 June 2019

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