

LITCHFIELD COUNCIL



Community effort is essential

Special Council Meeting BUSINESS PAPER WEDNESDAY 30/05/2018

Meeting to be held commencing 6:00pm
In Council Chambers at 7 Bees Creek Road, Freds Pass

Kaylene Conrick, 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

LITCHFIELD COUNCIL MEETING

Notice of Meeting
to be held in the Council Chambers, Litchfield
on Wednesday, 30 May 2018 at 6:00pm

Kaylene Conrick
Chief Executive Officer

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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



COUNCIL REPORT

Agenda Item Number:	6.1
Report Title:	Draft Municipal Plan & Budget 2018-19 Submissions
Report Number:	18/0079
Meeting Date:	30/05/2018
Attachments:	A - Table of Submissions received B – Recommendation for Amendments by Officers

Purpose

This report presents the submissions made to Council during the public consultation period on the Draft Municipal Plan 2018-19 and recommendations for amendments to the draft plan.

Summary

In line with legislative requirements Council has resolved at its meeting held on the 18 April 2018 for the Draft Municipal Plan 2018-19 to go out for public consideration. Through the period of public consultation from 20 April to 21 May 2018 Council has received 11 submissions.

All submissions received have been provided to Councillors under separate cover and are summarised and addressed in the table attached to this report (Attachment A).

Further to the above public submissions, Council officers are suggesting minor changes, resulting in the amendment of the budget and editorial changes to the document (Attachment B).

Recommendation

THAT Council

1. Reconsiders the Sealing of Oxford Road, Berry Springs;
2. Removes all references to a Rating Review in 2018-19 from the Municipal Plan document;
3. Amend the number of registered dogs to 5,201;
4. Removes references to charge commercial waste companies depositing a Litchfield resident's waste at a Waste Transfer Station;
5. Includes in its Budget for 2018-19
 - a. Income and expenditure for a \$2,000 Road Safety Grant;
 - b. Income and expenditure for a \$15,000 Stronger Communities Program grant; and
6. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to make editorial changes, as necessary.

Background

Council is requested to review the submissions received and approve the amendments suggested by Executive before the final Municipal Plan 2018-19 will be presented for Council's consideration at the Council meeting on 27 June 2018.

The public submission received in the consultation period include the following topics:

- Sealing of Oxford Road, Berry Springs;
- Works to Whitewood Road, Howard Springs;
- Upgrade of Playground Equipment at Howard Park Recreation Reserve;
- Support for Mira Square;
- Sealing and street lighting at Southport;
- Rural emphasis in the Municipal Plan document;
- Council to focus on basic services;
- Review of the need for a Rating Review
- Cost of Administration of Council;
- Success of Animal Management (Dog Registration);
- Consideration of takeover of Library Services;
- Establishment of an Aquatic Facility;
- Cost effectiveness of Mobile Work Force;
- Waste Strategy;
- Cash for Containers option on Waste Transfer Stations;
- Management of wetlands;
- New initiatives for scholarships;
- Financial impact of Rates increase;
- Women in Business program; and
- Financial management of Council.

Furthermore, Council officers have identified the following items:

- Editorial changes (as outlined in Attachment B);
- Inducing income and expenditure for a \$2,000 Road Safety Grant for signage and safety education at Howard Park Reserve; and
- Including income and expenditure for a \$15,000 Stronger Communities Program grant for the upgrade of the kitchen in both halls at Howard Park Reserve.

The Department of Housing and Community Development has provided suggestions regarding minor edits.

To address the above submissions, the following changes are suggested to the Municipal Plan 2018-19:

- removing all references to a Rating Review in 2018-19 from the Municipal Plan document;
- removing references to charge commercial waste companies depositing a Litchfield resident's waste at a Waste Transfer Station;
- including in Council's Budget for 2018-19
 - i. Income and expenditure for a \$2,000 Road Safety Grant;
 - ii. Income and expenditure for a \$15,000 Stronger Communities Program grant; and
- making minor editorial changes, as necessary.

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.

The Draft Municipal Plan 2018-19 for Litchfield Council complies with the above requirements.

Council must adopt a legally compliant budget. The draft 'balanced' budget 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 presented to Council will have no financial implications.

Community Engagement

Submissions presented arose from public consultation and will be incorporated in the final Municipal Plan 2018-19.

The Municipal Plan was promoted through the following means:

- Ad in the NT News 1 May 2018 in the public notice section;

- Boosted post on Facebook, reaching 4,165 people with 51 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 10 April 2018 and 1 May 2018;
- Discussed by Councillors at the Freds Pass Show and over Mix 104.9 in live interview with the Mayor;
- Copies displayed at the front counter in Councils office;
- Advertised on Community Notice Boards within the Municipality.

**Recommending
Officer:**

Silke Maynard, Director Community and Corporate Services

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

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.

2018/2019 Litchfield Council Municipal Plan Submissions

Topic	Name	Submission Summary	Response	RECOMENDATION
Sealing of Oxford Road, Berry Springs	1. Sam Foster, Berry Springs	Given the financial impact resident would be happy for the road to remain unsealed.	Council's Sealing of Roads Policy states that all Council roads should be sealed and provides a list of factors to consider in determining priority for sealing of roads.	3 residents representing 5 of 12 properties have submitted regarding the Sealing of Oxford Road Council should reconsider the project
	2. Ron Day, R & J Family Trust	Developer rejects having to pay further to monies previously paid to the contribution fund for the sealing of Oxford Road. Developer sights offers previously made to Council to assist with an upgrade to Oxford Road which were not accepted. Grading of Oxford Road post subdivision has almost isolated access to Solice Place which is impacting on property sales.	Council is proposing to use a combination of Developer Contribution Funds, a Special Rate for all properties having direct access onto Oxford Road, and Council Financial Reserves funding to seal the road. Recent heavy rains have scoured the intersection in question, which will be rectified at the next grading cycle, scheduled for June 2018.	
	3. Daniel and Charmaine Thorneycroft, Berry Springs	Disagrees with the additional charge to ratepayers to fund the sealing of Oxford Road given they already pay rates and that the Developers have made substantial contributions to fund improvements to the road. Resident requests for plans to be provided to owners for consideration. Resident questions finance arrangements around Finn Road upgrade and would like information on Council's nomination of roads in the re-seal program.	Council's Sealing of Roads Policy states that all Council roads should be sealed and provides a list of factors to consider in determining priority for sealing of roads. Council' Sealing of Road Policy INF05 states that Council may apply Special Rate for each allotment to defray the cost of sealing a road, or part thereof, where there is a public benefit.	

2018/2019 Litchfield Council Municipal Plan Submissions

Topic	Name	Submission Summary	Response	RECOMENDATION
Works to Whitewood Road, Howard Springs	Theo and Leona Tsikouris, Howard Springs	Proposed works to Whitewood Road are inadequate and do not address safety issues for road users, pedestrians or bicycle riders.	<p>Whitewood Road, between Hicks Road and Hillier Road is a historic road reserve that is only 20m in width.</p> <p>This width does not allow room for a safe cycle path and footpath as well as the required seal and stormwater drainage.</p> <p>To provide room for a cycle and footpath in this location, Council would need to acquire land from the adjoining properties on at least one side of the road to widen the road reserve. Land acquisition and the associated road opening would be a time and cost consuming process and is not currently part of Council's long-term plan for this area.</p> <p>The NT Government's plans for the broader locality of Howard Springs, including links to new hospital and City of Palmerston, include the addition of a cycle path along the Madsen Road corridor, which generally has a 30m or wider road reserve, to the east of Hamilton Road. A long-term consideration for Council may be the continuation of this future link to the west from Hamilton Road to Hicks Road.</p>	No change to Municipal Plan.

2018/2019 Litchfield Council Municipal Plan Submissions

Topic	Name	Submission Summary	Response	RECOMENDATION
Upgrade of Playground at Howard Park Recreation Reserve	Kiya Gill, Humpty Doo	The Playground at Howard Park Recreation Reserve is in poor condition and requires repairs and upgrades. Shade, water fountains and rubbish bins also required at the facility.	<p>In 2017 Council conducted a community survey on Howard Park Recreation Reserve. The condition of the Playground was raised in the survey results. Council has applied for a Special Purpose Grant from NTG to upgrade the Howard Park Playground. Council will be advised of the outcome of the Grant in June 2018.</p> <p>If unsuccessful, Council will consider other funding options.</p> <p>Further, Playground Audits have been scheduled for 2018/19.</p>	No change to Municipal Plan.
Mira Square, Southport	Denis Davey, Southport	Further detail sought on the \$5,000 budgeted to be spent on Mira Square improvements.	<p>Council's support for the development of Mira Square will continue in a strong partnership with the Progress Association.</p> <p>\$5,000 has been allocated in the 2018/19 budget to continue work to secure the land from NTG and commence design work on a community facility at Mira Square.</p>	No change to Municipal Plan.
Southport roads	Denis Davey, Southport	Resident would like to see funding of road sealing and installation of street lights at intersections in Southport.	Council has undertaken studies on the sealing of roads in Southport and is continuing to work on the details and costing of these works.	No change to Municipal Plan

2018/2019 Litchfield Council Municipal Plan Submissions

Topic	Name	Submission Summary	Response	RECOMENDATION
			The roads at Southport are of a rural characteristic and in line with the Council's Development and Subdivision Standards, streetlights are not proposed for Southport.	
Rural emphasis	Gerry Wood, Howard Springs	There is no mention of 'rural' in the Municipal Plan. Resident feels there is no distinction between an urban and rural council.	<p>Council recognises in its Strategic Plan 2018-2022 the unique characteristics of the Municipality.</p> <p>Over the next 40 to 50 years Litchfield is earmarked to play an important role in accommodating urban growth within the Darwin Region with its urban development zones Holtze, Weddell and Murrumujuk.</p> <p>Council does also mention the rural activity centres of Berry Springs, Howard Springs, Humpty Doo and Coolalinga.</p> <p>Council's vision is for Litchfield to be 'The best place to live in the Top End.' Either in the urban or rural areas of the Municipality.</p>	No change to Municipal Plan.
Council should provide basic services only	Gerry Wood, Howard Springs	Litchfield Council needs to keep to the basics and focus on rural services such as roads, reserves, weed and waste management.	<p>Council's strategic priorities reflected in the Draft Municipal Plan address those areas. With 7 out of the 9 key outcomes being:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Roads and transport - Waste and cleanliness - Recreation - Development and open space 	No change to Municipal Plan.

2018/2019 Litchfield Council Municipal Plan Submissions				
Topic	Name	Submission Summary	Response	RECOMENDATION
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Animals and wildlife - Natural environment - Water and drainage 	
Rating Review	Gerry Wood, Howard Springs	Questions the need for a rating review and does not support moving to a UCV based rating system.	At the Council meeting of 16 May 2018, Council accepted the Litchfield Council – Review of its Basis of Rating Report dated 2 March 2017 which was conducted by an independent consultant, no further decision has been made by Council.	All references to a rating review in 2018/2019 to be removed from Municipal Plan document.
Cost of Administration	Gerry Wood, Howard Springs	Council's administration costs and staffing numbers need to be reviewed.	<p>As part of the annual Budget preparation Council reviews staffing levels and administration cost.</p> <p>The Draft Municipal Plan document highlights on page 20 the increase in staffing levels over time with an increase of 4.47 Fulltime Equivalent over the last 5 years.</p> <p>The 2018/19 budget includes only one new fulltime positions (for 12 months) - a Customer Service Trainee position.</p> <p>The Operational Expenditure has increased by 1.3% from the 2017/18 Budget, keeping administration cost under restraint in accordance with the Long Term Financial Plan.</p>	No change to Municipal Plan.

2018/2019 Litchfield Council Municipal Plan Submissions

Topic	Name	Submission Summary	Response	RECOMENDATION
Animal Management	Gerry Wood, Howard Springs	Only 20% of dogs have been registered since Animal Management By-Laws came in to effect. Should the fees to register a dog be calculated differently for easier administration and higher participation rates.	<p>Of the 7948 dogs on Council's microchip database, 2747 of these have been recorded as deceased or having left the municipality.</p> <p>2921 have been registered with Council (issued a registration tag) and the remaining 2,280 dogs on our database are deemed to be registered and the dog owners will be sent a renewal notice in late July/early August advising them of the requirement to renew their dog's registration.</p>	To amend the figure of registered dogs on page 9 to 5,201, reflecting all dogs registered.
Community Engagement	Gerry Wood, Howard Springs	The role of community engagement should be the responsibility of the Mayor and Councillors.	<p>Community engagement is broader than communications and media liaison.</p> <p>Our community engagement is coordinated by one staff member and undertaken by all staff, Mayor and Councillors. It is a planned process, often for a specific purpose and generally involves working with the community to shape or inform Council decisions.</p> <p>Our examples of community engagement activities include face to face pop up stalls on specific issues such as dog management and waste management planning, surveys, establishing and managing community reference groups.</p>	No change to Municipal Plan.

2018/2019 Litchfield Council Municipal Plan Submissions

Topic	Name	Submission Summary	Response	RECOMENDATION
			<p>Council representation at markets and shows, as well as all the background work associated with planning projects is part of community engagement.</p> <p>Sponsorship and Council partnerships are also managed by Council's Community Engagement Officer, as well as Council's communications including website, noticeboards and social media.</p> <p>Council is committed to effective community engagement and open and accountable governance, please see out Community Engagement Strategy on our website.</p>	
Library Services	Gerry Wood, Howard Springs	Library Services are already provided to residents by the NT Government. Such services cost a lot of money and Council should not be seeking to take over this service.	Council is currently in discussion with NT Library regrading library services and will consider this item at the June Council meeting.	No change to Municipal Plan.
Aquatic Facility	Gerry Wood, Howard Springs	An aquatic facility in the rural area was a promise of a former NT Government. Such a facility would be costly to construct and operate and as such should be an NT Government initiative.	<p>Council has undertaken and Aquatic Facility Needs Study and is advocating for Government contribution to undertake a Feasibility Study in the coming year.</p> <p>This study will identify the financial impact and operating models for an aquatic facility.</p> <p>Council has not resolved to build a pool at this stage.</p>	No change to Municipal Plan.

2018/2019 Litchfield Council Municipal Plan Submissions

Topic	Name	Submission Summary	Response	RECOMENDATION
Mobile Work Force	Gerry Wood, Howard Springs	Council should consider if outsourcing to contractors would be a more effective option than maintaining an internal mobile workforce.	At the Council Meeting of 16 May 2018, Council resolved to be presented at the 27 June 2018 meeting, with a report on the process, cost and timing to undertake a Service Review of the Mobile Work Force to determine whether the service should continue to be provided by Council's in-house staff team or, if the service should be undertaken via an external contract	No change to Municipal Plan.
Waste Strategy	Gerry Wood, Howard Springs	The proposed charges to waste management companies for the disposal of resident's waste at Council Waste Transfer Stations is unfair given the Council has already been paid for this service by the ratepayer.	At the Council Meeting of 16 May 2018, Council resolved not to charge private waste collectors for waste collected from residents within the Litchfield Municipality.	All references to charge commercial waste companies depositing a Litchfield residents waste at a Waste Transfer Station to be removed from Municipal Plan document.
Cash for Containers	Gerry Wood, Howard Springs	A mobile Cash for Containers plant should be set-up near waster transfer stations to encourage recycling of applicable items.	The Cash for Containers received at the Waste Transfer Stations fund Council's Community Grants Scheme. There is also a commercial Cash for Container operator in close proximity to the Humpty Doo Waste Transfer Station.	No change to Municipal Plan.
Management of natural areas	Gerry Wood, Howard Springs	Council should consider taking on the management and maintenance of Girraween Lagoon, similar to the way it manages McMinns Lagoon.	McMinns Lagoon is Council owned land and a recreation reserve managed by an independent Association.	No change to Municipal Plan.

2018/2019 Litchfield Council Municipal Plan Submissions

Topic	Name	Submission Summary	Response	RECOMENDATION
		The areas wetlands, including creeks and rivers should be a focus for this Council.	Giraween Lagoon is currently privately-owned land. Council believes that the management of conservation area is a main focus of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. Furthermore, Council is recognising the importance of local flora and fauna by advocating and partnering with key organisations such as NT Natural Resource Management.	
New initiatives	Aisla Connolly, Humpty Doo	For community and economic prosperity new initiatives such as the below should be considered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the provision of a scholarship for Litchfield youth to continue further studies (industries such as horticulture are in dire need for local staff); and an investment in a campaign to train and promote the Litchfield municipality's horticulture industry, to the locals, as an employment opportunity. 	Organisations are eligible to apply for up to \$5,000 through Council's Community Grants Scheme. The current year's Scheme is open for applications until the 8 June 2018. Council would be interested in talking to and working with relevant businesses and industry bodies to contribute to local economic growth initiatives.	No change to Municipal Plan.
Partnership opportunities with NT Farmers	Greg Owens, NT Farmers	NT Farmers Association, the peak body representing the interest of all plant-based industries in the NT identify the following potential		

2018/2019 Litchfield Council Municipal Plan Submissions

Topic	Name	Submission Summary	Response	RECOMENDATION
		<p>partnering opportunities with Litchfield Council for 2018/2019 :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The Sweetest Job campaign (approx. \$10,000 investment); and • Scholarships for Litchfield school leavers towards further education in horticulture and agriculture (approx. \$2,000 investment). 	<p>Council would be interested in talking to and working with relevant businesses and NT Farmers to contribute to local economic growth initiatives.</p> <p>NT Farmers is eligible to apply for up to \$5,000 through Council’s Community Grants Scheme.</p>	No change to Municipal Plan.
Financial impact of rate increase to Ratepayers	Daniel Skewes	What factual evidence does Council have that ratepayers will feel a low impact from the proposed rate rise, residents are already counting every dollar.	<p>As demonstrated on page 38 in the Draft Municipal Plan under Social and Economic Impact Statement of Rating Strategy, Council has considered the Weekly Household Income and other ABS Census Data 2016 available.</p> <p>Furthermore, Council takes the number of rates assessments on Financial Hardship Arrangements with Council into consideration.</p> <p>The proposed rate increase for residential properties equates to \$0.92 per week.</p>	No change to Municipal Plan

2018/2019 Litchfield Council Municipal Plan Submissions

Topic	Name	Submission Summary	Response	RECOMENDATION
Litchfield Women in Business	Daniel Skewes	What is the financial benefit to Council of its \$10,000 sponsorship of the Women in Business Network.	<p>Litchfield Council recognises the importance of supporting, making connections, promoting businesses and gaining new skills to business success. It has facilitated the establishment of this Network to support women to be successful in business.</p> <p>A strong and successful business sector contributes to the liveability of the Litchfield municipality to be the Best Place to Live in the Top End.</p> <p>Council's Strategic Plan outlines one of the key outcomes of Community and Economic Prosperity and Council uses this measure to progress this outcome.</p>	No change to Municipal Plan
Financial Management	Daniel Skewes	Council shows a lack of financial restraint, spending in excess of income whilst the rural area is going through severe downturn.	<p>Council is aware of the financial restraints it has and addresses those challenges of service delivery in its Long Term Financial Plan.</p> <p>Overall Council's Operating expenses are lower than the Operating Income, meaning Council delivers ongoing services within the income generated. Financial reserves are only utilised to support the improvement and renewal of assets.</p>	No change to Municipal Plan

2018/19 Recommendations for Amendments by Council Officers	
Topic	Amendment
Budget updates	<p>Application for \$2k Road Safety Grant submitted. Notification of grant status to be received by EOM May 2018. Grant would cover safety signage and road safety themed event.</p> <p>Adjust Income and Expenditure, no bottom line impact.</p> <p>\$15,000 Howard Park Reserve kitchen upgrade grant funded, increase in expenditure and transfer from unexpended grant reserves (funds received in 2017/18), no bottom line impact.</p>
Removing references to Rating Review to be undertaken in 2018-19	<p>At the Council meeting of 16 May 2018, Council accepted the Litchfield Council – Review of its Basis of Rating Report dated 2 March 2017 which was conducted by an independent expert, no further decision has been made.</p> <p>All references to a rating review in 2018/2019 to be removed from Municipal Plan document.</p>
Change to final Waste Strategy	<p>At the Council Meeting of 16 May 2018, Council resolved to adopt the Waste Strategy 2018-2023 with the amendment to remove the introduction of commercial waste charge on all loads delivered by private waste collectors</p> <p>Removal of references to Commercial Waste Charge (from Waste Strategy report)</p>
Editorial changes	<p>Corrections required to Org. Chart page 21</p> <p>“Works Controller” position should be “Works Administrator”</p> <p>“Senior Ranger Supervisor” should be “Regulatory Services Manager”</p> <p>Colours in Pie Chart – Page 9</p> <p>Colours are too similar (Rates & Other Revenue) and require changing for easier recognition of break-up.</p> <p>Front cover colour scheme to be changed from blue to green.</p> <p>Page 20 Total Employee Costs</p> <p>add clarifying note that the cost for the Customer Service Trainee position is budgeted under New Initiatives, as this is a 12 month contract only and not considered a permanent addition to staffing cost.</p> <p>Page 36 Infrastructure Maintenance</p> <p>Update total value of current value assets to \$261 million</p> <p>Page 58 Depreciation</p> <p>Update depreciation for 2018/19 to \$16,749,678 and amend the following years accordingly</p>