



King Island Council

Media Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
10 July 2017

ANNUAL PLAN AND BUDGET APPROVED

Eight of King Island's Councillors including the newly elected Councillor Chivers were joined by Council staff and a large number of community members at June's Ordinary Council meeting in Currie

The June meeting is usually well attended with a guarantee of debate and discussion around Council's Annual Plan and Budget Estimates. All Tasmanian Councils must agree to an Annual Plan to make clear the actions Council intends to take over the next financial year. The Budget Estimates consequently outline how this plan will be financed.

This year Mayor Duncan McFie is pleased to announce an extensive program of capital investment while rate increases have been limited to 2.3 %, in line with the Consumer Price Index. "Council understands the financial pressures experienced by many families and businesses and the need for Council to display fairness when making decisions about who should pay for what. However, my Council colleagues and I were sent a clear message in the recent Community Needs Assessment report. Our community expressed an understandable desire to improve infrastructure and maintain high standards of service. I believe we have achieved that balance between limiting rate increases and meeting the needs of the community; my colleagues should be proud of a job well done".

Headline items in this year's plan include an extensive sealing and re-sheeting program for King Island's roads, new recycling and waste minimisation options as well as upgrades to outdoor facilities for young people such as the playground in Grassy and Currie Skatepark, and continuing upgrades to public infrastructure such as toilets. Proposed works also include the development of a sealed car park in Gatenby Park (Currie) to address the increasing demand for vehicle parking in and around the central business district. Behind the scenes Council plans to improve hard standing for aircraft at the airport, and prepare for the installation of an aviation fuel depot, in addition to constructing a new waste cell at Parenna.

Continuing the recent drive towards a fairer "user pays" system, there will be an increase in waste collection fees. This will partly reduce the losses being caused by waste management and result in freeing up some additional funding to be available for the infrastructure improvements called for by the community. The airport is another area in which losses are being made, with Council continuing to monitor the growth in visitor numbers while exploring alternative solutions to help reduce the airport's financial impact on our community. Achieving a commercially viable and affordable operating model at the airport is an ongoing priority, and significant work in the next year will focus on better understanding the mechanisms necessary for this to happen.

Council is also listening to people looking to start new businesses, or simply wanting to build, and is looking for ways to help cap fees for new developments and include incentives to encourage developers to complete their projects in a timely manner. In this next year there will be an option for new developers of projects of up to \$500,000; who complete their development within two years, to

apply for a refund of planning permit fees. There will also be a range of “fee caps” placed on larger developments to continue Council’s push to encourage the economic growth trend that has become more obvious over the last few years.

“These are exciting times for King Island” said Mayor McFie. “With economic growth, comes ongoing employment opportunities and capacity for retention of many of our young people, and more stability and sustainability for our community generally. We look forward to seeing all of these things come to fruition”.

-ends-

Media Contacts:

Mayor Duncan McFie
0428 621 761

David Laugher
GENERAL MANAGER
Phone: 03 6462 9000