

ITEMS FOR DECISION

ITEM NO: 1 – ADOPTION OF COUNCIL PLANS AND RATES & CHARGES
FILE: 03.38 / 05.33
FROM: GENERAL MANAGER

The draft Jerilderie Shire Council Delivery Program (2014 – 2018) and Operational Plan (2014 – 2015) was presented to Council at the April Ordinary Meeting and placed on community exhibition for a period of 28 days for community comment. A public meeting was held on Wednesday 21 May to discuss the content of the plans.

There has been a number of submissions received up to the closing date of Monday 16 June, copies of which are provided separately –we are unable to include in the business paper, as this would make the submissions public requiring prior permission from the writer in each case.

Submissions

The 25 submissions are detailed below:

	Objection	Comments
1	Rate increase	Is Shire being fiscally responsible? Is Shire making hard decisions to curb spending or just slugging ratepayers?
2	Rate increase	Council receives extra rates when VG does valuations Other Shires are not increasing rates Increase of 23% over 3 years
3	Tourism and General Rate Increase	Increase in land, water and tip fees Object to returning The Willows to Crown-impact on tourism
4	Rate increase and tip fees	Poorly timed public meeting Seeking an inquiry into decision to increase rates Concern with increase in tip fees
5	Rate increase	Objection
6	Rate increase	Council cut its own costs and services-not raise rates Do not implement new projects
7	Rate increase	Job share senior positions with neighbouring Shires
8	Rate increase	Independent audit of Jerilderie Shire office to deal with inefficiencies Review of planned projects
9	Rate increase	Cut jobs, reduce excessive salaries within the office and audit outdoor staff for inefficiencies Not getting all weather road access to their properties

This is page 2 of 29 of the General Manager's Reports as submitted to the Ordinary Meeting of Council held Tuesday 24 June 2014.

..... General Manager Mayor

	Objection	Comments
10	Rate increase	Poorly timed public meeting Council to look within its own expense structure to achieve balance
11	Rate increase	Proposed increase far in excess of neighbouring Shires
12	Rate increase	Excessive compared to other shires Effect of VG valuation increases rates Council and Shire residents need to lower expectations
13	Rate increase	Council discriminating against rural ratepayers Woodside Road neglected
14	Rate increase	Grading of gravel roads infrequent Save money within administration
15	Rate increase	Questioning why such a large rate rise
16	Rate increase	No rate rise above the cap
17	Rate increase	Further consultation
18	Rate increase	Further consultation
19	Rate increase	Shire needs to look internally to achieve greater efficiency
20	Rate increase	Rate increase should be fair and equitable across all ratepayers Shire to be prudent with expenditure
21	Rate increase	Further consultation Mounting unrest within rural ratepayer sector
22	Rate increase	Further consultation Concern with increase in tip fees
23	Rate increase	Rate rise should be shared sensibly
24	Rate Increase and others	Possible user pays levy ie on heavy vehicles Relinquish trusteeship of Willows and Courthouse Swimming Pool-cost of lifeguards RSL Hall-demolish
25	Tourism	No money proposed for tourism

The main focus of concern is the proposed rate increase of 7% above expected cap commencing in July 2015 and the lack of community consultation on this proposal.

The meeting of 21 May was the beginning of the process which Council will be required to complete before any application for a rate rise above the rate cap limit is made. Application needs to be with the Minister by the end of February 2015.

Council should now consider a schedule for additional public meetings and other communication, such as a survey, in order to ensure that the ratepayers have been given ample opportunity to comment, and we have a clear record of the

This is page 3 of 29 of the General Manager's Reports as submitted to the Ordinary Meeting of Council held Tuesday 24 June 2014.

..... General Manager Mayor

level of support for the proposal required for any application. Timing of meetings around expected farm activity to ensure attendance needs to be a priority.

In addition, a straight forward survey form to each ratepayer should be developed to allow absent ratepayers to contribute to the debate.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS (FAGS)

At the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) General Assembly in Canberra this week, 900 delegates representing Councils from across Australia voted to call on the Commonwealth Government to reverse the decision included in the 2014 Federal Budget to freeze indexation on Financial Assistance Grants (FAGs) for the next three years.

Apparently the indexation decisions on Financial Assistance Grants fall entirely within the discretion and powers of the Commonwealth Treasurer, Hon Joe Hockey MP. ALGA expects that a strong Congress resolution will pave the way for negotiations with the Treasurer, hopefully with some relaxation of the currently proposed three year freeze. The yearly effect on Council income if the Federal Government proposal goes forward is the following reduction in income:

2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
\$50,000	\$115,491	\$182,947	\$188,435	\$194,088	\$199,911	\$205,908	\$212,086	\$218,448	\$225,002

We will present the final effect of this matter to Council at the first 2014/2015 quarterly budget review scheduled for October 2014.

The Long Term Financial Plan is necessary under the Integrated Planning and Reporting requirements. It incorporates the proposed 10 year income and expenditure statement, balance sheet and cash flow statement.

It is necessary for Council to pass a formal resolution of the rates and annual charges for the Jerilderie Shire Council for the 2014/2015 financial year as a result of the adoption of the Delivery Program (2014 – 2018) and Operational Plan (2014 – 2015). The rates and annual charges for the 2014/2015 year are reproduced in the attachment (see attachment # 1).

FEES AND CHARGES

One point of concern to two of the correspondents was the introduction of new Waste Management charges associated with manning the town tip and introducing the user pays system. There has been minimum opportunity for the community to comment on this introduction, therefore I propose postponement of adoption of these new fees and charges until commencement of the manning operation. As this cannot be practically introduced before the Ordinary Council

This is page 4 of 29 of the General Manager’s Reports as submitted to the Ordinary Meeting of Council held Tuesday 24 June 2014.

..... General ManagerMayor

Meeting of 26 August, it is worthwhile allowing comment to be received up to 15th August to be included with a report on the matter to the August meeting.

The current draft document requires amendment to Appendix 2, Page 18-Private Works Gravel and Materials from Gravel Pits- to be varied from "as per quotation" to:

Fill loaded only	\$13.65 per m ³
Fill, load and haul	\$13.65 per m ³ plus cartage
Gravel loaded and hauled by Council	\$16.30 per m ³ plus cartage
Gravel loaded by Council and hauled privately	\$16.30 per m ³
Red sand	\$12.60 per m ³ plus cartage

RECOMMENDATION

That:

- 1) the Long Term Financial Plan be received
- 2) the Delivery Program and Operational Plan be adopted with changes as discussed
- 3) the rates and charges for the 2014/2015 financial year, as presented, with the exception of the Town Tip fees and charges and the amendment to private works charges for gravel and materials from pits, be adopted
- 4) a report be presented to the August meeting on introduction of Town Tip fees and charges

This is page 5 of 29 of the General Manager's Reports as submitted to the Ordinary Meeting of Council held Tuesday 24 June 2014.

..... General ManagerMayor