

# LITCHFIELD COUNCIL



*Community effort is essential*

## Special Council Meeting **BUSINESS PAPER** **WEDNESDAY 3/07/2019**

Meeting to be held commencing 6:30pm  
In Council Chambers at 7 Bees Creek Road, Freds Pass

**Silke Maynard, Interim Chief Executive Officer**

Any member of Council who may have a conflict of interest, or a possible conflict of interest in regard to any item of business to be discussed at a Council meeting or a Committee meeting should declare that conflict of interest to enable Council to manage the conflict and resolve it in accordance with its obligations under the Local Government Act and its policies regarding the same.



# SPECIAL COUNCIL AGENDA

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## LITCHFIELD COUNCIL MEETING

**Notice of Meeting**  
**to be held in the Council Chambers, Litchfield**  
**on Wednesday 3 July 2019 at 5:30pm**

Silke Maynard  
Interim Chief Executive Officer

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3	Apologies and Leave of Absence	
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NOTE: Attachments too large to include in the agenda can be found on Council's website at [www.litchfield.nt.gov.au](http://www.litchfield.nt.gov.au)



# COUNCIL REPORT

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<b>Agenda Item Number:</b>	06.01
<b>Report Title:</b>	Draft Municipal Plan & Budget 2019-20 Submissions
<b>Report Number:</b>	19/0071
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	3/07/2019
<b>Attachments:</b>	Attachment A – Table of Submissions received Attachment B – Recommendation for Amendments by Officers Attachment C – All Submissions Received by Council

## Purpose

This report presents submissions received on Council's Draft Municipal Plan 2019-20 and recommendations amendments to the draft plan.

## Summary

In line with legislative requirements Council resolved at its meeting held on the 15 May 2019 to release its Draft Municipal Plan 2019-20 inviting public comment. The draft plan was placed on public exhibition from 15 May to 6 June 2018 with 13 submissions received.

Attached to this report is a summary of all submissions: Attachment A – Table of Submissions, and Attachment C – All Submissions received by Council.

Suggested minor changes, resulting in amendments to the draft budget and editorial changes to the document are provided in Attachment B.

## Recommendation

THAT Council authorises the Chief Executive Officer to update the Budget 2019-20 in line with Attachment B and make editorial changes, as necessary to the Draft Municipal Plan and Budget 2019-20.

## Background

At its 15 May 2019 meeting, Council endorsed its Draft Municipal Plan 2019-20 and Budget to be placed on public exhibition for 21 days, inviting public comments.

Council at its 26 June 2019 meeting was presented with the summary of submissions received and resolved the following:

*THAT item 15.7 Draft Municipal Plan & Budget 2019-20 Submissions be deferred to the next meeting being a Special Meeting of Council for the following reasons:*

- *This report is not an open or transparent process*
- *The submissions should have been put into the report*
- *It does not have anything in reference to the successful grant for the Mango Strategic Roads project*

All submissions received are attached to this report (Attachment C). It is to be noted that statements and interpretations in the submissions are the opinion of the submitter and Council will only address comments that are a submission to the plan in the response presented in this report. Residents will receive a response of Council in writing after the meeting.

The 13 public submissions received include the following topics:

- Rate increase and rating policy
- Major projects (Community and Business Hub, Mango Strategic Roads Project, Aquatic Facility)
- Community consultation and engagement (for major projects and in determining service requirements)
- Council's financial management
- Infrastructure management (roads maintenance, cycle paths)
- New initiatives (chambers upgrade, Website update)
- Staffing structure and cost
- Waste management
- Natural resource management

Council received most submissions (8 out of the 13 submissions) on the proposed rate increase (Council acknowledges the current economic climate and continues to ensure operational expenditures are restrained in line with its Long-Term Financial Plan. It also is to be noted that the 5% proposed rate increase equates to \$40 per year and that the actual dollar increase is less than the increase of neighbouring councils (based on the average UCV residential property).

Attachment A to this report identifies the responses and suggested amendments regarding these submissions in detail. No changes are recommended as a consequence of public submissions.

The NTG Department of Local Government, Housing and Community Development has provided suggestions (not as public submission) regarding minor edits. As a result, items identified in Attachment B are recommended to be amended in the Draft Municipal Plan and Budget 2019-20.

During the period of public consultation, ownership of the property related to Council's workers village rating income has been transferred to the Northern Territory Government. With this transfer of title, the property becomes non-rateable under legislation and Council will lose the proposed rating income of \$55,211. The balance the loss of income, it is proposed to increase the transfer from Council's Asset Reserve to ensure Council can provide the services outlined in the Draft report. This increase in funds drawn from remains below the level of funding allowed for in the Long-Term Financial Plan.



## Links with Strategic Plan

A well-run Council

## Legislative and Policy Implications

Under Part 3.2 of the *Local Government Act* the Municipal Plan is to contain the following:

- A service delivery plan for the period to which the municipal plan relates;
- Council's Budget;
- Indicators for judging the standard of its performance.

The Municipal Plan must also contain, or incorporate by reference:

- Any long-term, community or strategic plan adopted by Council for the relevant period
- to which the municipal plan relates;
- The Council's long-term financial plan; and
- The Council's most recent assessments of:
  - Constitutional arrangements presently in force and whether they provide the most effective representation for the area;
  - Opportunities and challenges for local government service delivery in the Council's area;
  - Possible changes to the administrative and regulatory framework for delivering services within Council's area; and
  - Whether possibilities exist for improving local government service delivery by cooperation with other councils, government agencies or other organisations.

Litchfield Council Draft Municipal Plan 2019-20 complies with the above requirements.

Council must adopt a legally compliant budget. The Draft 'balanced' Budget 2019-20 is presented in accordance with Part 10.5, Section 127 (3) of the *Local Government Act*.

## Risks

Council is required to adopt a Municipal Plan by the 31 July of each year under Section 24 Local Government Act.

## Financial Implications

Amendments to the Draft Municipal Plan 2019/20 and Budget, as presented to Council will have the following financial implications (Attachment B) in summary:

	<b>Endorsed DRAFT Budget 2019-20 May 2019</b>	<b>Identified Amendments Increase (Decrease)</b>	<b>Amended DRAFT Budget 2019-20 July 2019</b>
Operational Revenue	\$16,493,299	(\$55,211)	\$16,438,088
Capital Revenue	\$7,584,743	\$0	\$7,584,743
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$24,078,042</b>	<b>(\$55,211)</b>	<b>\$24,022,831</b>
Operating Expenditure	\$14,990,450	\$0	\$14,990,450
Capital Expenditure	\$13,037,000	\$0	\$13,037,000
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>\$28,027,450</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$28,027,450</b>
Net Transfer from Reserves	\$2,949,408	\$55,211	\$3,004,619
Balance Sheet - Loan	\$1,000,000		\$1,000,000
<b>Balance Surplus/Deficit</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>

## Community Engagement

The Draft Municipal Plan 2019-20 was placed on public exhibition and promoted through the following means:

- Advertisement in the NT News 16 May 2019 in the public notice section;
- Advertisement in the Darwin Sun 21 May 2019 in the public notice section;
- Boosted post on Facebook, reaching 1249 people with 44 people interacting with the post including sharing;
- Numerous mentions on the Mayor's weekly radio spots on Territory FM;
- Mention on the Mayor's monthly radio spot on ABC Darwin;
- Included in the Mayor's monthly article in The Sun Newspaper on 28 May and 11 June 2019;
- Pop up stalls at Berry Springs Markets (26 May 2019), Humpty Doo Shopping Centre (29 May 2019) and Fred's Pass Markets (1 June 2019);
- Discussed by Councillors at the Fred's Pass Show; and
- Copies displayed at the front counter at Council's office.

### **Recommending Officer:**

**Silke Maynard, Interim Chief Executive Officer**

Any queries on this report may be directed to the Recommending Officer on telephone (08) 8983 0600.

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2019/2020 Litchfield Council Municipal Plan Submissions				
Topic	Name	Submission Summary	Response	RECOMMENDATION
Rates Increase	1. Kirsten Robb, Girraween	Disagrees with a rate rise of 5% compared to services	Page 11 of the Long Term Financial Plan notes an increase to overall rates income of 5.0% plus \$25,000 growth in rateable properties.	No changes to Municipal Plan recommended.
			Rates for Coolalinga residential properties will not be increased as stated on page 39 of the Draft Plan.	
	2. Geoff Baker, Noonamah	Comparison between City of Darwin (3%) and Palmerston's (2.9%) and Litchfield's rate rises (5%) and comparison to services and rise in pensions.	Council is currently undergoing a review of its rating policy through a community reference group as identified on page 17 of the Draft Plan. The objectives of the Rating Policy Review Community Reference Group are to act as an advisory Group to Council for the development of a new Rating Policy, and in particular to:	
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify and recommend principles for formulating a rating policy;</li> <li>Advise on the residential rate and consideration of differential rates;</li> <li>Advise on the equitable collection of rates; and</li> <li>Produce a Report with recommendations for Council before public comment.</li> </ul>	
	3. Petar Fantini, Blackmore	Disagrees with a rate rise of 5% compared to services to benefit rate payers.	After recommendations are made by the Reference group to Council, further consultation on the rating policy will be undertaken in August/September 2019.	
			Section 127(e) of the Local Government Act requires Council to make an assessment of the social and economic impacts of its rating policy which is the intent of statements on page 39.	
	4. Gerry Wood, Howard Springs	Disagrees with a rate rise of 5%, advocates for maintaining a flat rate, reviewing the need for community services and reducing administration costs. Suggests Council is trying to copy municipal neighbours.	Council has a number of processes in place to assess community need that are guided by the Community Engagement policy and strategy and include the annual community survey, social media monitoring and 'Your Say' process for gathering community feedback. Furthermore, Council draws on needs analysis and regional plans for the identification of major projects.	
		Suggests that "Rates should be kept to a minimum and the reasons for the increase need to be clearly articulated in the budget documents – not because we can afford it."		

2019/2020 Litchfield Council Municipal Plan Submissions				
Topic	Name	Submission Summary	Response	RECOMMENDATION
		<p>Questions the high rate for Coolalinga residents.</p> <p>Suggests shelving of proposed projects</p> <p>Suggests that rate increases should not be based on what people earn but on what is required to run a fiscally responsible council.</p>	<p>Council undertakes a rigorous budget process in identifying the cost to deliver services and intern the setting of rates. This process includes detailed financial and asset analysis to ensure Council has the required funds to ensure assets are maintained now and into the future.</p> <p>To assist ratepayers in the event of financial hardship Council has FIN06 Rates Concession policy in place.</p> <p>Councils current rating strategy of a flat rate means that property values have no impact on the amount of rates charged.</p>	
	5. Horst Walter, Berry Springs	Suggests that rate increases should be in line with CPI as that is what most wages increase by.		
	6. Gerard Maley, Howard Springs	<p>Suggests that “the 5% rate rise and 3% waste management rise comes from what Council believes ratepayers can afford, not from a formula based on the cost of running the Council.”</p> <p>Questions Coolalinga rate</p> <p>Suggests that rate rises should be determined by the</p>		

2019/2020 Litchfield Council Municipal Plan Submissions				
Topic	Name	Submission Summary	Response	RECOMMENDATION
		cost of the “proper operation” of Council  Comments regarding property value decrease, population growth rate and linkage to increased rates.		
	7. Alison Worsnop and Mike Bowman, Humpty Doo	Concerned with proposed rate rise and recalled how unpopular major rate changes have been in the past.		
	8. George Kasperek, Herbert	Statement endorsing rate rise but requiring value.		
Road Dollar Spend	Tony Hardwick, Howard Springs	Concerned with Council spending “\$5.6m of ratepayers money on roads” and that rate payers already pay for roads through fuel excise. Suggests Council should concentrate on waste collection, public recreation facilities and planning.  “Council should be lobbying government for funding of roads.”	Part 12.3 of the Local Government Act mandates that Council has the care and control of local roads.  Council will receive \$3.5 Million in grants (Roads to Recovery and Financial Assistance Grants) which contribute to the expenditure on roads. The balance of the funds come from reserves as per the Long Term Financial Plan and rate income.  Council has also received a commitment from the Federal Government to provide funding for the Mango Strategic Roads Project as identified on page 13 of the Draft Plan.	No changes to Municipal Plan recommended.

2019/2020 Litchfield Council Municipal Plan Submissions				
Topic	Name	Submission Summary	Response	RECOMMENDATION
Road Maintenance	Petar Fantini, Blackmore	Submission regarding maintenance of Cox Peninsular Road.	Cox Peninsular Road is not a Local Road. It is vested with the Northern Territory Government. This comment will be referred to the Department of Infrastructure Planning and Logistics.	No changes to Municipal Plan recommended.
Waste Charge	Tony Hardwick, Howard Springs	Comment regarding the imposition of a waste levy on unoccupied vacant land.	All residnetial ratepayers have the ability to use Council's waste transfer stations and therefore are liable for the user charge.	No changes to Municipal Plan recommended.
Staffing Numbers and Administration Cost	1. Tony Hardwick, Howard Springs	Comment regarding administration staffing level.	Council's staffing increased by 5.3 FTE compared to the 2018/19 budget of which 4.1 FTE are externally funded through grants and linked to increased service levels provided to the community in the areas of library and recreation.	No changes to Municipal Plan recommended.
	2. Gerry Wood, Howard Springs	Comment regarding administration staffing level and reducing administration costs	A further 1 FTE is a Customer Service Trainee giving opportunity for young residents to step in the workforce and improve service response by Council. A further 0.2 FTE increase have been identified through a staffing structure review increasing staffing to improve service delivery to the community.	
	3. Horst Walter, Berry Springs	Comment on comparison of spending between directorates and difference between full time equivalents for outdoor and office staff	Council reviews staffing levels every year to ensure it is staffed to provide services to the community in an efficient and cost effective way. Litchfield Council operates as one of the three tiers of government and as such is required to comply with various legislative mandates. The compliance environment and need for transparency is important when dealing with public funds and legislative requirements are continuously increasing.	
	4. Gerard Maley, Howard Springs	Comment regarding administration staffing level and reducing administration costs	The success of Litchfield Council's staffing structure is demonstrated through the delivery of services whilst meeting its compliance requirements. In its recent 2018 local government compliance review the Department of Local Government, Housing	

2019/2020 Litchfield Council Municipal Plan Submissions				
Topic	Name	Submission Summary	Response	RECOMMENDATION
	5. George Kasperek, Herbert	Comment regarding top heavy staffing structure.	and Community Services made three best practice recommendations, which Council has addressed.	
Mobile Workforce	1. Petar Fantini, Blackmore	Comment regarding the quality of roadside mowing.	Council encourages residents to contact Council regarding any comments on service provision at the point in time it occurs in order for Council to identify and if necessary rectify the situation.	No changes to Municipal Plan recommended.
	2. Gerry Wood, Howard Springs	Comment regarding Mobile Workforce review.	No review of the Mobile Workforce structure has been undertaken recently. The inclusion of a budget item for a review of the services delivered and the methodology of delivery is good process of council and included in the Draft 2019-20 budget.	No changes to Municipal Plan recommended.
New Initiatives	1. Horst Walter, Berry Springs	Comment regarding website redevelopment, audio/vis system upgrades, chamber refurbishment and review of Mobile Workforce New Initiatives.	All New Initiatives are costed by quotes as part of the budget process and are assessed by Council on a needs and service delivery basis. In line with the Long Term Financial Plan Council is setting aside \$200,000 every year to allow for projects to improve service delivery whilst constraining operational expenditures overall.	No changes to Municipal Plan recommended.
	2. Alison Worsnop and Mike Bowman, Humpty Doo	Comment regarding the funding of an art event suggesting funding for visual art, adapting existing interior spaces for art events as opposed to hiring equipment and funding art prizes.	As described on page 14 and 15 of the Draft Plan, Council is advocating for a Community and Business Hub to service the growing Litchfield Community, which includes the concept of space for arts and culture. Furthermore, the draft plan includes a New Initiative for an Annual Art Exhibition.	No changes to Municipal Plan recommended.
Rural emphasis	Gerry Wood, Howard Springs	Comment suggesting that Council is a rural Council.	The Northern Territory Government has designated Litchfield Council as a municipality based on population and location to urban areas. With the growth and development of the are Litchfield Council is including rural as well as urban planning zones.	No changes to Municipal Plan recommended.

2019/2020 Litchfield Council Municipal Plan Submissions				
Topic	Name	Submission Summary	Response	RECOMMENDATION
Core Focus Asset Management and Recommended Projects	1. Gerry Wood, Howard Springs	<p>Comments and suggestions regarding asset management and various projects including;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Girraween Lagoon</li> <li>• Bike paths</li> <li>• Netball and the Fred's Pass Reserve market shed</li> <li>• Mango Roads advocacy and requirement for ratepayer input of funds</li> <li>• Recycling facilities</li> <li>• Council major projects – Community consultation</li> </ul>	<p>Council has developed a number of asset management plans. These plans have identified significant gaps in the allocation of funding for the renewal of existing assets. The 2019/20 budget has been informed by these asset management plans with regards to allocations for renewal and maintenance.</p> <p>Council has several processes in place to assess community need that are guided by the Community Engagement policy and strategy and include the annual community survey, social media monitoring and 'Your Say' process for gathering community feedback. Council undertakes needs assessments including consultation for major projects prior to perusal.</p> <p>The property of Girraween Lagoon is private property and the management of natural resources is not a core activity of Council.</p> <p>Council has allocated \$25,000 to the development of a Shared Path Plan in 2019/20 budget (Page 38 of Draft Plan). This plan will review the existing pathway network into and throughout the municipality to identify future connections to improve pedestrian and cyclist transport links.</p>	No changes to Municipal Plan recommended.
	2. Gerard Maley, Howard Springs	<p>Comments and suggestions regarding asset management and various projects including;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Driveway access – questions regarding Council's responsibility</li> <li>• Wet season verge cutting and maintenance of infrastructure</li> <li>• Fred's Pass Recreation Reserve –</li> </ul>	<p>Council has an existing arrangement with the Fred's Pass Recreation Reserve Board who have developed a Master Plan for which the existing market shed and netball requirements are catered for. Council managed two large grant projects worth \$5m over the past years and works closely with the board on grant opportunities going forward. Council has allocated funds to the operation of the reserve of \$693,725 plus a \$1.5m for asset upgrades for the 2019/20 budget.</p> <p>Councils Road Seal policy will be applicable to all roads impacted by the Mango Strategic Roads project and therefore a contribution by ratepayers is expected to be set by Council.</p>	



2019/2020 Litchfield Council Municipal Plan Submissions				
Topic	Name	Submission Summary	Response	RECOMMENDATION
		need for focus of Council spending	<p>The impact of Councils recycling initiatives including savings are reported through the quarterly reporting process to Council and are available in the Council agenda papers.</p> <p>Council Policy INF02 Driveway Crossovers details Council's and ratepayers' responsibilities with regards to driveway cross overs.</p>	
	3. Adam Body, Unknown	Comment regarding the need for bike paths in the Litchfield Municipality	Council has allocated \$25,000 to the development of a Shared Path Plan in 2019/20 budget (Page 38 of Draft Plan). This plan will review the existing pathway network into and throughout the Municipality to identify future connections to improve pedestrian and cyclist transport links.	No changes to Municipal Plan recommended.
Community Engagement and Municipal Plan Content	1. George Kasperek, Herbert	<p>Comments regarding community engagement and encouraging residents to be more involved and prouder of the place where they love.</p> <p>General comments regarding the overall feel of the Draft Plan, suggesting it is to strategic in nature and the need for grant funding.</p> <p>Comment of the reliance of grant funding.</p>	<p>Council's Community Engagement policy and strategy encourages residents to be involved. Council has established a designated website 'Your Say' that enables residents to stay informed of any consultation processes undertaken.</p> <p>Council advocates for grant funding to ensure service improvements at lowest possible cost to ratepayers. Income from grants makes up 26% of the 2019/20 total budgeted income. Because Council understands the dependency of grant funding as a risk, the financial KPI of Council's strategic plan is set to have above 60% of own sourced revenue. Council's Draft Long Term Financial Plan is outlining how Council is proposing to work towards this goal.</p>	No changes to Municipal Plan recommended.
	2. Horst Walter, Berry Springs	Questioning the ownership status of Council assets between Litchfield Council and ratepayers.	Litchfield Council is the legal entity that holds responsibility for assets and the maintenance of these assets.	No changes to Municipal Plan recommended.

2019/2020 Litchfield Council Municipal Plan Submissions				
Topic	Name	Submission Summary	Response	RECOMMENDATION
	3. Gerard Maley, Howard Springs	Comments regarding community consultation in relation to increasing demand for community services.	<p>Council has several processes in place to assess community need that are guided by the Community Engagement policy and strategy and include the annual community survey, social media monitoring and 'Your Say' process for gathering community feedback. Council undertakes needs assessments including consultation for major projects prior to perusal.</p> <p>Additionally, the Northern Territory Government through consultation has developed the Litchfield Subregional Plan which identified the need for community infrastructure.</p>	No changes to Municipal Plan recommended.
Library Services	1. Gerry Wood, Howard Springs	Comments criticizing the taking over of the Taminmin Library	<p>Total costing of library services was provided in a public report to Council at the 18 July 2018 meeting. The financial impact to Council over the 4.5 year grant agreement term with the Northern Territory Government was identified in the report.</p> <p>Council has an agreement with Taminmin School for the use of the space at the school and continues to work with the principal and school board on improving the service into the future.</p> <p>Library services are a local government activity and the Taminmin library was the last public library not run by a local government entity in the Northern Territory.</p>	No changes to Municipal Plan recommended.
	2. Gerard Maley, Howard Springs	Comments criticizing the taking over of the Taminmin Library		
Aquatic Facility	1. Gerry Wood, Howard Springs	<p>Comments regarding the building of an aquatic centre in the Litchfield Municipality, where the funding will come from and public consultation.</p> <p>Suggestion to investigate a privately run pool.</p>	<p>There has been no council resolution to date to proceed with the construction of an aquatic facility. The previous needs study identified the need for a 25 meter learn to swim facility and Council resolved to further investigate through a feasibility study with concept plan and full costing of construction and operations.</p> <p>As identified on page 13 of the Draft Plan, Council is working with the Northern Territory and Federal Government to secure the funding required.</p>	No changes to Municipal Plan recommended.

2019/2020 Litchfield Council Municipal Plan Submissions				
Topic	Name	Submission Summary	Response	RECOMMENDATION
	2. Gerard Maley, Howard Springs	Comments regarding the unknown costs of building, maintaining and running a public pool. Suggest the need for a feasibility study.		
	3. Berry Springs Primary School Council	Support for the development of an aquatic centre with a proposed site of south of Coolalinga		
Litchfield Mango Industry Strategic Roads Project	Horst Walter, Berry Springs	Comment questioning the value of spending Council money to support a “very small sector”.	<p>Council has undertaken an economic analysis on an investment into the sealing of key roads in the Municipality in relation to supporting the mango industry. Through an investment of \$3 million Council has been able to leverage a further \$17.1 million in funds to initiate this project. Economic modelling showed that the overall project will provide a return on investment of 9.3% to Council and the local economy.</p> <p>Councils Road Seal policy will be applicable to all roads impacted by the Mango Roads project.</p>	No changes to Municipal Plan recommended.
Community and Business Hub	1. Gerry Wood, Howard Springs	<p>Comments and suggestions regarding the Community and Business Hub including;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The source of funding</li> <li>• Who is responsible for funding the capital infrastructure?</li> <li>• Encourage use of existing facilities</li> <li>• Suggests that the decision has already been made</li> </ul>	<p>Council has allocated \$40,000 for the development of a business and concept plan for the Community and Business Hub. This plan will provide detailed costings for the build and ongoing operation. The current costings are based on the average cost for the development of comparable facilities.</p> <p>For the Community and Business Hub to proceed a 85% funding investment from other levels of government are required. As identified on page 15 of the Draft Plan, Council will only commit funds if other levels of government funding are realised.</p>	No changes to Municipal Plan recommended.

2019/2020 Litchfield Council Municipal Plan Submissions				
Topic	Name	Submission Summary	Response	RECOMMENDATION
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Requires further consideration and public consultation</li> <li>Suggests funding should be directed to existing community centres</li> </ul>	The borrowing of \$1 million will allow that future rate payers will fund the project whilst receiving the benefit of the service. This has been included in the Draft Plan to seek community feedback prior to an application for borrowing to the Minister for Local Government can be made if required.	
	2. Adam Body, Unknown	General support for community development but looking for further information and business plan in relation to the Community and Business Hub.		
	3. Horst Walter, Berry Springs	Questions the need to borrow money for a “multi-purpose facility” given reserves of \$23 Million in the bank. Questions the overall need of the facility and suggests business should pay for it.		
	4. Gerard Maley, Howard Springs	Suggests a fully costed feasibility study is required prior to Council commitment. Questions the role of Council in the development of a business hub and feels that the Draft Plan indicates that it is going ahead.		

2019/2020 Litchfield Council Municipal Plan Submissions				
Topic	Name	Submission Summary	Response	RECOMMENDATION
Business Promotion	Gerry Wood, Howard Springs	Business promotion should be organised by business groups not by the Council. The Palmerston Business Association is one example of how it should be done	<p>Part 2.3 of the Local Government Act details the role, function and objectives of councils in the Northern Territory. As such Council has a role in economic development to “encourage and develop initiatives for improving the quality of life” and “provide services and facilities for the benefit of” the Litchfield Municipality, residents and visitors.</p> <p>The Act also mandates that Council can “promote its area as a location for appropriate industries or commerce or as an attractive tourist destination” and “establish or support organisations or programs that benefit the council area”.</p>	No changes to Municipal Plan recommended.
Project Management Fred’s Pass Sport and Recreation Reserve Grant	Gerry Wood, Howard Springs	Comment of the NTG grant for the Fred’s Pass Reserve upgrade and suggestion to “let the Reserve Board manage the money”.	This grant has been given to Council who has full responsibility for the expenditure of the funds. Dedicated staff has been employed for the project to ensure consultation with user groups and community members and timely management of the project.	No changes to Municipal Plan recommended.
Infrastructure Maintenance Program	1. Gerry Wood, Howard Springs	Comments in relation to the Infrastructure Maintenance programme including, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allocation for driveway access and culverts</li> <li>• Allocation for line marking</li> <li>• Maintenance grading</li> <li>• Storm water drainage</li> </ul>	<p>Council Policy INF02 Driveway Crossovers details Council’s and ratepayers’ responsibilities with regards to driveway cross overs.</p> <p>Council has developed a number of asset management plans. These plans have identified significant gaps in the allocation of funding for the renewal of existing assets. The 2019/20 budget has been informed by these asset management plans with regards to allocations for renewal and maintenance.</p> <p>Council undertakes a rigorous budget process in identifying the cost to deliver services and intern the setting of rates. This process includes detailed financial and asset analysis to ensure Council has the required funds to ensure assets are maintained now and into the future.</p>	No changes to Municipal Plan recommended.
	2. Gerard Maley, Howard Springs	Comments in relation to Infrastructure Maintenance expenditure in the budget,		

2019/2020 Litchfield Council Municipal Plan Submissions				
Topic	Name	Submission Summary	Response	RECOMMENDATION
		and what the commitments and how are they decided.	Activities such as line marking, maintenance grading and drainage clearing, are conducted to ensure Council's assets are safe and meet Australian standards.	
Financial Management	1. Hardy Schimmel, Knuckey Lagoon	Comments questioning Councils overall financial strategy and questioning Council interpretation of supporting plans and documents. Suggests that Council can not afford to spend and requests minimal service for minimal rates.	<p>Councils annual budgets are informed by its Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP) which is designed to ensure the financial sustainability of Litchfield Council continues to improve over the next 10 years by supporting sound decision making and appropriate financial strategies.</p> <p>The LTFP is informed by Councils Strategic and Asset management plans and provides the context and financial limits that need to be considered.</p>	No changes to Municipal Plan recommended.
	2. Horst Walter, Berry Springs	Comments regarding Council core business, the use of Council reserves and the FBT line item in the budget. Suggestion to cut back on project funding.	<p>Council's FIN04 Financial Reserves policy governs the sustainable and responsible financial management of Litchfield Council though consistent identification, administration and usage of externally and internally restricted reserves.</p> <p>Fringe Benefits Tax is a legislative requirement for benefits provided to council staff.</p>	
Thorak Regional Cemetery	Horst Walter, Berry Springs	This seems to be a financial 'headache'. Can't LC palm responsibility for that off to NTG or someone else?	<p>The Local Government Act mandates through Section 184(1) that a public cemetery situated in the council's area is under the care, control and management of the council.</p> <p>As part of its advocacy strategy Council is working with the Northern Territory Government and adjacent councils to review the funding and management responsibility of this regional service.</p>	No changes to Municipal Plan recommended.
Water Resources	Alison Worsnop and Mike	Comments regarding reduced ground water reserves and a request for Council to anticipate this	The management of water resources is not responsibility of council.	No changes to Municipal Plan recommended.

2019/2020 Litchfield Council Municipal Plan Submissions				
Topic	Name	Submission Summary	Response	RECOMMENDATION
	Bowman, Humpty Doo	issue with regards to assistance to land holders.	Council appreciates concerns of residents and works with the Northern Territory Government to understand the impact for the Litchfield area.	
Land for Wildlife	Alison Worsnop and Mike Bowman, Humpty Doo	Request for funding for Land for Wildlife program including the employment of a dedicated land for wildlife officer.	Through its community grants program Council supports Territory Natural Resource Management every year (\$2,500). Additionally, Council recently awarded a community grant to the Land for Wildlife scheme for \$4,400 for a community workshop.	No changes to Municipal Plan recommended.
Middle School	Berry Springs Primary School Council	Request Council consider infrastructure of a new middle school in the Litchfield Area.	Council is not responsible for education but will work with the NT Department of Education in relation to Council infrastructure (eg road safety).	No changes to Municipal Plan recommended.

2019/20 Recommendations for Amendments by Council Officers	
Topic	Amendment
Budget updates	<p>Removal of the Workers Village from the Rates Structure following notification of land and facility being handed back to the Northern Territory Government, reduces 19/20 income from this rating category from \$55,211 to \$0.</p> <p>Correction to Budget Overview page 4 \$10.8 million of Revenue from rates corrected to \$10.7 million.</p> <p>Correction to Budgeted Revenue table page 8 \$10,793,604 at 44.8% of Rates corrected to \$10,738,393 at 44.7% 45.5% of Grants corrected to 45.6% \$24,078,042 of TOTAL corrected to \$24,022,831.</p> <p>Correction to 2019-20 Budget by Program Profile \$9,100,652 in Income from Finance and Customer Service corrected to \$9,045,441. \$7,515,722 in Surplus (Deficit) from Finance and Customer Service corrected to \$7,460,511. \$10,472,679 in Income from Community and Corporate Services Total corrected to \$10,417,468. \$4,994,413 in Surplus (Deficit) from Community and Corporate Services corrected to \$4,939,202. \$16,493,299 in Income from TOTAL Result corrected to \$16,438,088. \$1,502,849 in Surplus (Deficit) from TOTAL Result corrected to \$1,447,638.</p> <p>Correction to Program Profile – Finance table page 12 \$9,100,652 of Operational Revenue corrected to \$9,045,441. \$7,515,722 of Net Operating Surplus corrected to \$7,460,511.</p> <p>9.3% of Operating Revenue increase corrected to 9.0%.</p> <p>Correction to 2019-20 Annual Budget Summary page 36, column Budget 2019-20 and % Variance \$16,493,299 at 9.3% of Operating Income corrected to \$16,438,088 at 9.0%. \$1,502,849 at 26.3% of Operating Profit (Loss) corrected to \$1,447,638 at 21.6%. \$2,949,408 of Finance Reserve Movements corrected to \$3,004,619.</p> <p>Correction to Rating Strategy page 39 \$7,682,178 in rating revenue corrected to \$7,626,967</p> <p>Correction to Rate Revenue table page 40 in column Budget \$ 2019-20 \$233,732 in Gas Plant / Workers Village / Pastoral Lease / Mining Tenements corrected to \$178,521</p>



	<p>\$7,682,178 in TOTAL corrected to \$7,626,967.</p> <p>Correction to Rate Revenue table page 41 in column 2019-20 \$55,211 in Workers Village – Rates Over Time corrected to \$0.</p> <p>Correction to Rate Structure table page 41 in column Rate 2019-20 0.985906% in Workers Village MZ corrected to N/A.</p> <p>Correction to Analysis of the Operating Budget - Operating Revenue page 45 (9.3%) in text forecast increase corrected to (9.0%).</p> <p>Correction to Operating Revenue by Department page 45 in columns 2019/20 and Variance in \$ Increase / (Decrease) \$9,100,652 with a variance of \$628,447 in Finance corrected to \$9,045,441 with a variance of \$573,236. \$16,493,299 with a variance of \$1,408,862 in TOTAL corrected to \$16,438,088 with a variance of \$1,351,651 (including editable changes below).</p> <p>Correction to Budgeted Statement of Comprehensive Income page 52 in column Budget 2019/20 \$10,793,607 in Rates corrected to \$10,738,393. \$17,580,042 in Total Income corrected to \$17,524,831. (\$8,968,028) in Operating Deficit corrected to (\$9,026,239) (including editable changes below). (\$2,570,028) in Net Deficit corrected to (\$2,628,239) (including editable changes below).</p> <p>Correction to Budgeted Statement of Financial Position page 53 in column Budget \$'000's 2019-20 \$2,339 in Cash and Cash Equivalents corrected to \$2,283. \$20,424 in Total Current Assets corrected to \$20,369. \$327,243 in Total Assets corrected to \$327,188. \$322,402 in Net Assets corrected to \$322,347. \$16,967 in Other Reserves corrected to \$16,912 \$322,402 in Total Equity corrected to \$322,347.</p> <p>Correction to Budgeted Statement of Cash Flow page 54 in column Budget \$'000's 2019-20 \$10,902 in Rates – general and other corrected to \$10,846. \$2,942 in Net Cash provided by Operating Activities corrected to \$2,886. \$99 in Net Increase in cash held corrected to \$43. \$2,339 in Cash and cash equivalents at end of period corrected to \$2,283.</p> <p>Correction to Budgeted Statement of Reserves page 55 \$929k in Asset reserves towards the renewal of infrastructure assets corrected to \$984k.</p>
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	<p>(\$929,097) "transfer from" and "Net Movement" columns in Asset Reserve corrected to (\$984,308).</p> <p>(\$8,679,728) "Balance at 30 June 2020" column in Asset Reserve corrected to (\$8,624,517).</p> <p>(\$3,382,821) "transfer from" column in TOTAL corrected to (\$3,438,032).</p> <p>(\$2,949,408) "Net Movement" column in TOTAL corrected to (\$3,004,619).</p> <p>(\$16,966,618) "Balance at 30 June 2020" column in TOTAL corrected to (\$16,911,407).</p> <p>Correction to Long Term Financial Plan will be made in line with the impact of above changes as part of the review of the LTFP</p>

## ATTACHMENT C - PUBLIC SUBMISSIONS

Megan Lea

From: Doug Sarden  
Sent: Wednesday, June 5, 2019 1:30 PM  
To: Mike Maynard  
Cc: Councilors and CEO adamcbody@gmail.com  
Subject: FW: Municipal Plan

Hi Mike

Could you please add the below email from Adam Body to submissions to the municipal plan which need to be submitted by tomorrow or advise the email address I need to send it to  
Thanking you

Doug

From: Adam Body <adamcbody@gmail.com>  
Sent: Sunday, 3 June 2019 8:48 AM  
To: Doug Sarden <Doug.Sarden@litchfield.nj.gov>  
Subject: Municipal Plan

Doug, thank you for bringing to my attention the new draft Municipal Plan. With regard to the Community Hub concept, I think the idea of community development and support is good. However, a lot more information is required before I can make a comment on this idea. I do conclude however that the Community Hub idea has not developed beyond the thought bubble stage. The following extract from the Plan leads me to this conclusion

*Council is yet to develop concept plans, decide on what the facility would look like, where the facility would be located and what other services would share the facility.*

*The Draft 2019-20 Council Budget allocates \$40,000 to undertake a feasibility study to determine the layout and location of a multi-purpose community facility for the long term plan.*

### **Government Support**

*Council's Draft 2019-20 Budget forecasts Council attracting \$6million government funding towards a total project cost of \$7million.*

*Council proposes to borrow \$1m in 2019-20, as its contribution to the project only if other levels of government funding is realised.*

*External Government funding will make up 85% of the total cost of the project.*

*As part of the consultation process for the Draft Municipal Plan, including the budget Council wants to hear from the community about what you think about its plan to build and borrow money for a multi-purpose facility for Litchfield residents, businesses and visitors for the long term.*

## ATTACHMENT C - PUBLIC SUBMISSIONS

I find this very perplexing. Whether it is the bad editing of the draft plan, or muddled thinking on behalf of the Council, I don't know. The budget timelines are very confused. How can the total expenditure occur in the same year as the \$40 k feasibility study?

Where did the \$7 million figure come from if the concept plan has not yet been done? How was this figure arrived at?

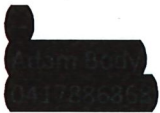
How can anyone comment on something that is essentially unknown?

What is the business case for borrowing \$1 million? A business case MUST be advanced before providing support for borrowing money.

What are the cost of running the Hub? Will it be a drain on Council resources? Is the assumption that it will be a profit maker?

What are the alternative community friendly and supportive proposals? have any been advanced: eg cycle paths? My personal view is that initiating a family friendly cycle path plan should be in the top group of infrastructure proposals.

The fact is the Council has to make choices between alternative proposals. This suggestion of the Hub has been presented to the people of Litchfield in a substandard manner. I cannot support a concept that involves expenditure of scarce council resources, when the concept is based on little more than a thought.



## ATTACHMENT C - PUBLIC SUBMISSIONS

Megan Leo

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From: Doug Barden  
Sent: Wednesday, June 5, 2019 1:21 PM  
To: Kate Maynard  
Cc: Doug Barden and CEO, adamgbody@gmail.com  
Subject: W. Municipal Plan

Hi Silke

As per previous email

Doug

From: Adam Body <adamgbody@gmail.com>  
Sent: Tuesday, 4 June 2019 5:53 PM  
To: Doug Barden <Doug.Barden@litchfield.nsw.gov.au>  
Subject: Municipal Plan

Dear Doug

Further to my comments about the proposed Community Hub, I am disappointed that the draft Municipal Plan makes no mention of bicycle paths. In my opinion and in the opinion of many people and authorities around Australia and around the world cycling is one activity that ticks so many boxes that it really is quite astonishing to me why the Litchfield Council has not given it any consideration in its draft plan. Here are some benefits:

- tourism: many tourists travel with their bicycles, because they want to enjoy the benefits of getting to know the place they are travelling to by riding their bikes
- cycling would attract more visitors, and allow businesses to take advantage of the increased activities
- health: the health benefits of cycling are well known, and safe, family friendly cycle paths would induce more people to undertake this form of exercise
- CO2 reduction: every little bit helps in the fight against climate change, and if people can take their bike instead of their car then that is beneficial to the environment
- community: cycling is a community experience, and people are more likely to interact when cycling than when driving
- safety: people who currently cycle on roads are at risk, and cycle paths eliminate the chances of car-bike accidents
- cost: the cost of building cycle paths is low

In summary, the benefits have been established and the costs are relatively low. Building cycle paths is a cost effective way to improve amenity and to increase visitors numbers and to provide business opportunities and should be included in the Council plans.

--  
Adam Body  
0438565044



## ATTACHMENT C - PUBLIC SUBMISSIONS

Megan Lee

From: Mike Maynard  
Sent: Thursday, June 6, 2019 6:17 PM  
To: Municipal Council  
Subject: Doc 431310 Fwd: Comment on draft Municipal Plan 2019-20

Mike Maynard  
Interim Chief Executive Officer  
Mitchell Council

From: Marce (fred.huber)  
Sent: Thursday, June 6, 2019 4:53:31 PM  
To: Alison and Mike; Mike Maynard; Jessica Warr  
Subject: Re: Comment on draft Municipal Plan 2019-20

Thanks Alison and Mike  
I will pass your comments onto the Council Officers who is collating responses to the Municipal plan

Hear what you are saying about the water and wildlife. Council has just provided a Community Grant to the local Wildlife group

Marce  
Sent from my iPhone

On 6 Jun 2019, at 5:16 pm, Alison and Mike <yarr@nispind.com> wrote:

- >
- > Dear Mayor and Councillors
- >
- > We make the following brief comments on the draft Municipal Plan 2019-2020.
- >
- > Rates: We are alarmed at the proposed rating strategy which will see rates increase dramatically at a time when many of us are on fixed and dwindling incomes; have little prospect of selling up and moving away and face issues with water shortages for which any resolution will be expensive. We recall how unpopular major rates changes have been in the past and would be sorry to see the current stability disrupted.
- >
- > Water: We are concerned that Water Resources are warning residents in some areas to expect groundwater to run out later this year. This is likely to be an increasing problem. Inevitably, those affected will turn to Council for assistance (they are unlikely to get any from NTG) and suggests that Council anticipates this issue.
- >
- > Land for Wildlife: We would like to see some of the funds diverted from Reserves budget to funding Land for Wildlife, which is widely supported in the Municipality. Educating and encouraging private land owners how to understand, retain and manage native vegetation as wildlife habitat has many advantages, not just for birds and animals, but for enhancing the amenity of the community, community interaction and wellbeing. It can involve and benefit every landowner/rate-payer and all community members, wherever they have come from and whatever their age or other interests. Many people move and stay in the rural area because they want to be 'closer to nature' but, without education can make serious mistakes in how they manage their property. We would like to see Council engage a properly qualified employee to manage the scheme. (Remember John Brock) This person could very usefully assist in advising on planning matters.
- >
- > Art Exhibition: We cautiously welcome the proposal to fund an art event, presumably this funding would be spread between music, performing and visual arts. (We would prefer it to be for visual art!) Adapting an existing interior space so it is suitable for art events would be welcome. We think this would be a more effective application of funds

## ATTACHMENT C - PUBLIC SUBMISSIONS

rather than expenditure on hiring equipment. It is suggested that some of the funds could be applied to a series of art prizes.

>

> Thank you for this opportunity to comment

●  
● Alison Wornob and Mike Bowman  
● PO Box 1938, Humpty Doo, NT 0835  
● tel (08)8988 1770  
● mob 0417 881 854 (Alison) 0417 858 143

## ATTACHMENT C - PUBLIC SUBMISSIONS

Megan Leo

From: Your Say Litchfield <notifications@engagementhq.com>  
Sent: Tuesday, June 11, 2019 4:35 PM  
To: Megan Leo  
Subject: Berry Springs School Council completed Draft 2019-20 Municipal Plan and Budget

Berry Springs School Council just submitted the survey 'Draft 2019-20 Municipal Plan and Budget' with the responses below:

Name

Berry Springs Primary School Council

Email address

rob.bspc@gmail.com

Contact phone number (optional)

0815869737

Please provide your submission or feedback in the box below

On behalf of Berry Springs Primary School Council I wish to raise the following points for consideration as part of this consultation process: - We support an aquatic facility being built in Litchfield Shire. We note that the draft plan proposes a site 'south of Coolalinga'. Given the fact that residents of Coolalinga/Humpty Doo area are already within 30 minutes drive of Palmerston pools, we would encourage Council to consider building the aquatic facility closer to Berry Springs community. This would enable children in the more southern parts of your jurisdiction (like Berry Springs, Darwin River, Acacia Hills etc) to access learn to swim facilities. At present, high transportation costs and the time associated with travelling a 1.5hr round trip prevent Berry Springs students from accessing learn to swim classes. A pool 'south of Coolalinga' or at Humpty Doo is still too far away. Please consider building the aquatic facility at Berry Springs. - We wish to start a conversation with Litchfield Council (and all other levels of government) about the need for a middle school in this locality. With Taminmin High School already at capacity, and given the long distances students must travel from Adelaide River, Darwin River, Berry Springs etc to Taminmin and back each day, we feel it is time to consider building a middle school at Berry Springs. We hope that future educational needs for Litchfield residents, such as a middle school, can also be included in this draft plan, recognising that local government plays a vital role in this type of development. Thank you for taking our feedback on board. Kind regards, Shannon Murray Secretary Berry Springs Primary School Council

Alternatively, if you would like to attach a pre-prepared submission (eg word or pdf document) or additional information to your submission, please attach your file below.

No Answer



## ATTACHMENT C - PUBLIC SUBMISSIONS

Megan Leo

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From: Your Say Litchfield <notifications@engagementhq.com>  
Sent: Friday, May 17, 2019 2:07 PM  
To: Megan Leo  
Subject: Doc 430225 spam>geoff88 completed Draft 2019-20 Municipal Plan and Budget

geoff88 just submitted the survey 'Draft 2019-20 Municipal Plan and Budget' with the responses below

Name

geoff88

Email address

geoffbaker88@bigpond.com

Contact phone number (optional)

01408087566

Please provide your submission or feedback in the box below

DCC put up rates by 3%, PCC put up rates by 2.9% and reduce waste charges. Not Litchfield you whack it up by 5% and we do not get as many services. Pensions went up by NINE DOLLARS, how the hell are we supposed to afford this???? This will be remembered at the next elections.

Alternatively, if you would like to attach a pre-prepared submission (eg word or pdf document) or additional information to your submission, please attach your file below.

No Answer

## ATTACHMENT C - PUBLIC SUBMISSIONS

Megan Lee

From: Your Say Litchfield <notifications@engagementhq.com>  
Sent: Wednesday, June 5, 2019 3:29 PM  
To: Megan Lee  
Subject: Doc 431265 GEORGE KASPAREK completed Draft 2019-20 Municipal Plan and Budget

GEORGE KASPAREK just submitted the survey 'Draft 2019-20 Municipal Plan and Budget' with the responses below.

Name

GEORGE KASPAREK

Email address

mfates@iinet.net.au

Contact phone number (optional)

No Answer

Please provide your submission or feedback in the box below

This Municipal Plan 2019 is not a plan. Plan is what and how things will be completed. Most of the document is about ideas that will need external funding/grants. Very little devoted to real \$ and their utilisation. There is nothing about what Council will do smarter or new with its real money. All development dependent on grants. Sorry - not good. Second hand car salesman style. The management is top heavy. Propose 5% rate increase - OK - but I would like to see value; I would like to see residents /citizens encouraged to be involved; everyone to be proud of the place where they live. Not happening right now. Evasive words talking re position of Hub, pool etc not helpful. Overall I would think the plan has no soul, no purpose besides being a requirement and used to tell people how great the council is.

Alternatively, if you would like to attach a pre-prepared submission (eg word or pdf document) or additional information to your submission, please attach your file below.

No Answer

### Submission to Litchfield Council

This submission is in response to the Draft 2019-20 Municipal Plan and Budget and the Draft Long-Term Financial Plan 2019-20 to 2028-29.

- The draft Budget shows that the Litchfield Council has become a bureaucracy Government style department with Administration costs skyrocketing over the past 8 years. The Council need to re-evaluate its responsibilities and Council's core business such as reserves, road and rubbish.
- The wages bill accounts for 25% of the total budget, staffing levels must be addressed. The Council has lost the mindset "Community effort is essential".
- Employees' costs have increased to \$6,121,026 (page 52). This shows the rates increases will be used to fund rising employee costs. The Council is spending rate money on matters that can be managed better, therefore not requiring a 5% rate increase each year. The Council should operate within its current employee budget.
- The Council has 4.5 full time employees for planning and development. How can this be justified? Council does not decide planning applications. It can comment, just like any other rate payer. Why are Council spending \$728,387 on operational expenditure? How many subdivisions applications are likely in the next 12 months, considering the economy in the NT at present?
- The 5% rate rise and 3% waste management rise comes from what Council believes ratepayers can afford, not from a formula based on the cost of running the Council. Why is there a difference in rates for those living in Coolalinga? Rate increases must be based on what it costs for the proper operation of the Council. Rate rises should not relate to what people can afford.



## ATTACHMENT C - PUBLIC SUBMISSIONS

- Where is the community consultation or the 'proof' of the so-called increasing demand for community infrastructure and services. What have councillors done or what work has the Council undertaken to come to the conclusion that there is a demand for community infrastructure and services and what type of services have been identified by the community through this consultation.
- In relation to Infrastructure Maintenance expenditure in the budget, what are the commitments and how are they decided.
- Why did Council agree to take on the Library and the ongoing running costs of it? Has the library been costed? The cost of the employees are covered by a NT Government grant this year, what arrangements have been put in place for future years?
- The Council has no plan and no idea of the cost to build a swimming pool or aquatic centre, let alone maintenance and on-going costs, until a feasibility study with full costings is undertaken this should not be considered by Council. Council needs to re-evaluate its proposed community services including the Community Business Hub, again a feasibility study fully costed must be undertaken before Council commits to these types of services. Council should not be taking out a loan to develop this facility without knowing the ongoing costs to Council of the viability of a hub. The Community Business Hub project should not be a role of the Council, the Northern Territory Government has an entire Department established to deliver these services. The Council should consult with the community before any commitments are made, (page 48). The words used by the Council at page 48 in the draft Municipal Plan indicate the Community and Business Hub project is going ahead, it does not matter if the community want it to, and more importantly can afford it. Again, Council should re-evaluate its core business when considering such projects, and prior to committing funds.
- Council should focus on the assets that it already has and ensure they are maintained and frequented more. They must focus on the



## ATTACHMENT C - PUBLIC SUBMISSIONS

maintenance of roads, reserves and drainage. Any plans for large projects that Council is proposing must be assessed not only financially but with a view on whether they fit within the core functions of the Litchfield Council. The Litchfield Council is a rural Council, and should remain so in the interest of rural residents.

- Council has set aside money for driveway access and culverts. This is the responsibility of the owner not Council. Further why are council using employees to maintain the wet season grass on road reserves. What happens to the plant an equipment during the dry season? Why not go back to contact wet season work. That will save the cost of a lot of expensive machinery sitting and not paying for itself for approximately 8 months a year. The machines still have to be maintained during the dry season.
- The Council should change their focus and spend more money on Fred's Pass Reserve and focus on upgrading sporting facilities in the rural area. For example, upgrade the lighting on various sporting fields at Fred's Pass Reserve. Give young families a place in the rural area to play sport away from the heat of the day.
- Council also needs to readdress its political motivation, noting that the CEO promoted Federal Labor's Election commitments affecting the Litchfield area, however did not do same when Coalition Election commitments were made. This biased approach by Council will have done nothing to assist with a forward agenda working with the Commonwealth Government.
- Finally, rural blocks have decreased in value and the rural population is not growing. Why should rural residents have to pay more towards rates?



### Response to Litchfield Budget

I would like to make the following submission re the budget.

The Litchfield Council needs a complete rethink of where it is going. For instance, is it a rural council or an urban council, what are its core responsibilities, why have administration costs gone through the roof and why is it charging ratepayers a 5% increase in rates (5% last year), well above the CPI?

This budget shows the council has become a very expensive and bloated bureaucracy.

The proof of that is having 58.5 full time staff and an administration's wages bill of \$6.76m. That is 25% of the total budget. In 2011 the wages component was \$2.1m. In 8 years the administration costs have tripled. In 2016 the costs were \$5.01m and 45.8 full time staff. In just 3 years an increase of 13 staff and \$1.7m in administration!

The council needs to start with a major cut to administration. For starters the council is not responsible for planning and development and therefore should not be employing 4.5 staff. Whilst council (councillors) should be commenting on planning matters this should be a function of the CEO who submits responses to the council for approval or otherwise. Perhaps a 0.5 position on the Infrastructure and Works section could be devoted to assisting with planning applications.

There nine people in Community and Corporate services. With computerised systems why do we have so many people in this area?

How many people are needed to assist the CEO?

There are now 3.5 staff in Library Services something previously the NT Government paid for. Putting that cost onto ratepayers should never have happened and defies logic and common sense.

There are certainly other areas of administration that should be looked into, such as scrapping the day labour and going back to contracts. I notice



## ATTACHMENT C - PUBLIC SUBMISSIONS

that \$30,000 has been set aside for a review of the mobile workforce but I thought a review had already occurred sometime ago.

Paying someone to manage the Government grant for Freds Pass Reserve is money that could be spent on the Reserve – let the Reserve Board manage the money instead of going into wages for an outside person.

Business promotion should be organised by business groups not by the Council. The Palmerston Business Association is one example of how it should be done.

In relation to the Infrastructure Maintenance programme it would be good to have an explanation about some of the expenditure. For instance there is \$150,000 for driveway access and culverts. Aren't driveways the responsibility of the landowner? There is \$180,000 set aside for line marking. Do all roads have to be line marked especially short roads or cul-de-sacs? Maintenance grading was \$89,000 in 2017/18 but the budget for this year is \$180,000. Why the big difference? \$50,000 to be spent on stormwater drains – where and why?

### Rates

The increase in rates at 5% is higher than the CPI and higher than other councils. Although not mentioned in this year's budget it is worrying that in last year's budget it was stated ***The Long-Term Financial Plan (updated on an annual basis) proposes an annual increase in general rates of 5% for the next 10 years to secure Council's financial sustainability.***

This would mean that our rates would be increased by at least approximately \$605 depending on the amount charged for garbage collection.

The argument for the increase and how the 5% is calculated in this year's budget is stated as ***Council's goal is to ensure there are enough funds to maintain and renew Council's assets to meet increasing demand for community infrastructure and services in line with population growth. As part of this process, Council considers the financial***

## ATTACHMENT C - PUBLIC SUBMISSIONS

***capacity of its ratepayers and believes that the 5% rate rise, which is less than \$1 a week, will not significantly impact residents, even in relatively low-income households.***

This means that instead of how much it will cost to run the council the council is saying our rates will be based on how much ratepayers can afford – the capacity of the ratepayers to pay.

Surely that is not the way to calculate the rate.

The flat is based on the cost of running the council minus the Federal Grants divided by the number of residential blocks.

Council needs to stick to the flat rate and then review the so called *increasing demand for community infrastructure and services* and see if we need more community infrastructure and services, are we trying to copy our urban neighbour councils, or is this mismanagement of the budget?

If we need to increase rates to pay for renewing and maintaining existing infrastructure and services than that's what should be the basis of our rates. At the same time Council has to reduce its administration costs to show its keeping expenditure down. That's not the feeling you get from this budget.

We also need to see whether some of the projects proposed in the budget should be shelved for the time being. As mentioned in the 10 Year Financial Plan ***Another impact of growth noted over the past years is increasing community expectations for an expanded range and quality of services, for example library services or an aquatic facility. Managing these expectations can be challenging as funding new service standards may be beyond the financial capacity of Council with rate income generated through additional properties not increasing proportionally.***

With a decrease in subdivisions this year because of water issues obviously there will be few additional properties and funding a new library was a mistake.

Rates should be kept to a minimum and the reasons for the increase need to be clearly articulated in the budget documents – not because we can afford it.



The higher rate for residents in Coolalinga is totally unfair and has nothing to do with extra services or a higher cost to maintain land in the area, it is simply a money making exercise that the council won't change. It is wrong and should be changed and brought back to the same level as all other residential properties. Imagine what those residents think when they see that the council has taken over a Government funded library.

### **Uncosted projects**

#### **Library**

Taking over the Government run library was a bad move and one that did not have public support. The Sydney survey asked about what people thought about the library. Only about 125 people responded and at no stage were they asked if the council should take it over. There were negotiations made by the CEO but the ratepayers have never been given any details about initial costs and costs into the future, about what arrangements were made with Palmerston Council and what arrangements were made with the Taminmin College. These arrangements seemed to be hidden from the public under the guise of confidential meetings. We already know that there will be 3.1 full time equivalents and the cost for this year according to the budget will be \$421,447. Whilst this may be covered by a grant for this year there has been no release by the Council of what the cost will be in future years.

#### **Swimming Pool**

The Council wants to build a pool or an aquatic centre. If the Council wants a pool or an aquatic centre regardless of pre-election promises, we know now it will not be funded by the Federal Government and according to the Chief Minister if one is built, it will definitely not be maintained by the NT Government. The Council has no plan, no idea what the cost to build it would be, nor the maintenance cost (short term and long term) nor the cost to ratepayers and unless that is done in an open and transparent way

## ATTACHMENT C - PUBLIC SUBMISSIONS

it will continue to be just an idea. Unless everything is done properly with due diligence and probity and people (ratepayers) have a say then Council should look at other priorities.

One suggestion could be to talk to businesses to see if a privately run pool would be an option, eg Gold Fish Bowl, maybe even as part of Coolalinga Central.

### **Art Centre and Business Centre**

In the past I have supported the concept of an arts centre/ theatre/ assembly/cafe facility on the Council land at Humpty Doo. The idea behind this was to provide an area where local artists who may use council facilities already would have a purpose built space to practice their hobby and then display and sell those wares. The assembly/theatre was to allow schools and other groups to have concerts, assemblies, conferences. The art gallery café was to hopefully bring attract income to offset costs and with the proximity to the Arnhem Highway attract tourists. I would **definitely not support** this proposal unless it could basically pay for itself. There would need to be a proper feasibility study done first. If the Council can attract money from the Department of Education and the Department of Tourism and Culture or private sponsors to help run the facility on an annual basis that may help. In regards to the capital cost of such a facility I would not expect that cost to be borne by the ratepayers but it should be funded by the Commonwealth and Territory Governments.

In relation to a business centre, that is the NT Government's job and that is why we have the Department of Trade, Business and Innovation. Please don't take over the NT Government's job – taking over a Government funded library was a silly idea and shouldn't be repeated. The Government should be pushing for a Government Hub similar to the one in Katherine and this could be situated in either Humpty Doo or Coolalinga. It could be part of the proposed art centre providing an income for the centre.

But regardless there may be other ways to look at this and not be a burden on the Council.

For instance why not encourage the use of existing facilities such as the community room at the Living Water Op Shop? It is for hire, can hold about



## ATTACHMENT C - PUBLIC SUBMISSIONS

100 people and is air conditioned. Why not promote that facility for those hobby and art groups that are looking for a cooler place to work?

If we are looking at a theatre, perhaps it would be better built at Taminmin College and able to be used by other schools?

What is concerning about this project is it seems to have been decided that it will happen. The budget summery says this ***The Community and Business Hub is to be funded through \$6million of government funding and \$1million through a Council loan. Council believes that borrowing allows for the cost of this project to be funded through future generations with these receiving the benefit of the service.***

This proposal needs a lot more careful consideration including public consultation and detailed costings both long term and short term, which did not happen with the library, before any decision is made.

Considering what I quoted earlier from your 10 Year Financial Plan: ***Managing these expectations can be challenging as funding new service standards may be beyond the financial capacity of Council,*** then Council may need to put a halt to these projects at the very least for the time being.

### **Community Centres.**

We are not the same as Palmerston. We are not a city with a defined centre – we are a rural area and we have community centres across the council area. The Berry Springs Reserve is the centre for that area and the same for the other reserves. The council should spend money on upgrading these facilities, if required, not building a new central community centre. Perhaps the Council should look at having its monthly meetings at these local centres, as it once used to, to promote the use of these important Council community centres.

### **Projects that council should be doing**

Council should concentrate on looking after the assets it has and making sure it maintains the roads, reserves, wetlands and drainage areas as free of weeds as possible. Instead of looking at building big monuments it should look at the future of Girraween Lagoon as a reserve, after all the council will be collecting rates from all the new developments in that area. It could be run on a similar basis to McMinns Lagoon – low cost, minimal interference with the environment – walking paths and weed control. Any handover of the land would need to be made only having after detailed discussions with the Churcher Estate with a proper assessment of the state of the land before anything was agreed on.

I support the upgrade of the foot/cycle path along Whitewood Road as it is in desperate need of repair and it will be safer for people especially tourists to use when finished.

Council should be constructing more cycle paths especially along busy roads such as the eastern end of Whitewood Road which would connect to the existing path leading to the schools, shops and the cycle path to Palmerston and Darwin. Extension of cycle paths along Girraween Road would be a start as Girraween is one of the busiest roads in the area and that could eventually connect to the proposed new cycle path along the old rail corridor at Coolalinga.

The big shed at Freds Pass was designed for indoor sport but for half a day a week the shed is now used for the markets. Whilst the markets are important, the facility is wasted and a review needs to see whether the markets could be moved to another site which would allow development of the shed for its intended use. The new netball club has no home and this would be ideal for them and of course other sports may be interested.

In relation to the Federal money for the mango roads, this assistance to seal those roads should not remove the requirement for a payment from block owners to pay towards these roads as well under the sealing of roads policy. This keeps consistency with all other rural block owners who have paid something towards sealing of their road.

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It is good to see the expansion of recycling facilities at the transfer stations but the Council needs to show what the cost of recycling is compared to the savings of less rubbish going over the weigh bridge at Shoal Bay.

### **Summary**

The Council should stick to being rural and work on maintaining and improving the assets we have – our reserves, our roads and our transfer stations. Rate increases should not be based on what people earn, as highlighted in the budget papers, but on what money is required to pay for the operations of a fiscally responsible council. A 10 year plan to increase rates by 5% each year is simply a way of making money or as you say in your budget – increasing rate income – and as a ratepayer that blanket approach is not a smart or responsible way to calculate the rates. Any plans for large projects that the council is proposing need to be assessed very carefully not just financially but simply from the point of view of whether they fit within the core functions of this Council, a rural council. And then the ratepayers need to have a say, after all they will be paying. Stick to what we can afford and reduce costs especially administration costs and leave the flat rate, flat.

Simply put, this budget needs to be redone and refocussed.



## ATTACHMENT C - PUBLIC SUBMISSIONS

Megan Leo

From: Hardy <hardy@litchfieldmunicipal.ca>  
Sent: Monday, June 3, 2019 9:05 AM  
To: Municipalities  
Subject: Doc 431112 Fwd: Draft Litchfield Municipal Plan 2019-2020

Dear Sir/ Madam

Please see below my comments on the Draft Municipal Plan 2019-2020 for publication.

This is a budget for economic and social debt and is a terrible thing for the Litchfield Shire. It is very important for the public to understand that the 5% rate rise is no where near enough to cover it. What is council not telling us? I can expect massive rate rises in the future to pay for all of this. It will take decades to pay off this level of spending and incompetence. The draft plan refers to several documents but none of those documents support council's proposals. The Library needs study tells us people do not want a new library. The Litchfield subregional Land Use Plan does not support council's new 'multi purpose common facility. The various pool surveys do not support the building of a pool. Please do not refer to these documents in the future and claim they support your council's. Regardless of your desires and wishes you as a council are broke and cannot afford it. You cannot afford your current spending never mind borrowing one million dollars and servicing the debt. Your spending is out of control!

Minimal rates. Minimal services!

Hardy Schimmer

Knuckey Lagoon

Kind Regards

Hardy Schimmer



Virus-free. www.avg.com

## ATTACHMENT C - PUBLIC SUBMISSIONS

Megan Leo

From: Horst Walter <wvauwus26@hotmail.com>  
Sent: Wednesday, June 5, 2019 3:07 PM  
To: Municipalplan  
Subject: Doc 431268 Comments Draft Municipal Plan

To whom it may concern.

Comments regarding Draft Litchfield Council Municipal Plan 2019-2020 (DLCMP).

I would like to make some overall comments on the DLCMP and some comments related to specific pages of the DLCMP:

1. I find it astonishing that Litchfield Council (LC) spends (out of a total budget of \$18.7M) \$1.44M on leadership and corporate in comparison to \$1.25M on mobile workforce, whilst spending \$4.16M on contractors, approx. \$380k on computers/IT, \$613k on "professional services" and \$422k on "sundries". The \$241k spent on Elected Members seems to be a bargain by comparison.
2. I surely would like to know why LC, the purpose of which, in my book, is to provide essential services such as waste management and roads for rate payers, would have "other financial assets" in the order of \$21.4M (somewhere else referred to as "net cash position" worth \$23.6M). Is LC in the business of running a 'hedge fund' or something? In that light it is even more infuriating that LC then states it needs 5% rate increases pa. My advice: First, cut back on all those fancy spending ideas (like the rest of us ordinary people are forced to do) and, secondly, use up that "net cash position" before you come looking for more money from the rate payer. And, thirdly, any increases should be in line with CPI as that is what most of LC rate payers income increases (if lucky).
3. DLVMP page13: Why does LC want to spend \$3M of rate payer's money to support a very small sector of the LC community (namely sealing roads for mango growers)? The mango industry is unhealthy for workers and the environment due to the spraying of various poisons (also killing bees) and noise pollution at night.
4. DLCMP page 15: Why does LC need to borrow money for a "multi-purpose facility" if we have \$23M cash in the bank? More fundamentally, why do we need that facility in the first place? Has LC done a feasibility assessment (enough money seems to be spent on consultants anyhow) on a library etc.? And, if 'business' wants a space they can pay for it.
5. DLCMP page 18: Thorak Regional Cemetery: This seems to be a financial 'headache'. Can't LC palm responsibility for that off to NTG or someone else?
6. DLCMP page 18: Interesting wording "...LC owns...", hmm I thought that the ratepayer owns...? Strange thought, I know.
7. DLCMP page 19: Why or better what for is LC paying \$26k FBT (private use of LC vehicles perhaps)?
8. DLCMP page 20: Staffing org chart: FTE office vs FTE outdoors appears quite skewed (towards office) and somewhat top heavy with 'executive' positions.
9. DLCMP page 22 & p38: \$45k, \$40k and 10k for website redevelopment, audio/vis system upgrades and chamber refurbishment respectively, seems quite extravagant. Especially in context of wasting another \$30k to cut (sorry 'review efficiency of') mobile workforce.
10. DLCMP page 39: Last but not least. RE: LC statement it believes that Rate payers can afford/are ok with... rate increases at 5% over coming years, i.e. increases at about 3 to 4 times current CPI. I find that statement and the whole notion offensive. It shows LC to be arrogantly out of touch with its rate paying community. NO, I am not ok with that. I am on a fixed income and any increases in cost of living beyond CPI come off my standard of living. Not that LC leadership appears to know and/or care about that! It is not surprising that some jurisdiction have introduced the capping of rates to reign in the rampant overspending of over ambitious local councils. This cannot come soon enough to the NT.

Regards  
Horst Walter

## ATTACHMENT C - PUBLIC SUBMISSIONS

Megan Leo

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**From:** Your Say Litchfield <notifications@engagementhubs.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, May 17, 2019 6:02 AM  
**To:** Megan Leo  
**Subject:** Doc 430329 spam: Anonymous User completed Draft 2019-20 Municipal Plan and Budget

Anonymous User just submitted the survey 'Draft 2019-20 Municipal Plan and Budget' with the response below.

**Name**

Airsten Robb

**Email address**

arobb2017@gmail.com

**Contact phone number (optional)**

No Answer

Please provide your submission or feedback in the box below.

Disagree and furious about the proposed rate rise! Council does NOTHING in our area except mow the verges once in a while! Where are the bike paths so kids can actually ride safely around our rural area and to school? Where are the reduced speed limits so we can reduce accidents and deaths on Power Road? Where are the actual decent road repairs in our rural area? What exactly are we paying for- and please don't refer to the blurb above..that is meaningless toddwaffle and spin with NO substance! NO TO A RATE RISE.

Alternatively, if you would like to attach a pre-prepared submission (eg word or pdf document) or additional information to your submission, please attach your file below.

No Answer



## ATTACHMENT C - PUBLIC SUBMISSIONS



From: petar fantini <petarfantini@gmail.com>  
Sent: Tuesday, 28 May 2019 9:17 PM  
To: Council <council@litchfield.nt.gov.au>  
Subject: Rates

Hi petar fantini here I live in the Litchfield area and I am a rate payer. I have just been informed that our rates will increase by 5% each year for the next 10 years. Ever since I have owned my place you have done nothing to benefit rate payers in our area yet you increase rate payments. How about fixing Cox peninsula road from berry springs through to Litchfield park road its hard to keep your vehicle on the road with that many pot holes and bumps in the road. Also I should not have to use my own mower and fuel to fix up the long grass along the sides of the road just because people you employ with the money I pay do a half job and miss everything. Thanks for reading this. I look forward to your reply regards petar

## ATTACHMENT C - PUBLIC SUBMISSIONS

Megan Leo

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From: Tony Hardwick <tony@nt-easy.com.au>  
Sent: Tuesday, May 21, 2019 11:18 AM  
To: Municipalian  
Subject: Dec-430730 Municipal Plan

The CEO  
Litchfield Council

I am concerned that Council intends spending \$5.6m of ratepayers money on roads. Road users are already subjected to fuel excise imposed by the Federal government. Of the total amount collected in this way it is believed that only 25% goes towards roads. Council should stick to its core function of waste collection, public recreation facilities and planning. Why should ratepayers pay an additional tax on top of what is collected by the Federal government, supposedly for roads. Council should be lobbying government for funding of roads. Another matter where some ratepayers are being penalised by the imposition of a waste levy on unoccupied vacant land. Council also should explain the need for what appears to be a grossly overstaffed administration.

I should look forward to your response.

Tony Hardwick  
PO Box 854  
HUMPTY BONGARD NT 0846  
0408 547 000