

LITCHFIELD COUNCIL



Community effort is essential

Special Council Meeting BUSINESS PAPER WEDNESDAY 5/07/2017

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, 5 July 2017 at 6:00pm**

Kaylene Conrick
Chief Executive Officer

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Audio Disclaimer

An Audio recording of this meeting will be made for minute taking purposes as authorised by the Chief Executive Officer.

Acknowledgement of Traditional Ownership

It is acknowledged that the meeting is held on the land of the traditional owners and Council respect the Elders past and present for their continuing custodianship of the land and the children of this land across generations.

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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:	5.1
Report Title:	Municipal Plan 2017/18 including Annual Budget 2017/18
Meeting Date:	5/07/2017
Attachments:	Municipal Plan 2017/18

Purpose

This paper presents for Council adoption the Litchfield Council 2017/2018 Municipal Plan.

Summary

The Municipal Plan 2017/18 has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Act 2014 and includes the following:

- Reference to the Litchfield Council Strategic Plan and Long Term Financial Plan.
- Annual Service Delivery Plan with activities, initiatives and Key Performance Indicators.
- Details of the services, initiatives and projects to be funded in the Annual Budget.
- The Rates Declaration Statement 2017/2018.
- Elected Members Allowances.
- The staffing plan – the total number and total employee costs.
- The amount of total rate revenue to be raised in 2017/2018.

Recommendation

THAT Council pursuant with Section 24 of the Local Government Act 2014, endorse the Municipal Plan 2017/18 as provided in Attachment A.

Background

The Draft Municipal Plan includes Councils Annual Budget and Annual Service Delivery Plan to address areas as specified in the Litchfield Council Strategic Plan.

The Budget 2017/18 is a balanced budget and includes:

- An increase of 5% to rate income
- Expiry of the \$50 Humpty Doo Waste Transfer Station Levy
- \$2.6 million for Road Reseals
- \$2.8 Million for infrastructure maintenance including stormwater drains, kerbing, culverts, road shoulders and safety barriers.
- \$10,000 for a program to reduce the impact of feral dogs on communities.
- \$95,000 for Community Grants and Donations including Freds Pass Show, Southport Mira Square.
- \$37,500 for the Litchfield Community Grants Scheme for annual grants up to \$5,000 and rapid response community initiatives up to \$500.
- \$15,000 to improve water management on council reserves.
- \$953,000 to support the ongoing operations and maintenance of Council Recreation Reserves.

- \$30,000 to address policy concerns of private road infrastructure in the Litchfield Municipality.

In proposing the rate increase, Council has considered the long-term financial plan, its strategic priorities for providing services and infrastructure, and the social and economic realities for the Litchfield community.

The proposed staffing plan has increased by 1 full time equivalent from the previous year to 54.47 to assist Council meeting its compliance obligations. This equates to 38.97 full time equivalent outdoor staff and 15.5 full time equivalent office staff.

The Municipal Plan 2017/18 was placed on public exhibition for a period of 21 days in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Act and Regulations. Written submissions were presented and considered by Council at its ordinary meeting on the 21 June 2017.

Links with Strategic Plan

An effective and sustainable 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;
- Council's long-term financial plan; and
- 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 Municipal Plan 2017/18 for Litchfield Council, Attachment A, complies with the above requirements.

Council must adopt a legally compliant budget. The budget is presented in accordance with Part 10.5, Section 127 (3) of the Local Government Act.

Risks

Council must adopt the Municipal Plan before the 31 July 2017.

Financial Implications

Not applicable.

Community Engagement

The Draft Municipal Plan 2017/18 was made available to the public for a 21-day consultation period.

Recommending Officer: **Silke Reinhardt, Director Community and Corporate Services**

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

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Municipal Plan

2017-2018

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+ Mayor's Opening

It is a pleasure to introduce you to this Council's second Municipal Plan during our term in office.

The draft Municipal Plan 2017-2018 includes the Annual Budget and builds on the progress made in 2016-2017 to achieve our vision for the Litchfield Municipality: to be the best place to live in the Top End.

Our priorities, drawn from our Strategic Plan 2016-2020, and underpinned by being an effective and sustainable Council, continue to be as follows:



An Effective and Sustainable Council

The new initiatives Council has determined to support in the 2017-2018 financial year focus on taking action on issues we know you think are important, as well as those issues required for good governance and Council's sustainability.

We continue to keep a watchful eye on ensuring we are financially responsible and are always looking for opportunities to attract funding from other sources to enable us to do more.

I have the privilege this year to take a leadership role as Chair of TOPROC (Top End Regional Organisation of Councils) and am mindful of the responsibility I have to ensure the Litchfield Municipality has a strong voice in discussions about present and future possibilities for the sustainable growth of the Northern Territory.



Mayor Maree Bredhauer

One of our challenges continues to be around managing growth to ensure the ambience we all so love about rural living - the reason we all live here - is maintained.

I am proud to say that the Women's Business Network initiative started in 2016-2017 will continue with our support. It is inspirational to hear of women in business in our municipality who are doing great things to drive economic growth in our region.

We have much to be proud of in our community and my fellow Elected Members and I are humbled by the opportunity we have to contribute to Litchfield Municipality being the best place to live in the Top End.

+ Chief Executive Officer's Message

The past eighteen months have seen our organisation evolve in its capacity to deliver on the vision and priorities set by the current Council early in its term.

The emphasis has been on enabling an effective and sustainable Council supported by good governance, great customer service, a positive culture, innovation and continuous improvement in all that we do.

The 2017-2018 Municipal Plan draws on the 10-year Long Term Financial Plan to improve our financial sustainability.

Whilst there are challenges looming in the future, such as large operating deficits and inadequate funding for capital expenditure to maintain our asset base, in the short-term, Council has strong cash reserves and no debt.

Our longer-term focus in managing our assets, providing effective and accountable internal systems and delivering sustainable services, such as waste management, ensures we can be confident we are heading in the right direction.

The 2017-2018 Municipal Plan sets the agenda for another exciting year as we roll out projects and programs. This includes funding events that bring local people together to celebrate and share important occasions such as Australia Day, Anzac Day and the Freds Pass Annual Show. It also includes enabling the seven Recreation Reserves to provide great facilities for everyone to enjoy.

I look forward to working with this Council to the end of its term and the next Council, following the August 2017 Council election, to achieve their vision for the Litchfield Municipality.



Kaylene Conrick, Chief Executive Officer

+ Key Highlights in the 2017-2018 budget include:

- A balanced budget.
- An increase of 5% to rate income.
- Expiry of the \$50 Humpty Doo Waste Transfer Station Levy.
- \$2.6 million for Road Reseals.
- \$2.8 million for infrastructure maintenance, including stormwater drains, kerbing, culverts, road shoulders and safety barriers.
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- \$15,000 to improve water management on Council reserves.
- \$953,000 to support the ongoing operations and maintenance of Council Recreation Reserves.
- \$30,000 to address private road policies in the Litchfield Municipality.

+ Public Consultation and Submission Review

Local governments in the Northern Territory are required to undertake their planning and reporting activities in accordance with the *Local Government Act* and Local Government (Administration) Regulations.

A draft annual plan is required to be prepared for public display and submissions, prior to being submitted to Council for adoption. The public display and submission process must occur for at least 21 days between 1 April and 31 July.

It is a requirement of the *Act* that the Municipal, Regional or Shire Plan be adopted by the Council by the 31 July each year.

The Draft 2017-2018 Municipal Plan has been released by Council for public consultation for a period of 21 days, ending 31 May 2017.

Council has an ongoing commitment to engage the community in setting Council's direction and we encourage you to make a submission in relation to this Draft 2017-2018 Municipal Plan for Council's review at a Special Council Meeting on 5 July 2017.

Submissions can be made as follows:

Attention: CEO Re: 2017-2018 Municipal Plan Submission

By Mail

Litchfield Council
PO Box 446
HUMPTY DOO NT 0836

In Person

Litchfield Council Offices
7 Bees Creek Road,
Freds Pass

Online

emailed to council@litchfield.nt.gov.au

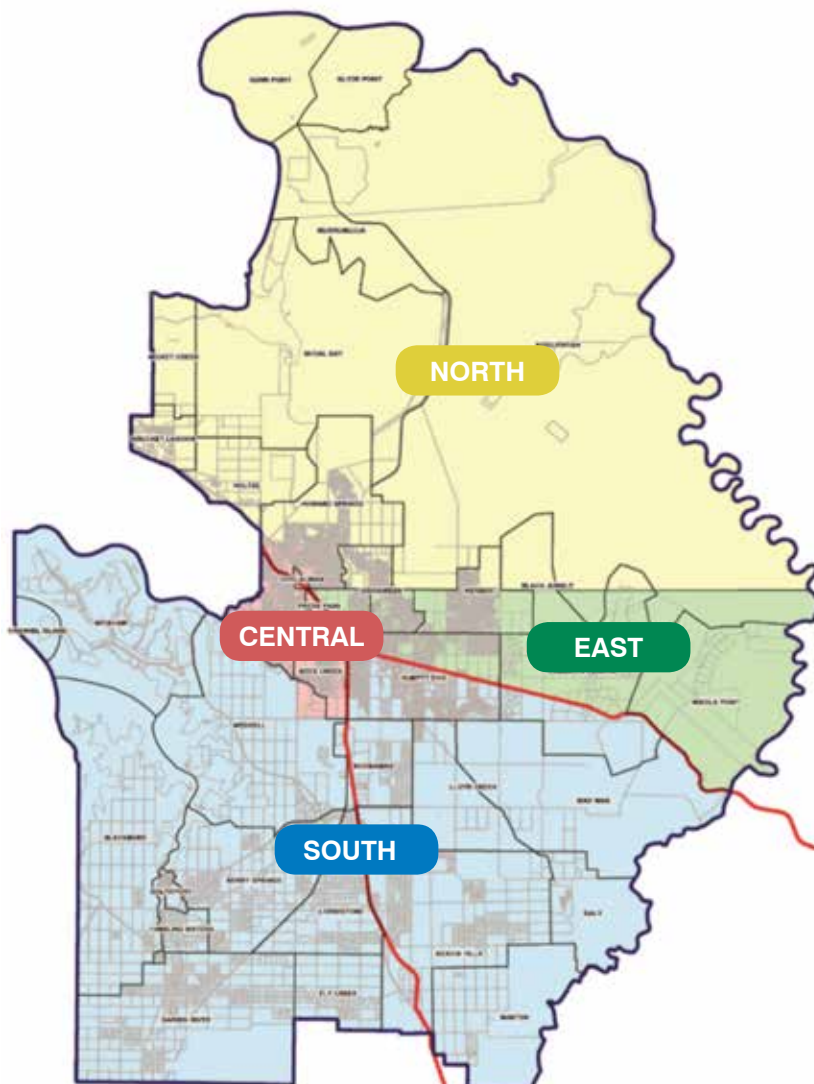
Council plans to adopt the 2017-2018 Municipal Plan, Rates Declaration and 2017-2018 Budget at a Council Meeting on 5 July 2017.

+ Council Overview

Litchfield Council's elected body consists of the Mayor and four Councillors.

The local government area is divided into four wards, each with one Councillor. The Mayor is elected at large.

Council elections will be held again in August 2017.



Mayor
Maree Bredhauer



North Ward
Cr Letchmi Wright



Central Ward
Cr Christine Osborn



East Ward
Cr Kirsty Hunt



South Ward
Cr Doug Barden

Litchfield Profile*

Population	23,614	
Male	12,822	54.3%
Female	10,792	45.7%

Our Economy*

Local Jobs	12,470
Number of Businesses	2,024

*Source: Profile id National demographic indicators for local government areas

Council Data

Number of Rateable Assessments	8186
Kms of Sealed Roads	614.1
Kms of Unsealed Roads	108.5
Kms of Dedicated Bicycle Paths	7.1
Number of Signs	6054
Number of Waste Transfer Stations	3
Number of Micro-chipped Dogs	5583
Number of Recreation Reserves	7

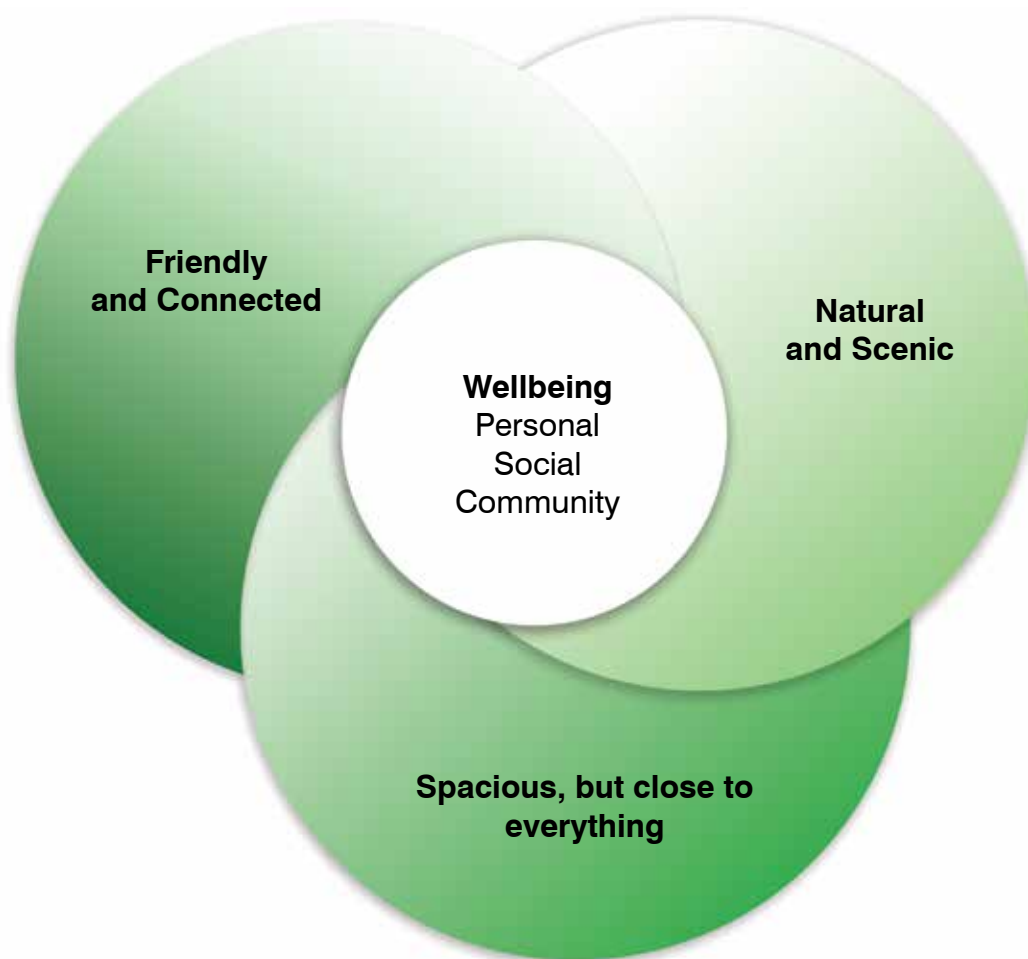
Operating Statement

	Draft Budget \$
Income	2017-2018
Rates	9,697,195.00
Statutory Charges	33,500.00
User Charges	1,217,955.00
Grants, Subsidies and Contributions	5,294,974.00
Investment Income	725,000.00
Reimbursements	-
Other Income	43,000.00
TOTAL INCOME	17,011,624.00
Expenses	
Total Employee Costs	5,973,624.00
- Auditor Fees	41,000.00
- Bad and Doubtful Debts	-
- Elected Member Expenses	245,787.00
- Election Expenses	136,710.00
Other Materials, Contracts and Expenses	
- Cemetery Operations	266,500.00
- Contractors	4,513,358.00
- Energy	231,600.00
- Insurance	223,599.00
- Maintenance	522,628.00
- Legal Expenses	173,000.00
- Donations and Community Support	136,250.00
- Computer / IT Costs	281,290.00
- Parts, Accessories and Consumables	188,000.00
- Professional Services	444,070.00
- Sundry	384,357.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	13,761,773.00

+ Strategic Plan Summary

Our Vision

Our vision is for a place of person, social and community wellbeing that stem from three unique attributes which are rarely, if ever, found together:



Friendly and connected:

We are a community where it is easy to get to know people and be around them; it is ideal for family living; there are plenty of activities, and it is safe.

Natural and scenic:

We have large blocks, attractive scenic outlooks, lots of native wildlife and we take pride in places being beautiful and clean.

Spacious, but close to everything:

While we have plenty of space to grow, you can get around easily, work locally and obtain everything you need within Litchfield.

The best place to live in the Top End.

+ Strategic Priorities, Outcomes and Principles

Priority # 1: Everything you need



Roads



Waste



Water



Public Transport



Cleanliness



Drainage

Priority #2 A great place to live



Social Activity



Culture



Community



Recreation



Animal Control



Sense of Place

Priority #3 A beautiful natural environment



Protection



Open Space



Weeds



Sustainability



Fire

Priority #4 A vibrant economy



Economic Development



Local Employment



Strong Local Business



Engage our
Community



Good
Governance



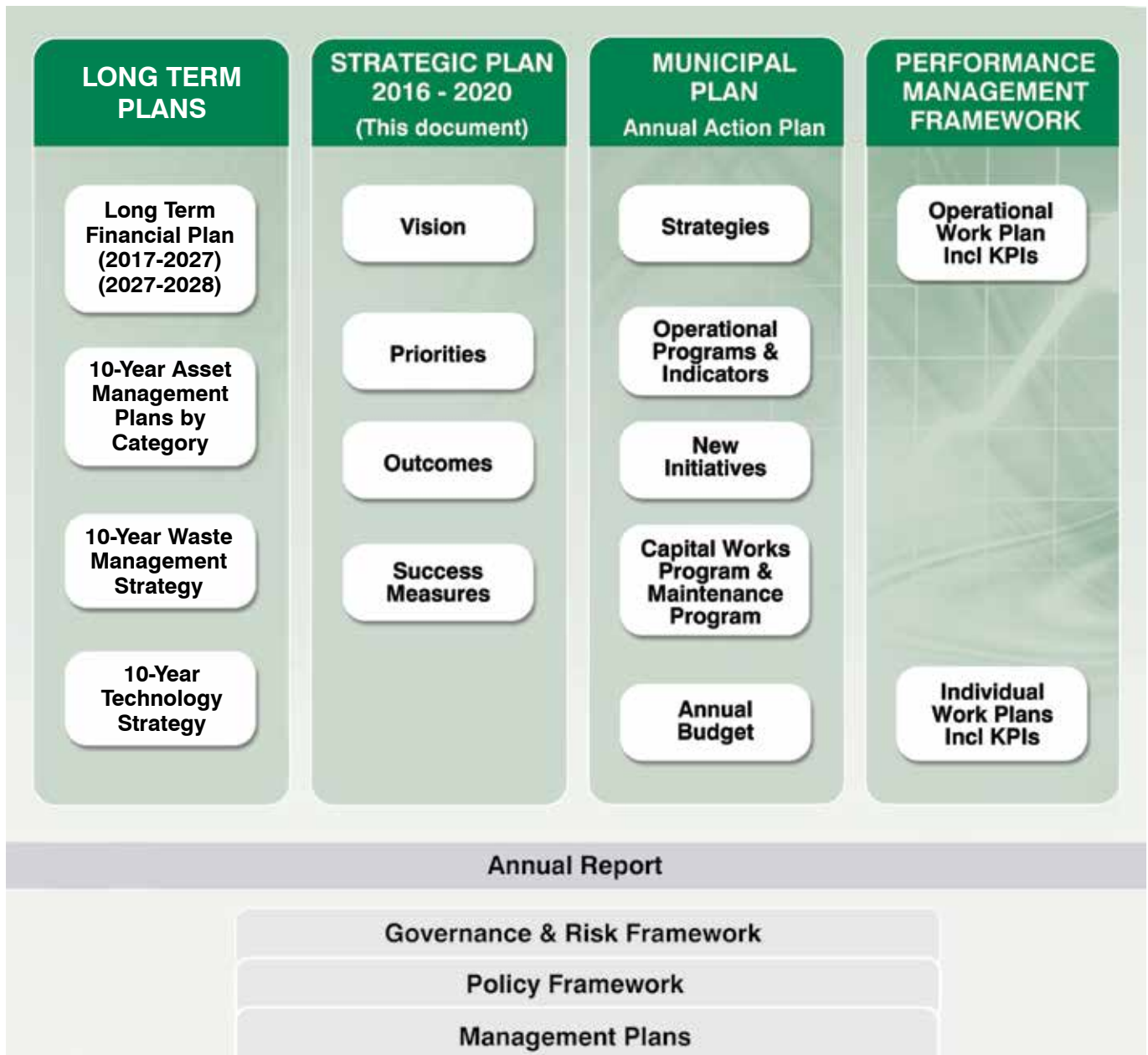
Partnership
and Advocacy



Modern Service
Delivery

Plus: An effective and sustainable Council

+ Litchfield Council's Planning Framework



+ Municipal Plan Overview

Strategic Focus for 2017-2018

Through the Litchfield Council Strategic Plan 2016-2020, five key priorities have been identified as Strategic Focus areas for the 2017-2018 financial year ahead.

- **Roads**
- **Waste**
- **Planning**
- **Thorak Regional Cemetery and**
- **Financial condition of Council.**

The following tables detail the objectives and key messages to Litchfield residents for each focus area. Council recognises that without the assistance of the Northern Territory and Australian Governments, an unfair burden will be placed on Litchfield residents. Consequently, advocacy targets have been identified to facilitate the engagement and partnering with these two spheres of government.

Roads	
Objective:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure that planning, maintenance and renewal of local roads is undertaken for current and future residents at an accepted service standard and cost.
Key Messages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are aware that roads are important and we're onto it! • We have prioritised which roads, and when the maintenance, renewal or upgrades work will occur. • Local roads are paid for from rates, developers' contributions, government grants and individual residents. • We have a major gap, or shortfall, in how much we should be spending on roads and how much we can afford to spend. • Over the next 10 years, we will spend an extra \$1m each year on local roads. • This means we will focus on maintaining our roads in the condition and at the current service level. • Bituminising unsealed roads and building new roads, will only occur when we can attract external funds to do so. • We will lobby NT Government to resolve the legacy issue of battleaxe properties road access. These private roads are on private titles and are unable to be transferred to Council as part of the local road network.
Advocacy Target:	<p>We are therefore doing the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submitting for Federal Government Blackspot road funding each year to make our local roads safer. • Utilising all grant opportunities with NT Government to attract additional road funding. • Lobbying the NT Government to resolve battleaxe private road issues. • Improving Council's asset management planning linked to long term financial planning.



Waste	
Objective:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To generate less waste and manage wisely and efficiently the waste we produce.
Key Messages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Waste Management is a significant activity for Litchfield Council. A Residential ratepayer, pays a \$349 waste management charge each year, in addition to property rates. Waste Management is full cost recovery; the full year cost is divided by the number of ratable properties. In addition, ratepayers have paid a special rate of \$50 per year for the last seven years to recover the cost of establishing the Humpty Doo Waste Transfer Station. This special rate finishes at 30 June 2017. We want to find ways to more efficiently deal with waste and reduce the volumes going to landfill. The new Waste Management Strategy lists what improvements we should make to our waste transfer stations over the next 10 years to be as efficient as possible. Generating less waste requires community effort and changing behaviours.
Advocacy Target:	<p>We are therefore doing the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing a 10 Year Waste Management Strategy that meets Litchfield residents' needs in a cost-effective way. Working with the NT Government to commit funds to commence work to establish a regional waste facility in Litchfield.
Planning	
Objective:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To influence the NT Government's development of rural activity centre Area Plans for Howard Springs, Coolalinga, Humpty Doo and Berry Springs to ensure community needs are represented and that the community shapes the future vision, identity and growth of our villages.
Key Messages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We want you to be confident of Council's involvement in the planning process. NT Government makes the final decision on planning matters but we have a voice. We continue to be actively involved in planning matters in Litchfield. We have successfully advocated for greater community participation. The NT Planning Commission has now established Community Advisory Groups for the Howard Springs and Coolalinga Area Plans. Community voice is important. You can get involved by going to information sessions and writing submissions when the opportunity arises. We are focused on maintaining a rural amenity as Litchfield grows.
Advocacy Target:	<p>We are therefore doing the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively meeting with Department of Lands, Planning and Logistics representatives to ensure Council is consulted on proposed changes for Litchfield Municipality. Meeting with Minister Manison on key rural issues. Influencing the quality and quantity of community engagement activities held on development and planning issues for Litchfield residents by working collaboratively with NT Government to raise awareness of the importance of effective community engagement on key matters affecting residents' lives.



Thorak Regional Cemetery

Objective:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To work with the NT Government to establish a governance model and operating plan that is economically sustainable and doesn't burden Litchfield residents in the long term.
Key Messages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thorak Regional Cemetery is the most recent cemetery established in the greater Darwin region. It occupies a large 26-hectare site and will be the primary location for burial, memorialisation and cremation services well into the future. The Cemetery is a regional service that Council operates for the benefit of our residents and others outside Litchfield. Only 11% of users of the service resided in the Litchfield Council area. Most services are provided for Darwin residents (59%) and Palmerston residents (19%) and other NT residents from as far as Katherine (11%). Each year the Cemetery is making a loss. 2016-2017 will be the third consecutive annual loss. The Darwin region has about 530 deaths each year. This number has not changed for a long time. Each year, more people are being cremated than buried. Thorak undertakes an average of only 110 cremations per year. For the cremator at Thorak to be financially viable approximately 400 cremations per year would need to occur. Affordable and accessible death services are everyone's right, but it shouldn't be Litchfield ratepayers carrying the cost. It is impractical and inequitable to expect Litchfield ratepayers to subsidise a regional community service, maintenance liabilities and capital expenditure over time. This is unsustainable and unfair.
Advocacy Target:	<p>We are therefore doing the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working collaboratively with the NT Government, City of Darwin and City of Palmerston to explore a new governance model for the cemetery, such as moving to a skill-based trust or delegated committee structure with regional input. Negotiating to secure increased funding from the NT Government and other regional councils to ensure the viability of the cemetery as a regional public service. Developing and implementing a robust, priority-based future maintenance plan with estimated costs. Meeting with the NT Government to discuss funding for a detailed investigation into the critical on-site irrigation system, cremator, building and structures to identify maintenance liabilities.

Financial condition of Council

Objective:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure that Council is financially positioned to continue to provide good quality services and infrastructure at an affordable level of property rates now and into the future.
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Key Messages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most of our business, financial and management revolves around community infrastructure. We, like all councils across Australia, continue to experience a decrease in alternative funding sources. Federal Government Assistant Grants (FAGs) are a core revenue stream received by all Australian local governments. FAGs funding is used for local roads maintenance and renewal and to provide other services. FAGs funding will be indexed in 2017-18 for the first time since 2013-14. Our most reliable funding source is our own, from property rates. Our rating system is out of date. Council's rate revenue is approximately 57% of total revenue. We need to collect more rates when due, with less in arrears. We need to contain operating costs to allow more to be spent on roads and other assets, such as our Recreation Reserve buildings.
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Advocacy Target:	<p>We are therefore doing the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopting a Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP) which sets out the financial parameters we must work within over the next 10 years to improve our long term financial position and to spend more on roads. Making submissions to the Federal Government Blackspot road funding each year to make our local roads safer. Lobbying the Federal Government via Local Government Association of NT (LGANT) to reinstate the FAGs index. Working hard on applying to other levels of government for funding when grant opportunities are advertised and have funding applications ready to go.
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Also, we will continue doing.....

	<p>Whilst the Strategic Priority Areas will be the key focus, Council will maintain an advocacy and/or operational presence in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocating for a solution to the identified gap in aquatic facilities for the 11,500 residents south of Freds Pass. Advocating for improved early years services to support our young residents to succeed. Supporting a Women's Business Network to support Litchfield businesses. Implementing Council's new Animal Management By-laws and promoting responsible dog ownership by providing incentives, education and enforcement. Developing occupancy and funding agreements for each Recreation Reserve. Implementing Council's Community Grants Scheme.
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+ Municipal Plan Compliance

Complying with the *Local Government Act*

The *Local Government Act* (Part 3.2, Section 22) states that Litchfield Council must have a plan, called the Municipal Plan, which must be adopted by Council before 31 July each year.

Final adoption of the plan follows a minimum of 21 days where the Draft Municipal Plan has been made available for public comment and a further period where any public submissions are reviewed and changes made to the plan where appropriate.

This Municipal Plan must be accessible to all members of the public and contain a service delivery plan, indicators for measuring Council's performance and the Council Budget. It must also refer to Council's Strategic Plan and Long Term Financial Plan, and it must include assessments of the adequacy of current constitutional arrangements and opportunities and challenges for delivering services within the Litchfield Municipality.

The Municipal Plan must also highlight potential changes to the administrative and regulatory framework for delivering services in the local government area, and it must address whether there are any opportunities to improve the delivery of services through working with other councils, government agencies or other organisations.

Litchfield Council's Annual Budget is prepared in accordance with the *Local Government Act* (Part 10.5 Section 127) and must also be adopted prior to 31 July each year.

The Annual Budget outlines Council's objectives for the current financial year, how Council will achieve those objectives, the indicators Council will use to review progress on the objectives, Council estimates of capital and operational revenue and expenditure, the allocations Council has budgeted for in developing and maintaining the different asset classes, how much Council will raise in rates, the rating structure and an assessment of the social and economic impact of that rating structure, and the budget allocations for elected members allowances.

Adequacy of Constitutional Arrangements

As required by the provisions of Section 23 of the *Local Government Act*, the Constitutional Arrangements were reviewed in 2014 and presented to the Minister in March 2015 prior to the November 2015 Litchfield Council Elections. It was resolved that the composition and structure at the time of review should be retained. Litchfield Council was exempt from a further review until after the Council elections in 2017.

+ Opportunities and Challenges for Service Delivery

In the process of developing the Annual Budget for the 2017-2018 Municipal Plan, Council has reviewed the Long Term Financial Plan and assessed emerging challenges and opportunities.

The Impact of Growth

The Litchfield Municipality has experienced substantial population growth of 47% in the last ten years, amounting to 6,500 new residents. Whilst future growth is predicted to be more moderate, the Greater Darwin Land Use Plan estimates 500 dwellings will be needed in this area to accommodate the increase in population in the next five to ten years.

Council can expect to derive more rates and waste management charges income as a result, though it is also likely that there will be a greater and more complex demand for services, particularly if that growth is in family households.

More than one dwelling on a single allotment also poses a challenge, straining Council's capacity to provide services when rates are fixed regardless of the nature of the allotments.

A review of the rating strategy to ensure the rating system is structured in a fair and equitable way, thus enabling a more sustainable financial position for Council in the long-term, is being considered.

Maintaining and Renewing Assets

As is the case for all local governments around Australia, maintaining and renewing infrastructure assets is a considerable challenge. As a member of the Local Government Association of the Northern Territory and the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA), Council participates in advocacy efforts to attract adequate funding to enable a timely approach to asset management. The current campaign is seeking a permanent doubling of Roads to Recovery funding as well as additional funding for community infrastructure to ensure Councils stay on top of this challenge.

Unsealed roads are a challenge, given the commitment to ensure all-weather access to most properties. Council has just over 108 kilometres of unsealed roads to maintain. Above average wet seasons place further pressure on Council's capacity to maintain these roads.



Further Challenges and Opportunities

Council continues to address the challenges of multiple adjacent battleaxe blocks and is seeking funding support to address this important issue.

The transfer of responsibility for street lighting infrastructure to NT local governments from the start of 2018 (estimated cost \$130,000) has been considered in developing the Service Delivery Plan, placing a considerable cost impost on ratepayers and drawing funds away from other programs.

Whilst considerable progress has been made on reducing the rates and infringements arrears, there is still a need to pursue this vigorously. Monies not paid significantly impact Council's capacity to deliver the projects and services it promises in the planning process.

A new Waste Management Plan is still in development and animal management by-laws will be introduced during the 2017-2018 Financial Year, though associated fees have yet to be determined and thus have not been factored into the draft Municipal Plan.

Council has adopted and implemented a new Community Grants Scheme for 2017-2018. This opens new opportunities for community groups and gives assurance that each approach from individual groups to Council for support will be considered fairly and equitably.

In the bigger picture, there has been a reduction in the Financial Assistance Grants (FAGs) base paid to local governments of an estimated 13% since the 2014/2015 financial year. ALGA has been successfully advocating on our behalf for the indexation of FAGs being restored in the 2017-2018 Federal Budget, thus returning the quantum to a level equal to at least 1% of Commonwealth Tax Revenue.

Acknowledging that there is a challenging fiscal environment facing the Federal Government considering its commitment to return the budget to surplus by 2021 ALGA, in its budget submission, is advocating for prioritisation of investment in programs, projects and support for local communities.

ALGA has argued in its Federal Budget submission that there is a need to address the high levels of unemployment, particularly for youth, and has highlighted the importance of supporting jobs growth, innovation and opportunity for all Australians. With its rapid recent growth, Litchfield Council is well placed to take advantage of any Federal Government initiatives that may arise.

The Northern Territory Economy

The Northern Territory Government has noted the current economic challenge of low inflation and low growth in the National context. However, the numbers of those employed has grown in recent months, as have average weekly earnings, and economic growth is forecast to be double the national average for 2017-2018.

+ Possible Changes to the Regulatory and Administrative Framework

The following activities have been identified as having potential to influence and/or enhance Council's Administrative and Regulatory Framework:

- Continuing to develop the Governance and Risk Framework.
- Reviewing (ongoing) existing policies and developing new policies and procedures to rationalise the policy framework.
- Developing a Community Engagement Framework.
- Developing Meeting Procedure By-Laws.
- Reviewing Council's rating methodology with a view to fairness and equity for ratepayers.
- Conducting an independent review of Council's procurement policy and procedures.
- Introducing new Rural Dog Management By-Laws.

Improving Service Delivery through Working with Others

Litchfield Council is a member of the Top End Regional Organisation of Councils (TOPROC) that is committed to the sustainable development of the Greater Darwin Region. TOPROC meets regularly to explore common issues and to generate potential solutions.

Mayor Maree Bredhauer is currently serving as Chair of TOPROC.

Litchfield Council is also a signatory to a Common Services Agreement with some Northern Territory and Tasmanian Councils and currently shares Financial and Geographical Information System capacity with Palmerston Council.

In meeting the recreational and sporting needs of the local community, Council owns seven Recreation Reserves, of which five are managed by not-for-profit community organisations and two are managed by Council through Advisory Committees. These important community assets are well used and prized by locals and visitors alike. They host events and sporting clubs' fixtures and training, which generate income for groups whose funds are invested straight back into the local community.

Council also partners with the Palmerston and Rural Seniors to deliver an annual two-week program recognising and celebrating seniors in our community. Council sponsors the group through a three-year agreement that has a further two years to run.



Our Success Measures

The Litchfield Council Strategic Plan 2016-2020 includes a series of key performance indicators that will be used to evaluate the successful implementation of the plan.

We are the best place to live in the Top End.

Friendly and connected

- **safety:** Annual community survey- perception of safety >70% feel safe
- **dogs:** Number of dogs registered >5,000

Spacious but close to everything

- **roads:** >60% community satisfaction rating
- **services:** community rating overall satisfaction >60%

Natural and scenic

- **open space:** community satisfaction with Recreation Reserves >60%
- **waste:** less waste to landfill each year

We deliver this by performing well financially.

Rate coverage >50%

- Improving Council's financial position by lowering Council's dependency on government grants and other funding sources, which continue to decrease and be unreliable.
- The higher the percentage, the greater the independence and flexibility to influence future results.

Current year overdue rates < 5%

- Improving Council's financial performance in collecting rates in the year owed.
- Collecting what is owed.

Operating surplus 0 -10%

- Improving Council's financial performance.
- Is Council living within its means?
- Expressed as the operating result as a percentage of operating revenue.
- Indicates the extent to which revenues cover operational expenses only or are also available for capital funding.
- A positive ratio means that the surplus can be used for capital expenditures or debt repayments.

asset sustainability ratio >90%

+ Annual Budget Summary

The 2017-2018 Budget continues the theme of improving services delivered to ratepayers whilst investing in assets efficiently and effectively and reducing operating costs. The following budget summary provides an overview of Council's income and expenditure.

	Forecast 2016-2017 \$	Budget 2017-2018 \$	Increase %
Operating Revenue	14,053,634	14,657,838	4%
Capital Revenue	4,663,813	2,353,786	-50%
Total Revenue	18,717,447	17,011,624	-9%
Operating Expenditure	13,487,249	13,761,773	2%
Capital Expenditure	11,370,494	4,171,231	-63%
Total Expenditure	24,857,743	17,933,004	-28%
Net Transfers from Reserves	6,140,296	921,380	
Balance Surplus/Deficit	0	0	

Council has committed to a variety of capital improvement and maintenance projects including:

- \$2.1 million on road maintenance
- \$2.6 million on resealing 46 km of Council roads
- \$300,000 on road shoulder improvements
- \$400,000 on re-sheeting of unsealed roads
- \$100,000 on safety rails on Leonino Road



New Initiatives

Several new initiatives totalling \$200,000 have been proposed in this year's budget to support Council's strategic and operational objectives.

Initiative	Amount (\$)	Description
Data Back up - Business Continuity	16,000	To source backups to industry standard using hard drive onsite as well as out tape backups
Private Roads Strategy	30,000	To understand the implications of Council taking ownership of private roads within the Municipality
Feral Dog Program	10,000	To continue the Feral Dog Program to ensure Council is able to respond to carry out necessary action
Promoting Responsible Dog Ownership	10,000	To promote and encourage responsible dog ownership by providing de-sexing vouchers for dog owners within the Municipality
Southport Progress Association Mira Square	5,000	To progress the acquisition of Mira Square for the Southport Progress Association
Queen's Baton Relay	10,000	To run a Community event for the Queen's Baton Relay within our Municipality
Tree Management	30,000	To undertake tree audits on Recreational Reserves
Women's Business Network Meetings	10,000	To run Community events for Women in Business to be held by the Women's Business Network Steering Committee.
Mayoral Robe & Chain	3,000	To provide the Mayor with an adjustable robe & chain to wear on official occasions
Asbestos Audits on Reserve Infrastructure	10,000	To fund asbestos audits for infrastructure on Council Reserves to ensure that Council is compliant with Work Health and Safety legislation
Meters on Council Bores	15,000	To fund the supply and installation of meters to ensure compliance with NT Water Resources policy direction, to monitor water use to better identify water saving initiatives
Records Management Improvement	51,000	To provide resources to address the current deficiencies in Council's record management systems and processes to comply with the <i>Local Government Act</i> .
Total	200,000	



Rates and Charges

Social and Economic Impact of Council's Rating Strategy

Council's strategy for setting the 2017-2018 financial year's rates and charges has been drawn from examining the Long Term Financial Plan, Council's strategic priorities from the Strategic Plan 2016-2020 and its guiding principles for determining the best mix of rates and charges given the social and economic realities for the Litchfield community.

Council has been mindful of ratepayers' capacity to pay, who benefits, and how best to balance the costs of present and future benefits. It has considered the issue of 'user-pays' for charges and has sought to ensure there is an ease in understanding what people are being charged, why, and the consistency of Council's approach.

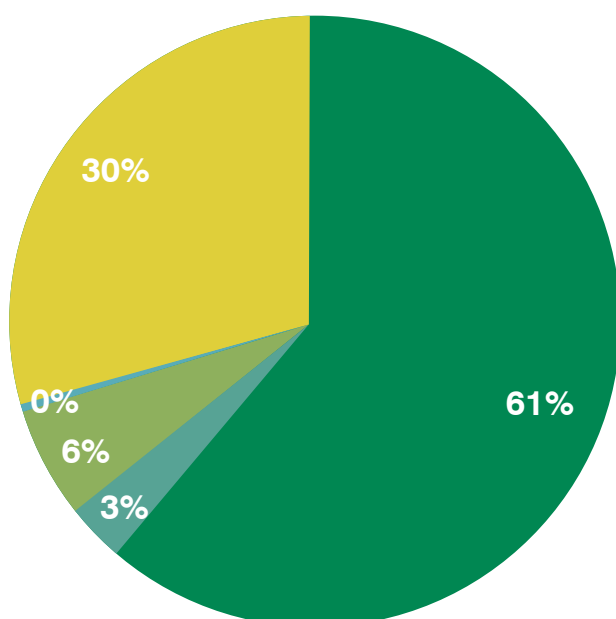
In 2017-2018, 57% of Council's income will be raised through rates and charges. Currently, to enable Council to keep up with maintaining and renewing assets and provide the services people want, Council is drawing on its financial reserves. This is not sustainable in the long run and Council has already flagged the need to review the rating strategy, as well as to advocate for more funding from the NT and Federal Governments.

The current rating strategy has two categories, each with a different basis of charging:

- Residential and rural – a fixed rate.
- Other (includes commercial and industrial) – a valuation-based rate with a minimum charge set.

By increasing the general rates income by 5% in 2017-2018, Council has opted for the increasing costs of Council to be shared by both categories.

	2012/13	2013-2014	2014/15	2015/16	2016-2017	2017-2018
Rates % Increases	4.2	6	3.5	5	5.5	5



Single dwelling residential ratepayers outside Coolalinga will pay an additional \$0.96 per week or \$36 a year. Rates in Coolalinga attract no increase.

Council proposes to raise \$9,612,195 in revenue from rates and charges in 2017-2018.

Rates and Charges for 2017-2018

- Residential Rate (\$5,890,585)
- Waste Charge (\$2,743,838)
- Commercial & Industrial Rates (\$614,483)
- Urban Rate (\$289,170)
- Gas Plant, Workers Village, Pastoral Lease and Mining Tenements (\$159,118)



The Waste Management Charge will be \$349 per allotment (excluding land zoned CB, C, SC, TC, LI, GI and DV) to cover the operational costs of \$2,743,838 for Council's three Waste Transfer Stations and contribute to the Waste Management Reserve for future improvements to the service.

Where infrastructure costs are directly attributable to individual property owners, Council will recover those costs through applying special rates schemes.

To address concerns about ratepayers' capacity to pay a lump sum amount for their rates, rates for 2017-2018 will be collected in three equal instalments by the following dates:

- 31 August 2017
- 30 November 2017
- 28 February 2018

The table below provides more detail.

RATES AND CHARGES

Planning Zone	Code	No. of properties	Rate 2017-2018	Rate 2016-2017
Fixed Rates				
Single Dwelling Residential; Rural Residential; Rural Living; Rural (excluding Coolalinga)	SD; RR; R; MD; MR; HR; SU; CP; RD; U; CL; HT; PS; CN; OR	7589	\$765.00	\$729.00
Single Dwelling Residential; Rural Residential; Rural Living; Rural (Coolalinga)	SD; RR; R; MD; MR; HR	238	\$1,215.00	\$1,215.00
Mining Tenements	As approved by the Minister	87	\$871.68	\$871.68
Pastoral Lease	As approved by the Minister	2	\$368.31	\$368.31
Valuation Based				
Central Business, Future Development, Tourist Commercial, Commercial Service Commercial, Caravan Park, General Industry, Development, Light Industry	CB; FD; TC; C; SC; CV; GI; DV; LI	266	0.189871% Minimum Charge \$1,395	0.180795% Minimum Charge \$1,329
Gas Plant (hundred 045 Lot 01860, hundred 045 Lot 01872, hundred 000 Lot 07002)	MZ	3	0.251661%	0.188507%
Workers Village (hundred 055 Lot 06128)	MZ	1	0.503348%	0.377036%
Levy				
Waste Charge		7862	\$349.00	\$339.00

+ Sponsorships, Grants and Operating Subsidies

An important role of Council is to support community groups and organisations to run events, facilities and programs that enrich life in the local community.

In particular, Council supports seven recreational reserves within the Municipality through operational funding to maintain facilities and support activities. The tables below highlight Council's investment in these reserves and notes three new initiatives to improve water and tree management and to conduct asbestos audits.

Operational Contribution to Recreational Reserves	Funding Amount (\$)
Freds Pass Reserve	648,788
Howard Park Reserve	69,020
Knuckey Lagoon Reserve	21,823
McMinns Lagoon Reserve	17,255
Humpty Doo Village Green	86,275
Berry Springs Reserve	58,160
Livingstone Reserve	51,765
TOTAL	953,086
New Initiatives for Reserves	Funding Amount (\$)
Asbestos Audits on Reserve Infrastructure	10,000
Meters on Council Bores	15,000
Tree Management	30,000
TOTAL	55,000



Council also continues to support a number of community events and community initiatives through direct ongoing funding and one-off grants through its Community Grants Scheme, which identifies ongoing funding, community initiatives that need immediate one off assistance and the Annual Community Grants program for grants up to \$5,000. Funding generated through Council's recycling initiatives contributes to this scheme.

Grants / Donations	Amount (\$)	Description
Freds Pass Show Donation	40,000	Funds to assist the running of the Freds Pass Show
Schools Community Service Award	2,000	Grant to support a community service program in school communities
Palmerston & Rural Seniors Group	5,000	Grant to support the seniors festival
Library Heritage Collection	10,000	Funding to support the preservation of the Litchfield Heritage Collection at Taminmin College
Southport Mira Square Centre	5,000	Provide funding to support the acquisition of Mira Square land
NT Natural Resource Management Awards	2,500	Grant to support the NT Natural Resource Management Awards
Community Initiatives	7,500	Up to 15 community initiatives at \$500 each
Annual Community Grants	30,000	Annual grants up to \$5,000
TOTAL	102,000	
Community Support / Events	Amount (\$)	Description
Women's Business Network	10,000	Community Groups
Baton Relay	10,000	Community Groups
Australia Day Activities	7,000	Community Event
National Youth Week Event	500	Community Event
ANZAC Day Activities	1,000	Community Event
Clean Up Australia Day	1,000	Community Event
Freds Pass Annual Show Stall	10,000	Community Event
TOTAL	39,500	



Elected Members Allowances

In accordance with Section 71(3) of the *Local Government Act*, the Elected Members Allowances as per Ministerial Guidelines for this financial year are as follows:

Elected Member Allowances for 2017-2018		Amount (\$)	
Allowance Type	Mayor	Deputy Mayor	Councillor
Annual Base Allowance	73,125.37	27,039.81	13,151.83
Annual Electoral Allowance	19,247.18	4,812.67	4,812.67
Extra Meeting Allowance	-	-	8,767.88
Professional Development Allowance	3,653.68	3,653.68	3,653.68
Total Maximum Claimable	96,026.23	35,506.16	30,386.06

Annual Base Allowance

- Covers those activities required of a Council member in the performance of their role as an elected representative and includes, but is not limited to,:
 - Agenda study and meeting preparation.
 - Attendance at regular Council and committee meetings.
 - Attendance at social functions as a Council representative.
 - Constituency responsibilities.
 - Council representation outside Litchfield Municipality, including delegations interstate and overseas, unless such representation has been approved as an 'extra' meeting.

Annual Electoral Allowance

- Is provided to assist elected members with electoral matters and can be used at the discretion of individual elected members.

Extra Meeting Allowance

- Is paid in accordance with Council Policy and is capped for each financial year as per the table above.

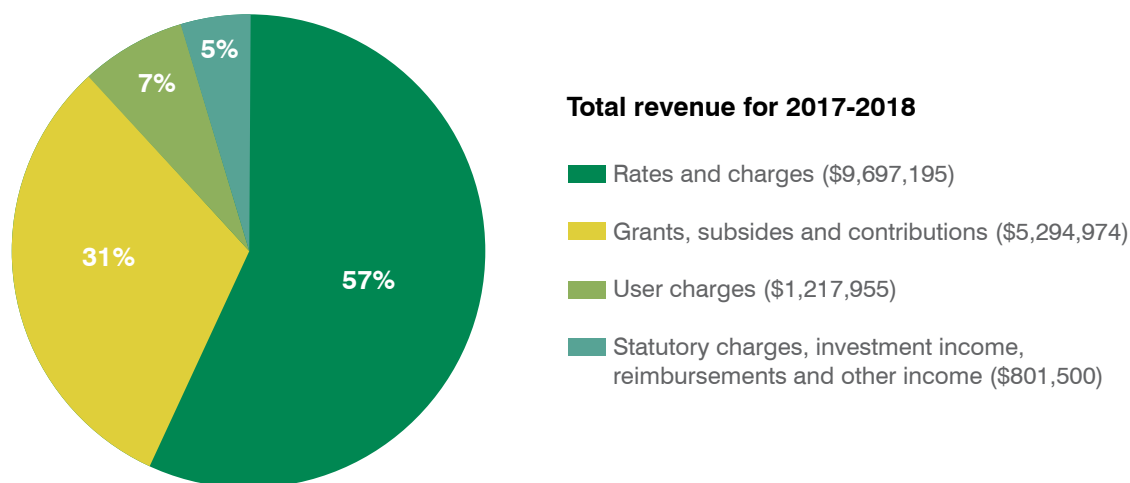
Professional Development Allowance

- Covers elected members attending approved conferences and training courses that build their professional capacity to perform their role on Council.

+ Analysis of the Operating Budget

Operating Revenue

Of Council's total revenue, 57% is sourced through rates and charges on land, which meets the key performance indicator in the Strategic Plan. Total revenue from rates has increased from 43% in 2016-2017. This is a result of a reduction in the amount available for grants and the decision to increase total rate revenue by 5% from 2016-2017. There is still a 31% reliance on grants, predominantly consisting of financial assistance and roads grants.



- Statutory Income is primarily generated from Regulatory Services from infringements.
- User fees and charges represent 7% of total income, compared to 6% in 2016-2017.
- Grants, subsidies and contributions have decrease by 18% compared to 2016-2017.
- Investment income is interest generated from Term Deposit Investments and rate arrears.
- Other income is the proceeds from disposals of plant & machinery in 2017-2018.
- Total revenue includes capital revenue.

Council continues to face challenges in relation to investment in road infrastructure due to the reduction in funds available through Government grant programs. Through the development of the Long Term Financial Plan, Council has committed to allocating an extra \$1,000,000 from reserves to ensure our assets are maintained to an appropriate standard.

Waste charges for 2017-2018 are set to increase by 3%, which equates to \$10 per property; however, this is offset by the expiration of the \$50 Waste Transfer Station Levy.

+ OPERATIONAL REVENUE BY DIRECTORATE

Directorate	Division	Forecast 2016-2017 (\$)	Budget 2017-2018 (\$)
Council Leadership			
	Elected Members, Office of the CEO and Community Engagement	663	0
Community and Corporate Services			
	Finance	7,736,812	8,174,865
	Community	46,500	79,500
	Corporate	0	0
	Information Services	32,909	27,500
	Thorak Regional Cemetery	779,169	725,125
Infrastructure and Operations			
	Mobile Workforce	0	0
	Planning and Development	42,320	162,430
	Regulatory Services	28,856	34,000
	Works	2,472,405	2,467,580
	Waste Management	2,914,000	2,986,838
TOTAL		14,053,634	14,657,838

Operational revenue is forecast to increase by \$604,204 compared to 2016-2017, which can be attributed predominately to an increase in rate revenue. Of note is the decrease in revenue for Thorak Regional Cemetery, which further highlights the challenges to Council of operating a regional service utilised by residents from outside the Litchfield area.



CAPITAL REVENUE BY DIRECTORATE

Directorate	Division	Forecast 2016-2017 (\$)	Budget 2017-2018 (\$)
Council Leadership			
	Elected Members, Office of the CEO and Community Engagement	0	0
Community and Corporate Services			
	Finance	9,500	0
	Community	0	0
	Corporate	0	0
	Information Services	0	0
	Thorak Regional Cemetery	0	0
Infrastructure and Operations			
	Mobile Workforce	300,654	30,000
	Planning and Development	293,000	763,409
	Regulatory Services	17,244	0
	Works	3,568,938	1,547,377
	Waste Management	436,586	13,000
TOTAL		4,625,922	2,353,786

Overall capital revenue is expected to decrease in 2017-2018 by \$2,272,136, primarily due to the unsuccessfully applying for Federal 'Black Spot' and Northern Territory Government road grants. This is partially offset by an expected increase in developer contributions.

+ Projects Carried Forward

A capital project is works that result in the creation or improvement of an asset. Replacement of less than 100% of an asset or replacement that does not extend the life of an asset is not considered capital. Council received several capital grants in previous years which are in progress or still to start. This funding will be carried over into 2017-2018. These projects are identified below.

Major Projects commenced - carried over from the 2016-2017 financial year

- Freds Pass Sport and Recreation Reserve Upgrade - \$3 million
 - The Northern Territory Government has invested \$3,000,000 towards the execution of Stage 1 of the Freds Pass Reserve Management Plan. Stage 1 is well underway and includes upgrades to electrical infrastructure, improved road networks, construction of ablution blocks, improved fencing and irrigation. This project will continue in the 2017-2018 financial year.
- Freds Pass Road Upgrade
 - As part of the then Department of Transport's Improving Strategic Local Roads Infrastructure Program, Litchfield Council was granted \$1,220,500 in 2015-2016 for use in the delivery of an upgrade to Freds Pass Road. This grant is to enhance the development of economic infrastructure in regional and remote areas. This project will continue in the 2017-2018 financial year.
- Anzac Parade - Stage 2 Upgrade
 - Litchfield Council successfully obtained a Regional Economic Infrastructure Fund grant from the Northern Territory Government for \$1,800,000. to upgrade Anzac Parade. Stage 1 of the project was completed under budget. The remaining grant will be used to progress Stage 2 which will continue in the 2017-2018 financial year.

Major Projects identified for 2017-2018

- Finn Road Upgrade
 - The NT Government Department of Infrastructure, Planning & Logistics has confirmed contribution of \$1,500,000 from the Regional Economic Infrastructure Fund for Finn Road upgrade. The upgrade will improve drainage, strengthen floodways and support the supply and install of guiderails along areas of Finn Road.
- Mobile Workforce Shed
 - The Department of Housing and Community Development has approved a special purpose grant totalling \$225,000 towards the construction of a purpose-built depot for the mobile workforce team at the Humpty Doo Waste Transfer Station. The design stage is currently underway. Council will contribute \$225,000 to complete this project.

+ Operational Expenses by Directorate

Operational expenses are expected to increase by 2% from 2016-2017. The overall increase in expenditure can be attributed to the inclusion of the 2017 election cost in the Council Leadership Directorate, the addition of a Records Management and Customer Service position and asset revaluation costs in the Finance Directorate and a new initiative to improve Council's records management compliance in the Corporate Directorate.

Directorate	Division	Forecast 2016-2017 (\$)	Budget 2017-2018 (\$)
Council Leadership			
	Elected Members, Office of the CEO and Community Engagement	919,561	1,071,161
Community and Corporate Services			
	Finance	1,302,485	1,522,941
	Community	1,301,335	1,285,840
	Corporate	368,150	466,900
	Information Services	462,304	469,156
	Thorak Regional Cemetery	844,156	791,655
Infrastructure and Operations			
	Mobile Workforce	1,222,414	1,226,644
	Planning and Development	804,129	609,494
	Regulatory Services	427,317	376,940
	Works	3,351,412	3,112,938
	Waste Management	2,483,986	2,828,104
TOTAL		13,487,249	13,761,773

The operational revenue includes capital revenue, operational expenses exclude capital expenses.

+ Analysis of Roads Program

Council will implement its roads program, which includes spending:

- \$2,159,000 on road maintenance.
- \$2,649,404 capital on resealing 46 km of existing roads.
- \$400,000 capital on re-sheeting existing unsealed roads.
- \$418,654 capital on works to improve road safety, such as shoulder widening, guard rails and traffic counters.

This total spend of \$5,627,049 (capital and operational) will ensure that Council's road assets are maintained at a level that ensures a maximum life span.

Road Maintenance Program

	2015-2016 \$	2016-2017 \$	2017-2018 \$
Kerbing	8,160	16,419	30,000
Maintenance Grading	135,393	205,000	205,000
Patching	210,240	100,000	100,000
Pavements Rehabilitation	605,274	230,000	230,000
Shoulders	522,258	200,000	200,000
Signage	146,187	120,000	60,000
Road Culverts	48,234	70,000	30,000
Road Table Drains	218,763	250,000	250,000
Driveway Access	57,624	60,000	105,000
Driveway Culverts	139,972	200,000	200,000
Safety Barriers	7,762	50,000	50,000
Stormwater drains	96,624	67,581	90,000
Stabilisation	1,924	-	30,000
Guide Posts	50,490	56,000	56,000
Floodways / Causeways	25,996	60,000	60,000
Line Marking	321,809	140,000	160,000
Sweeping	16,739	50,000	50,000
Road and Drainage	-	-	200,000
Building Maintenance Program	39,661	74,000	53,000
TOTAL	2,653,110.00	1,949,000.00	2,159,000.00

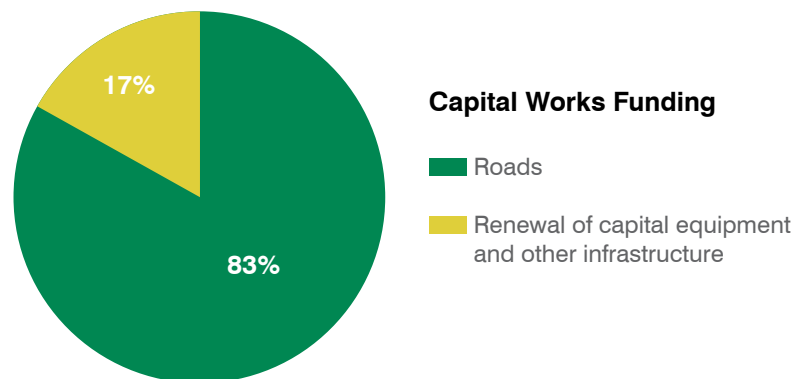


Road Reseal Program

ROAD NAME	LENGTH (m)	WIDTH (m)	COST (\$)
Alphatonio Road	3520	6.2	179,620
Beard Road	1965	6.1	116,671
Boyd Road	250	6.4	12,468
Bees Creek Road	4880	8	361,601
Dominick Road	1080	5.8	64,354
Sunter Road	915	6.2	56,760
Daniel Road	290	7.5	15,177
Batu Road	560	6	21,727
Golding Road	3215	7.2	123,432
Henning Road	1062	6	37,427
Ewart Road	1640	6.1	97,680
Agostini Road	1375	6.2	83,176
Andrews Road	600	5.8	22,456
Bastin Road	2460	6.2	146,421
Jarrold Road	390	6.1	16,581
Langton Road	1320	6.5	81,742
Mira (Southport) Road	1690	7	64,894
Marjerrison Drive	72	7	8,599
Pratincole Road	590	7	40,151
Trippe (North) Road	980	5.7	58,359
Strangways Road	490	8	23,805
Livingstone Road	470	7	20,959
Lowther Road	1270	6.5	46,697
Sunset Road	270	6	12,658
Paddy Court	165	5.8	13,402
Peacock Road	2370	7	148,103
Pioneer Drive	4500	8	315,887
Garganey Road	150	5.8	12,566
Gonnerman Road	1599	6	94,647
Horne Road	1660	6	98,097
Krichauff Road	1833	6	107,881
Mahaffey Road	1403	6	83,562
Sandpiper Grove	1113	6	61,844
TOTAL	46,147	213	2,649,404

+ Analysis of Capital Budget

Council is spending \$4,171,231 on capital works of which 83% will be spent on roads. The balance will be spent on renewal of capital equipment and other infrastructure including the building of a new work shed (partly funded through a Special Purpose Grant) at the Humpty Doo Waste Transfer Station and maintenance of the Council offices on Bees Creek Road identified in the Other Capital Works table.



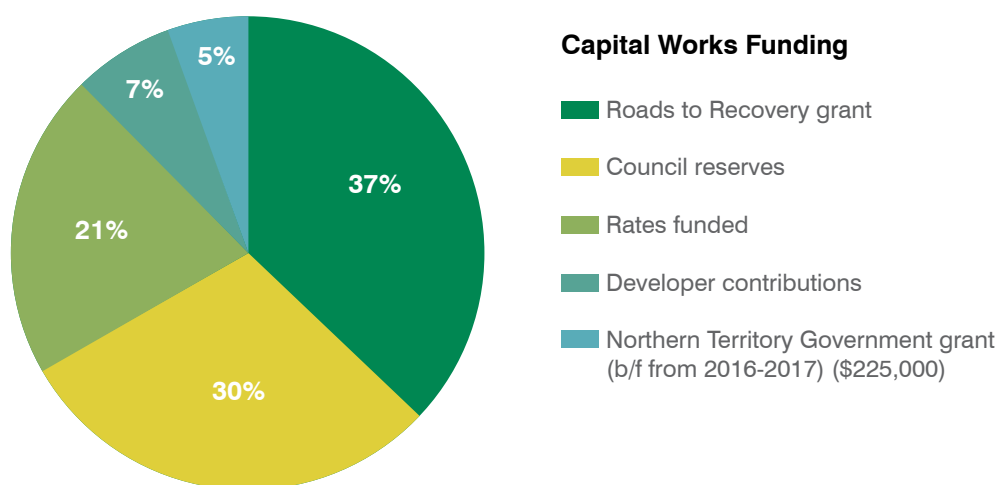
Other Capital Works

Department	PROJECT	COSTS (\$)
Works		
	Shoulder widening, sealing and edge lining of narrow seals (300mm to 500mm). Estimated cost of \$30,000 per km.	300,000
	Re-sheeting of roads (Renewal) (moved from Operational Budget)	400,000
	Purchase of 3 Armadillo Traffic Counters	18,645
	Purchase and installation of 3 safety rails along Leonino Road: Chainage 12.25, 7.98 and 12.4.	100,000
	Painting of the Council Chambers roof	18,181
TOTAL		836,826
Mobile Workforce		
	Building of shed	225,000
	Tractor with loader replacement	150,000
	Tractor mount post hole digger	5,000
TOTAL		380,000
Waste Management		
	Building of shed	225,000
	Bobcat replacement	80,000
TOTAL		305,000
		1,521,826



Source of Capital Funding

Council has funded its capital works budget through a combination of grants, developer contributions, rates income and Council financial reserves.



Financial Reserves

Council continues to maintain strong financial reserves whilst contributing \$921,380 to the 2017-2018 budget in line with the Long Term Financial Plan target of increasing capital spending on road infrastructure. This budget will see the Thorak Regional Cemetery reserve reduced to \$12,241, highlighting the need for increased efficiencies and/or external support to ensure that Litchfield ratepayers do not subsidise the cemetery operations into the future.

Financial Reserves	Balance at 01/07/2017 \$	TO RESERVES \$	FROM RESERVES \$	Balance at 30/06/2018 \$
Property Reserve	417,192	0	0	417,192
Plant and Equipment Reserve	14,796	30,000	-30,000	14,796
Infrastructure Reserve	1,973,238	0	-978,731	994,507
Developer Contribution Reserve	847,088	763,409	-281,148	1,329,349
Waste Management Reserve	3,481,625	91,620	-225,000	3,348,245
Election Reserve	25,044	0	0	25,044
Disaster Recovery Reserve	790,388	0	0	790,388
Strategic Initiatives Reserve	1,144,139	0	0	1,144,139
Capital Grants Unexpended	225,000	0	-225,000	0
Thorak Cemetery	78,771	0	-66,530	12,241
TOTAL	8,997,281	885,029	-1,806,409	8,075,901

+ 2017-2018 Budgeted Financial Statements

Following is a comparison of operating statements between the 2016-2017 approved and the 2017-2018 proposed budgets. Key aspects of the 2017-2018 budgeted expenses to note are:

- Significant reduction in the grant funding available in 2017-2018 impacting on Council's ability to implement an expanded its capital works program.
- Total employee costs (including salaries, superannuation, workers' compensation insurance premiums, staff training and other on-costs) contribute 43% of total expenses.
- Inclusion of Northern Territory Electoral Commission costs for the August 2017 Local Government Election.
- Increase in legal expenses due to the use of a debt collection agency for outstanding rates. These fees, however, are passed on to the rate payer.
- Increase in donations and community support funded through increased income from recycling activities.



Operating Statement

	Budget (\$)	Draft Budget (\$)
Income	2016-2017	2017-2018
Rates	9,492,370	9,697,195
Statutory Charges	41,500	33,500
User Charges	1,192,860	1,217,955
Grants, Subsidies and Contributions	10,835,755	5,294,974
Investment Income	505,000	725,000
Reimbursements	-	-
Other Income	-	43,000
TOTAL INCOME	22,067,485	17,011,624
Expenses		
Total Employee Costs	5,650,888	5,973,624
- Auditor Fees	39,000	41,000
- Bad and Doubtful Debts	-	-
- Elected Member Expenses	250,691	245,787
- Election Expenses	-	136,710
Other Materials, Contracts and Expenses		
- Cemetery Operations	309,600	266,500
- Contractors	4,905,650	4,513,358
- Energy	192,800	231,600
- Insurance	226,633	223,599
- Maintenance	506,950	522,628
- Legal Expenses	138,000	173,000
- Donations and Community Support	108,000	136,250
- Computer/IT Costs	272,500	281,290
- Parts, Accessories and Consumables	215,500	188,000
- Professional Services	675,700	444,070
- Sundry	367,330	384,357
TOTAL EXPENSES	13,859,242	13,761,773
New Initiatives included above		200,000

Balance Sheet

The following Balance Sheet demonstrates Council's sound financial position forecast for June 2017 and continuing throughout 2017-2018. Council will maintain a strong position to meet its financial obligations with a current ratio between its current assets and current liabilities of 1:9.6.

Trade receivables continue to decrease in line with the continued implementation of Council's debt recovery policy.

Depreciation remains greater than capital expenditures, thus the value of non-current assets (infrastructure, property and plant) are expected to reduce in 2017 despite the expected capitalisation of completed infrastructure projects. An asset revaluation review is scheduled for 30 June 2018.

Other reserves have decreased in line with projected expenditure for capital works through the Long Term Financial Plan.

Balance Sheet			Forecast	Forecast
	Year Ended 30 June 2015 \$	Year Ended 30 June 2016 \$	Year Ended 30 June 2017 \$	Year Ended 30 June 2018 \$
CURRENT ASSETS				
Cash & Cash Equivalents	364,284	1,273,210	1,000,000	1,000,000
Trade Receivables	2,933,316	2,393,448	2,200,000	1,900,000
Other Financial Assets	15,149,029	19,769,224	16,580,677	16,409,297
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	18,446,629	23,435,882	19,780,677	19,309,297
NON-CURRENT ASSETS				
Infrastructure, Property, Plant	288,742,937	282,195,344	274,278,427	263,412,247
Other Non-Current Assets	875,072	708,756	2,500,000	750,000
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS	289,618,009	282,904,100	276,778,427	264,162,247
TOTAL ASSETS	308,064,638	306,339,982	296,559,104	283,471,544
CURRENT LIABILITIES				
Trade & Other Payables	1,423,311	2,056,532	1,500,000	1,500,000
Provisions	485,669	490,579	495,000	495,000
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	1,908,980	2,547,111	1,995,000	1,995,000
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES				
Provisions	290,787	292,267	295,000	295,000
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES	290,787	292,267	295,000	295,000
TOTAL LIABILITIES	2,199,767	2,839,378	2,290,000	2,290,000
NET ASSETS	305,864,871	303,500,604	294,269,104	281,181,544
EQUITY				
Accumulated Surplus	52,040,194	45,776,256	41,960,093	29,793,913
Asset Revaluation Reserves	243,311,730	243,311,730	243,311,730	243,311,730
Other Reserves	10,512,947	14,412,618	8,997,281	8,075,901
TOTAL EQUITY	305,864,871	303,500,604	294,269,104	281,181,544

+ Annual Service Delivery Plan

Staffing Plan

Staffing levels will increase by one to increase Council's capacity to meet its customer service targets and records management compliance obligations. Following an organisational restructure the Human Resource function has been moved from Community and Corporate Services into the Office of the Chief Executive. The increase in the total cost to the staffing plan is due primarily to the inclusion of training costs into 2017-2018 and annual salary increases.

Directorate	Budget 2016-2017	Budget 2017-2018	
		Office	Outdoor
Community and Corporate Services	18	11.5	5.8
Infrastructure and Operations	32.47	5.5	27.47
Office of the Chief Executive	3	4	-
Total full time equivalent staff	53.47	54.27	
Total cost of staff plan (salaries, superannuation, workers compensation insurance, Fringe Benefits Tax training and other on costs)	\$5,650,888	\$5,973,624	

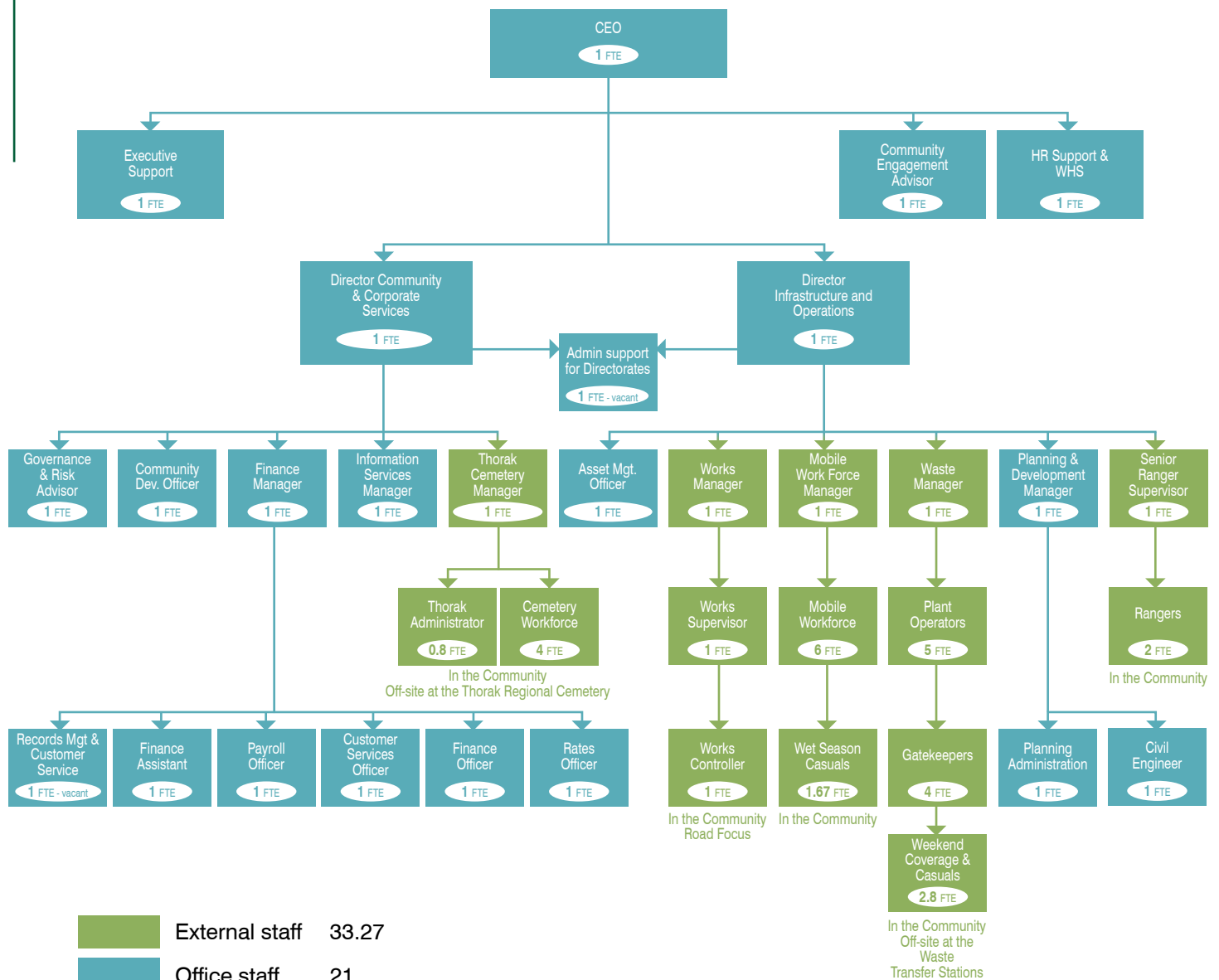
Program Profiles

The following Program Profiles provide a detailed breakdown of how Council will deliver services for 2017-2018.

As per the staffing plan, Litchfield Council is structured into two directorates of **Community and Corporate Services** and **Infrastructure and Operations**. Full Time Equivalent (FTE) positions allocated to each program are identified. Each profile identifies the Strategic Plan links and associated outcomes the program will contribute to achieving. The program description provides context to the operational activities that will be implemented to focus on the priorities identified in the Strategic Focus and will deliver 'key outputs'.

A budget summary is provided to show the Net Operating and Capital costs to Council. Key performance indicators will be used to gauge the successful implementation of the programs.

+ Staffing Plan 2017-2018



COUNCIL LEADERSHIP

Directorate – Office of the Chief Executive

Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer
Number of FTEs	3
Strategic Priority	2 – A Great Place to Live 4 – A vibrant economy An Efficient & Effective Council
Outcome	4.1 Economic Development 4.2 Strong Local Business 4.3 Local Employment Engage Our Community Good Governance Partnerships & Advocacy Modern Service Delivery
Council Roles	Advocacy, Community Engagement, Revenue/ Funding, Regulation, Partnering

Program Description

Provide leadership, ensuring good governance, clear and consistent communication, reputation management, media monitoring and management, community engagement, sound resource management practices and the delivery of timely services and safe operations.

Key Outputs

Manage and provide high level executive support to the Office of the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer
Elected Members support, training and development
Plan, coordinate and implement best practice community engagement using the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) principles
Review of adequacy of constitutional arrangements
Business planning and performance reporting frameworks
Survey of residents' perceptions of services (Annual Community Survey)
Governance, strategy, legislation and policy
Council meetings and activities

New Initiatives

Mayoral Robe and Chain	\$3,000
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2017-2018 Budget

Operational Revenue	0	Capital Revenue	0
Operational Expenditure	\$1,071,161	Capital Expenditure	0
Net Operating Cost	\$1,071,161	Net Capital Cost	0

Key Performance Indicator	Unit	Target
Develop a Professional Development Program for Councillors	Number	>2
Annual Community Survey	Number	1
Community perception of safety from Council's Annual Community Survey	%	>70
Overall community satisfaction from Council's Annual Community Survey	%	>60
Media response timeframe	Number	<24 hours

HUMAN RESOURCES and WORK HEALTH & SAFETY

Directorate – Office of the Chief Executive

Responsible Officer	HR & WHS Advisor
Number of FTEs	1
Strategic Priority	An Effective & Sustainable Council
Outcome	Good Governance
Council Role	Service Delivery

Program Description

Manage and deliver a suite of Human Resource Management services and Council's Work Health and Safety (WH&S) responsibilities.

Key Outputs

Corporate training and development program
Performance management framework
Work Health and Safety policy, plan and audit program
Day-to-day advice to staff on Human Resource matters
Organisational culture and development Initiatives
Employee support services
Recruitment and selection activities, including managing on-boarding and induction/orientation programs

Key Performance Indicator	Unit	Target
Staff turnover rate	%	<20
Organisational development initiatives	Number	3
Professional development training for each staff member	Number	<1

Note: The budget for the Human Resources and Work Health and Safety program is identified in the Governance and Risk program profile.



PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

Directorate - Infrastructure and Operations

Responsible Officer	Planning and Development Manager
Number of FTEs	4.5
Strategic Priority	1 – Everything You Need 2 – A Great Place to Live 3 – A Beautiful Natural Environment 4 – A Vibrant Economy
Outcome	1.1 Roads 1.3 Waste 1.6 Drainage 2.5 Community 2.6 Sense of Place 3.1 Protection 3.2 Open Space 3.4 Sustainability
Council Roles	Service Delivery, Advocacy

Program Description

Assess and provide comment on land use and development applications, planning scheme amendments and strategic plans and policies relating to the Litchfield Municipality, in accordance with Council policy requirements and considering community impact, amenity protection and sustainability.

Approve design and construction documentation, undertake onsite inspections and provide clearance for future Council assets in new developments and subdivisions.

Key Outputs

Submissions to Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics
Participation in NT planning working groups
Approval of plans, reports and construction
Inspections

New Initiatives

Private Roads Strategy	\$30,000
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2017-2018 Budget

Operational Revenue	\$162,430	Capital Revenue	\$763,409
Operational Expenditure	\$609,494	Capital Expenditure	0
Net Operating Cost	\$447,064	Net Capital Surplus	\$763,409

Key Performance Indicator	Unit	Target
Comments submitted on applications	% of total applications	>95
Issue works permits associated with a Development Permit	Days	<5
Issue clearances for development	Days	<10

INFRASTRUCTURE AND WORKS

Directorate - Infrastructure and Operations

Responsible Officer	Road Network Manager
Number of FTEs	4
Strategic Priority	1 – Everything You Need 2 – A Great Place to Live 3 – A Beautiful Natural Environment
Outcome	1.1 Roads 1.6 Drainage 2.4 Recreation 3.4 Sustainability
Council Role	Service Delivery

Program Description

Develop, schedule, contract and implement annual programs for capital works, infrastructure asset renewal, maintenance and upgrade; prepare designs, specifications, estimates and tender documentation for works; supervise contracts; conduct routine maintenance inspections; apply for grants; and ensure timely responses to ratepayer requests for services.

Key Outputs

Capital works program
Road upgrades and maintenance program
Property maintenance program
Road closures on request
Grant applications
Asset management policy and plans
Drainage upgrades and maintenance program
Special rate schemes on request
Annual reseal program

2017-2018 Budget

Operational Revenue	\$2,467,580	Capital Revenue	\$1,547,377
Operational Expenditure	\$3,112,938	Capital Expenditure	\$3,486,231
Net Operating Cost	\$645,358	Net Capital Cost	\$1,938,854

Key Performance Indicator	Unit	Target
Works (Operating) Program - as adopted, completed in agreed timeframes	%	>90
Works (Capital) Program - as adopted, completed within agreed timeframes	%	>90
Drainage / roads meet a condition rating of satisfactory or above	%	>75
Emergency works response mobilised	Time	<48 hours

Data

Number of Roads Reported with Potholes:
2013 – 138, 2014 – 307, 2015 – 178, 2016 – 106

Of each dollar collected from rates, \$0.44 is spent on municipal roads.

MOBILE WORK FORCE (MWF)

Directorate - Infrastructure and Operations

Responsible Officer	MWF Manager
Number of FTEs	8.67
Strategic Priority	1 – Everything You Need 3 – A Beautiful Natural Environment
Outcome	1.1 Roads 1.4 Cleanliness 1.6 Drainage 3.2 Open Space 3.3 Weeds 3.5 Fire
Council Role	Service Delivery

Program Description

Provide an effective and efficient maintenance service for Council's road verges, drainage easements, signs, reserves, excised lands, areas surrounding waste transfer stations and Council buildings using well-maintained plant and equipment.

Key Outputs

Two rounds of slashing
Road verge litter collection
Maintenance and installation of signs and guide posts
Tree pruning and removal
Plant and equipment servicing schedule
General go to team for any odd jobs
Weed spraying of road furniture and classified weeds on our verges and excised lands

2017-2018 Budget

Operational Revenue	0	Capital Revenue	\$30,000
Operational Expenditure	\$1,226,644	Capital Expenditure	\$380,000
Net Operating Cost	\$1,226,644	Net Capital Cost	\$350,000

Key Performance Indicator	Unit	Target
Vegetation slashing and mowing of 900kms of road network (equivalent to 7,200kms per round) before July fire bans	Rounds	2
Fire breaks and road reserves slashing of 1000kms within Council excised land	Kms	>75%
Replace non-compliant signs in the signage program to Australian standards	Number	100%
Reduce lost time due to plant & equipment breakdown	Lost Hours	<20
Plant serviced within 3 days of service due date	%	100
Weed spraying roadside furniture (signs, guide posts, culverts, power poles and pits) Target Gamba grass and classified weeds. 900km road verges and 1000km excised lands	Litres	150,000

Data

We slash 900kms of verges beside Council roads each year.

Number of Damaged Road Signs replaced per year: 2013 – 108, 2014 – 208, 2015 – 352, 2016 – 2133 and 4135 guideposts

WASTE MANAGEMENT

Directorate - Infrastructure and Operations

Responsible Officer	Waste Manager
Number of FTEs	12.8
Strategic Priority	1 – Everything You Need 2 – A Great Place To Live 3 – A Beautiful Natural Environment
Outcome	1.2 Waste 2.5 Community 3.2 Sustainability
Council Role	Service Delivery, Community Engagement

Program Description

Implementing an environmentally sustainable, safe and cost-effective waste management system through Council's waste transfer stations and recycling operations.

Provide ongoing community information in relation to recycling and disposal of waste materials and enhance the community's awareness of environmental initiatives.

Key Outputs

Waste Disposal Program	Manage the safe operation of waste transfer stations Work with industry to ensure commercial waste is disposed of appropriately Waste Management Plan development and implementation
Recycling Program	Maintain a recycling program that is easily accessible for the community Manage the resale of recycled materials (mulch, crushed concrete, cash for cans, batteries) Public education and awareness program

2017-2018 Budget

Operational Revenue	\$2,986,838	Capital Revenue	\$13,000
Operational Expenditure	\$2,828,104	Capital Expenditure	\$305,000
Net Operating Surplus	\$158,734	Net Capital Cost	\$292,000

Key Performance Indicator	Unit	Target
Waste tonnage transferred to Shoal Bay	Tonnes	<10,000
% of green waste received that is on-sold as mulch	Tonnes	>80%
Community Education Programs	No.	2

Data

Litchfield Residents in 2015/16 recycled	164 tonnes of cardboard 119.25 tonnes co-mingle 100.33 tonnes of batteries 1237.42 of scrap metal 108.60 tonnes of fridge/freezers 52411 litres of used oil
Mulched on site	4,000m ³ Green Waste 1,200m ³ Wood
200 Tonnes concrete crushed on site	
9,411 tonnes of waste went to landfill at Shoal Bay in 2015-2016 from the Litchfield Council area	



REGULATORY SERVICES

Directorate - Infrastructure and Operations

Responsible Officer	Ranger Supervisor
Number of FTEs	3
Strategic Priority	2 – A Great Place to Live
Outcome	2.5 Animal Control
Council Roles	Service Delivery, Regulations, Community Engagement

Program Description

Administer Council's Animal Management By-Laws; promote responsible dog ownership through public education and initiatives; assist with the management and control of feral dogs; and address abandoned vehicles.

Key Outputs

Implement, administer and enforce the new Animal Management By-laws including the requirement for dog registration

Educate the community about responsible dog ownership and implement new initiatives

All customer requests recorded and investigated

Monitor and control the feral dog population in response to feral dog activity reported to Council

Provide a micro-chipping service for dog owners

Abandoned vehicles removed from roadside

New Initiatives

Feral Dog Management Program	\$10,000
Promoting Responsible Dog Ownership	\$10,000

2017-2018 Budget

Operational Revenue	\$34,000	Capital Revenue	0
Operational Expenditure	\$376,940	Capital Expenditure	0
Net Operating Cost	\$342,940	Net Capital Cost	0

Key Performance Indicator	Unit	Target
Number of dogs registered	Number	> 5000
Investigations completed within 14 days	%	> 90
Responsible Dog Ownership educational/promotional material		Developed & Published
Dog Awareness Education program delivered to primary schools	Number of schools	> 2 per year
Animal Management Strategy		Developed

Data

5,583 dogs in the Litchfield Municipality have been micro-chipped as of April 2017

Number of dog attacks on animals: 2014 – 100, 2015 – 73, 2016 – 81

Number of dog attacks on people: 2014 – 14, 2015 – 13, 2016 – 9

Number of dogs at large: 2014 – 244, 2015 – 252, 2016 – 398

Number of abandoned vehicles: 2014 – 61, 2015 – 80, 2016 – 58

FINANCE

Directorate – Community and Corporate Services

Responsible Officer	Finance Manager
Number of FTEs	8.5
Strategic Priority	An Effective and Sustainable Council
Outcome	Good Governance Modern Service Delivery
Council Role	Service Delivery

Program Description

Provide financial services to assist Council in making informed decisions regarding allocating resources efficiently and effectively in the short and long term and to ensure Council meets all its statutory and regulatory obligations.

Key Outputs

Annual Budget
Municipal Plan
Monthly and annual financial reporting
Rates and accounts receivable collection
Front counter customer service
Long Term Financial Plan
Long term rating strategy
Accounts payable and payroll

2017-2018 Budget

Operational Revenue	\$8,174,865	Capital Revenue	0
Operational Expenditure	\$1,522,941	Capital Expenditure	0
Net Operating Surplus	\$6,651,924	Net Capital Cost	0

Key Performance Indicator	Unit	Target
Compliance with management, statutory and regulatory budgeting and reporting	%	100
Current years rates outstanding as at 30 June 2018	%	<15
Rates coverage ratio-lowering Council's dependency on government grants and other funding sources.	%	>50
Liquidity ratio		>1:1
Asset sustainability ratio	%	90



INFORMATION SERVICES		
Directorate – Community & Corporate Services		
Responsible Officer	Information Services Manager	
Number of FTEs	1	
Strategic Priority	An Effective & Sustainable Council	
Outcome	Engage Our Community Good Governance Modern Service Delivery	
Council Role	Service Delivery	
Program Description		
Ensure the delivery of efficient and effective information technology and communications systems, infrastructure and support services, geographical information services and records management to enable improved services for Council's customers, the capture and use of Council knowledge and effective processes.		
Key Outputs		
Contract management of Council’s IT service and future IT investment program Manage Council’s Geographical Information System (GIS) to support the effective maintenance and gathering of spatial information, data maintenance, data integrity, provision of mapping services and asset management. Effective and integrated electronic records system. An effective Customer Request System (CRM).		
New Initiatives		
Data Backup – Business Continuity		\$16,000
2017-2018 Budget		
Operational Revenue	\$27,500	Capital Revenue0
Operational Expenditure	\$469,156	Capital Expenditure0
Net Operating Cost	\$441,656	Net Capital Cost0
Key Performance Indicator	Unit	Target
Compliance – Incoming documents entered into records management system	Days	<1 day
Staff using records management system	%	>80
Acknowledgment of the lodgement of Technology Issue	Days	<1Days
Timely Resolution of Technology Issues. - Category 1 Urgent	Days	<2Days
Timely Resolution of Technology Issues. - Category 2 Moderate	Days	<5Days
Timely Resolution of Technology Issues. - Category 3 Non-Urgent	Days	<15Days

COMMUNITY SERVICES & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Directorate – Community & Corporate Services

Responsible Officer	Director of Community and Corporate Services
Number of FTEs	1
Strategic Priority	2 – A Great Place to Live An Effective & Sustainable Council
Outcome	2.1 – Social Activity 2.2 – Culture 2.3 – Community 2.4 – Recreation
Council Roles	Service Delivery, Advocate, Revenue/Fund, Community Engagement, Partnering

Program Description

Support Recreation Reserves Committees

Implement Council's Community Grants Scheme, including the Annual Community Grants Program, community initiatives program and Council Partnerships and support grants.

Identify opportunities for grant funding and support community events and programs.

Key Outputs

Annual Community Grants Program

Council partnership and support grants

Community events and programs supported

Community initiatives program

Governance and support for the operations of Council's seven Recreation Reserves

Australia Day Event

New Initiatives

Women's Business Network	\$10,000
Asbestos Audits on Council Reserves	\$10,000
Water Meters on Council Bores	\$15,000
Southport Progress Association Mia Square	\$5,000
Queen's Baton Relay	\$10,000
Tree Management	\$30,000

2017-2018 Budget

Operational Revenue	\$79,500	Capital Revenue	0
Operational Expenditure	\$1,285,840	Capital Expenditure	0
Net Operating Cost	\$1,206,340	Net Capital Cost	0

Key Performance Indicator

	Unit	Target
Grants acquitted within agreed timeframes	%	100
Annual Community Grants awarded	Number	6
Community events and programs supported	Number	4



GOVERNANCE & RISK			
Directorate – Community & Corporate Services			
Responsible Officer	Governance & Risk Advisor		
Number of FTEs	1		
Strategic Priority	An Effective & Sustainable Council		
Outcome	Good Governance Modern Service Delivery		
Council Role	Service Delivery		
Program Description			
Support the Risk Management and Audit Committee and ensure Council's compliance with the <i>Local Government Act</i> and other relevant legislation through providing advice, maintaining required registers, and developing and implementing a governance framework that supports best practice governance.			
Key Outputs			
Governance and risk management framework Elected members support Policy framework Coordinate records management review and improvements Risk management framework, including risk register Audit committee support Assist with policy development Administrative support to Leadership Group Meetings			
New Initiatives			
Records Management Improvement		\$51,000	
2017-2018 Budget			
Operational Revenue	0	Capital Revenue	0
Operational Expenditure	\$466,900	Capital Expenditure	0
Net Operating Cost	\$466,900	Net Capital Cost	0
Key Performance Indicator	Unit	Target	
Compliance with legislative requirements as per Department of Local Government Compliance Checklist (DOLG)	%	100	
Risk Management Audit Committee Meetings	Number	4	
Internal Audits conducted as defined in the Annual Internal Audit Program	Number	3	
Governance & Risk Management Framework	Document	Complete	

Note: The budget includes the Human Resources and Work Health and Safety program.

THORAK REGIONAL CEMETERY

Directorate – Community & Corporate Services

Responsible Officer	Thorak Manager
Number of FTEs	5.8
Strategic Priority	2 – A Great Place to Live An Efficient & Sustainable Council
Outcome	2.3 – Community 2.4 – Recreation Modern Service Delivery
Council Roles	Service Delivery, Community Engagement

Program Description

Operate the Thorak Regional Cemetery in an efficient and effective manner in accordance with approved plans and the *Northern Territory of Australia Cemeteries Act*, Cemeteries regulations and Council policy.

Key Outputs

Internments and cremations including burial preparation, burials and processing of ashes.
Amenity and chapel hire, including cleaning and maintenance
Grounds maintenance, including mowing, mulching, planting, pruning and irrigation
Maintain plant and equipment
Cemetery products, including memorial permits, bronze plaques, urns, and memorial plots

2017-2018 Budget

Operational Revenue	\$725,125	Capital Revenue	0
Operational Expenditure	\$791,655	Capital Expenditure	0
Net Operating Cost	\$66,530	Net Capital Cost	0

Key Performance Indicator	Unit	Target
Compliance with cemetery regulations	%	100
Achievement of operational budget	%	100



Long Term Financial Plan

The Litchfield Council Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP) is prepared in accordance with the *Local Government Act* (Section 126). The LTFP details the expected activities over the duration of the plan from the year ended 2017-2018 to the year ended

2026-2027 and is based on assumptions identified below. Whilst Council has adopted a ten-year plan, only the first five years are noted in this Municipal Plan, recognising future uncertainties.

Long Term Financial Plan Assumptions

ITEM	INCREMENT 2017-2018 to 2020-2021	INCREMENT 2021-2022 to 2026-2027
INCOME		
General Rates	5.0% + \$25,000 growth	5.0% + \$25,000 growth
Waste Charge	3.0% + \$10,000 growth	3.0% + \$10,000 growth
Statutory Charges	0.0%	0.0%
User Charges	5.0%	5.0%
Grants, Subsidies and Contributions	1.5%	1.5%
Investment Income	-3.0%	-3.0%
Other Income	Thorak Cemetery Assistance	Thorak Cemetery Assistance
EXPENSES		
Total Employee Costs	2.1 – 2.7%	2.4%
Auditor Fees	1.0%	1.0%
Elected Member Expense	2.0%	2.0%
Election Expenses	10% growth every 3 years	10% growth every 3 years
Cemetery Operations	1.5%	2.0%
Contractors	1.5%	2.0%
Energy	2.0%	2.5%
Insurance	2.0%	2.5%
Maintenance	1.5%	2.0%
Legal Expenses	0.0%	0.0%
Donations and Community Services	1.5%	2.0%
Computer/IT Costs	1.5%	2.0%
Parts, Accessories and Consumables	1.5%	2.0%
Professional Services	1.5%	2.0%
Sundry Expenses	1.5%	2.0%
New Initiatives	0.0%	0.0%



The Way Ahead – Strategies to Improve Long-Term Sustainability

At present, Council has strong cash reserves and no debt and is thus able to continue to deliver services and a limited amount of capital works in the short term.

In the longer term, Litchfield Council faces several challenges, including operating deficits due to an outdated rating system and therefore inadequate funding for capital expenditure to maintain and renew the existing asset base. A disciplined approach to the management of financial resources is required to ensure sustainability.

Explore Opportunities to Increase Income from Sources Other Than Rates

Council receives income from a range of user fees and charges. A comprehensive review of the adequacy of these charges will be undertaken to identify where users could make a greater contribution to the cost of delivering the services they are using.

Advocacy

Council has received substantial grants for one-off capital projects in recent years and continues to advocate strongly for road-related grants to address the funding gap for infrastructure maintenance and renewal.

Whilst the LTFP is conservative in future estimations of such grant funding being made available, Council has every intention of stepping up its efforts to attract greater grant funding.

Improving Asset Management

The ongoing maintenance and renewal of Council's infrastructure assets is one of its biggest challenges. The LTFP assumes an increase in capital expenditure over time. To achieve this goal,

Council is focusing on continuously improving how assets are managed, including ensuring adequate data collection to analyse and assess the condition, valuation and useful life of each asset.

Use Discretionary Reserves for Capital Expenditure in the Short Term

Council's discretionary reserves was \$14.1 Million at 30 June 2016. These funds are being used in the short term to enable Council to deliver its desired program of capital works, but it is not a long-term solution.

It is proposed to review the financial reserves to ensure funds can be utilised appropriately to address the funding issues for renewal of assets.

Constrain Growth in Operating Costs

The largest components of Council's operating costs are employee costs, contractors and materials. The LTFP constrains wages and on-costs growth to 2% and growth in contractors and materials costs to 1.5%. This is supported by data related to the current economic climate of the Northern Territory, where low inflation is a prevailing trend and wages growth in 2015-2016 was 2.2%.

Any recurrent increases in operating costs must be funded from matched income sources or reductions in expenditure elsewhere in the budget.

Increase Rate Income

The LTFP makes the assumption of a 5% per annum increase in rates on existing properties, with allowance for growth in the number of rateable assessments. It also assumes indexed growth in the waste management charge.

Additionally, a review is planned to examine opportunities for a more fair and equitable rating system.

Long Term Financial Plan 2017 - 2022



	Budget 2017-2018	Plan			
	\$	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022
Income					
Rates					
- General Rates	6,953,357	7,323,025	7,714,176	8,124,885	8,556,129
- Waste Charge	2,743,838	2,836,153	2,931,238	3,029,175	3,130,050
- Waste Levy	0	0	0	0	0
Statutory Charges	33,500	33,500	33,500	33,500	33,500
User Charges	1,217,955	1,278,853	1,342,795	1,409,935	1,480,432
Grants, Subsidies and Contributions	5,294,974	4,168,498	4,171,881	4,215,976	4,260,071
Investment Income	725,000	703,883	683,382	663,478	644,153
Reimbursements	0	0	0	0	0
Other Income	43,000	70,000	70,000	70,000	70,000
Total Income	17,011,624	16,413,913	16,946,972	17,546,949	18,174,336
Expenses					
Total Employee Costs	5,973,624	6,136,102	6,294,948	6,426,178	6,582,370
Prescribed Expenses					
- Auditor Fees	41,000	41,410	41,824	42,242	42,665
- Bad and doubtful Debts	0	0	0	0	0
- Elected Member Expenses	242,787	247,643	252,596	257,648	262,800
- Election Expenses	136,710	0			150,381
Other Materials, Contracts and Expenses					
- Cemetery Operations	266,500	270,498	274,555	278,673	284,247
- Contractors	4,447,358	4,579,068	4,647,754	4,717,471	4,811,820
- Energy	231,600	236,232	240,957	245,776	251,920
- Insurance	223,599	228,071	232,632	237,285	243,217
- Maintenance	522,628	530,467	538,424	546,501	557,431
- Legal Expenses	173,000	130,000	70,000	70,000	70,000
- Donations and Community Support	116,250	117,994	119,764	121,560	123,991
- Computer/IT Costs	281,290	285,509	289,792	294,139	300,022
- Parts, Accessories and Consumables	188,000	190,820	193,682	196,588	200,519
- Professional Services	343,070	348,216	353,439	358,741	365,916
- Sundry	374,357	379,972	385,672	391,457	399,286
- New Initiatives	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000
Depreciation	16,787,411	16,787,411	16,787,411	16,787,411	16,787,411
Total Expenses	30,549,184	30,709,414	30,923,451	31,171,669	31,633,996
Underlying Operating Result	-13,537,560	-14,295,501	-13,976,479	-13,624,720	-13,459,661
One-off Capital Grants	0	600,000	600,000	600,000	600,000
Operating Deficit	-13,537,560	-13,695,501	-13,376,479	-13,024,720	-12,859,661
Operating Surplus / (Deficit) less Depreciation	3,249,851	3,091,910	3,410,932	3,762,691	3,927,750
Capital Spend					
Operating	3,249,851	2,491,910	2,810,932	3,162,691	3,327,750
Capital Grants	0	600,000	600,000	600,000	600,000
Reserve	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000
Funds Available for Renewal and Replacement of Assets	4,249,851	4,091,910	4,410,932	4,762,691	4,927,750
Financial Reserve Prediction	8,075,901	7,075,901	6,075,901	5,075,901	4,075,901



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COUNCIL REPORT

Agenda Item Number:	5.2
Report Title:	Rates Declaration 2017/18
Meeting Date:	5/07/2017
Attachments:	Certificate in Terms of Regulation 24(1) of the Local Government (Accounting) Regulations

Purpose

This report presents the proposed Rates Declaration for the financial year 2017/18 for Council adoption and the certification for the assessment records by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

Summary

The Rates Declaration 2017/18 reflects an overall increase of 5% on rates income in line with the Long Term Financial Plan.

Furthermore, the special rate for the Waste Transfer Site has expired and will not appear on the declaration anymore. Council is not declaring any special rates for 2017/18.

In line with Section 24(1) Local Government (Accounting) Regulations the CEO must certify to Council that, to the best of the CEO's knowledge, information and belief, the assessment record is a comprehensive record of all rateable land within the area before council adopts its budget for the financial year.

Recommendation

1. THAT Council receives and notes the Chief Executive Officer's certification of the assessment records in line with Section 24(1) Local Government (Accounting) Regulations as attached to this report.
2. THAT Council, pursuant to Section 158 of the Local Government Act, declares the following rates and charges for the financial year ending 30 June 2018:

RATES

- 1 That Pursuant to Section 149 of the Act, the Council adopts the Unimproved Capital Value as the basis of the assessed value of allotments within the Litchfield Municipality ("**the Council Area**").
- 2 That Pursuant to Section 155 of the Act Council declares that the amount it intends to raise for general purposes by way of rates is \$6,868,357 by the application of a combination of the following fixed charges and differential valuation-based charges with minimum charges being payable:

Residential

- 2.1 With respect to every allotment of rateable land within that part of the Council Area comprising the suburb of Coolalinga and zoned SD, MD, MR and HR under the *NT Planning Scheme* (other than conditionally rateable land), a fixed charge of \$1,215.00.
- 2.2 With respect to every allotment of rateable land within that part of the Council Area zoned SD, MD, MR and HR under the *NT Planning Scheme* (other than land in the suburb of Coolalinga and conditionally rateable land), a fixed charge of \$765.00.
- 2.3 With respect to every allotment of rateable land within the Council Area zoned CL, PS, OR, H, A, RR, RL, R, CP, CN, HT, RD, WM, T, SU, M, PM, RW, and U under the *NT Planning Scheme* (other than conditionally rateable land) a fixed charge of \$765.00.

Commercial

- 2.4 With respect to every allotment of rateable land within the Council Area zoned CB, C, CV, SC, TC, LI, GI, DV and FD under the *NT Planning Scheme* (other than conditionally rateable land), a valuation-based charge calculated at a rate of 0.189871% of the unimproved capital value of the land, with the minimum amount payable in the application of that valuation-based charge being \$1,395.00;
- 2.5 With respect to every allotment of rateable land within that part of the Council Area, comprising of Hun 055 P 6128, a valuation-based charge calculated at a rate 0.503348% of the unimproved capital value of the land.
- 2.6 With respect to every allotment of rateable land within that part of the Council Area, comprising Hun 045 P 01860, Hun 045 P 01872 and Hun 000 P 07002, a valuation-based charge calculated at a rate 0.251661% of the unimproved capital value of the land.

Other Land

- 2.7 With respect to every allotment of rateable land within the Council Area not otherwise described above, a valuation-based charge calculated at a rate of 0.189871% of the unimproved capital value of the land with the minimum amount payable in the application of that valuation-based charge being \$1,395.00.

Mining Tenements

- 2.8 With respect to every allotment of conditionally rateable land within the Council Area occupied under a mining tenement, a valuation-based charge calculated at a rate of 0.34% of the unimproved capital value of the land with the minimum amount payable in the application of that valuation-based charge being \$871.68.

Pastoral Leases

- 2.9 With respect to every allotment of conditionally rateable land within the Council Area comprising a pastoral lease as defined in the *Pastoral Land Act*, a valuation-based charge calculated at a rate of 0.0299% of the unimproved capital value of the land held under the pastoral lease, with the minimum

amount payable in the application of that valuation-based charge being \$368.31.

CHARGES

- 3 That pursuant to Section 157 of the Act, the Council declares a Waste Management Charge:
- 3.1 The purpose for which this Charge is imposed is to enable and assist Council to meet the cost of the waste disposal services, including management and operation of the three waste transfer stations, which Council provides for the benefit of all rateable land within the Council Area, other than the land described in paragraph 3.4 below, and the occupiers of such land.
- 3.2 The amount to be raised by this Charge is \$2,743,838.
- 3.3 The amount of the Charge declared is \$349.00 per allotment.
- 3.4 The Charge will be levied on all rateable land within the Council Area with the exception of allotments within that part of the Council area zoned CB, C, SC, TC, LI, GI, DV under the *NT Planning Scheme* and including the allotments identified in B ii. and iii above.

RELEVANT INTEREST RATE

- 4 That the Council fixes the relevant interest rate for the late payment of rates and charges in accordance with Section 162 of the Act at the rate of 17% per annum which is to be calculated on a daily basis.

PAYMENT

- 5 That the Council determines that the Rates and Charges declared under this declaration are all due and payable in three (3) approximately equal instalments on the following dates:
- 31 August 2017;
- 30 November 2017; and
- 28 February 2018.

Background

The Local Government Act states the following:

155 General rates

- (1) A council must, on or before 31 July in each year, declare rates (general rates) on allotments throughout the area to raise the amount the council intends to raise for general purposes for the financial year.
- (2) The council may, at the same time, raise an amount towards a special purpose.
- (3) The declaration must state:
 - a. The amount to be raised for general purposes and, if an amount is to be raised for a special purpose, the amount to be raised for the special purpose; and
 - b. The basis or bases of the rates; and
 - c. If the rates are to be payable in instalments – the number of instalments and when they will be payable.

Division 2 Charges

157 Imposition of charges

- (1) If a council carries out work, or provides services, for the benefit of land, or the occupiers of land, within its area, the council may declare a charge on the land.
- (2) A declaration of a charge must:
 - a. State the amount or basis of the charge; and
 - b. Identify the land to which the charge will apply; and
 - c. State the purpose of the charge.
- (3) The amount of a charge need not be limited to the cost of providing the service.
- (4) Subject to the following exceptions, the provisions of this Chapter applicable to rates apply with necessary adaptations and modifications to charges imposed under this section.

Exceptions

- 1 A charge may be imposed on land that is not liable to rates (including land that is exempt from rates).
- 2 A charge may have a reasonable basis that differs from rates.

Example

A charge to recover the cost of kerbing might consist of an amount per metre of the frontage of an allotment.

- 3 The provisions for rate concessions do not apply to charges.

Links with Strategic Plan

An effective and sustainable Council

Legislative and Policy Implications

Part 11.5 of the Local Government Act defines the imposition of rates and charges as mentioned under the heading Background in this report. Section 24 of the Local Government (Accounting) Regulations prescribes the certification of the assessment record.

Risks

If Council does not declare rates by the 31 July 2017, Council is unable to levy rates on properties in the financial year 2017/18 and will not receive any income of rates and charges.

Financial Implications

As prescribed in the report, Council intends to raise \$9,612,195 by the means of rates and charges on land. This income constitutes 57% of Council's budgeted income for the financial year 2017/18.

Community Engagement

Proposed rates and charges have been part of the Draft Municipal Plan that has been for public consultation from the 10 – 31 May 2017. Furthermore, in line with Section 158 Local Government Act Council has to publish within 21 days of declaring rates a notice of the rates on its website and in a newspaper circulating generally in the council's area.

**Recommending
Officer:**

Silke Reinhardt, 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.



Certificate in Terms of Regulation 24 (1) of the Local Government (Accounting) Regulations

This is to certify that assessments numbered 10000024 to 10111961 declared pursuant to Sections 155 – 157 of the Local Government Act are recorded in the assessment record and to the best of my knowledge, information and belief the assessment record is comprehensive record of all rateable land within the municipality.

Signed:

Chief Executive Officer

Dated: 28 June 2017



COUNCIL REPORT

Agenda Item Number:	5.3
Report Title:	Elected Member Allowances for 2017/18
Meeting Date:	5/07/2017
Attachments:	Department of Housing and Community Development – Maximum Council Member Allowances – amounts applicable 1 July 2017

Purpose

This report provides Council with information on elected member allowances and seeks Council's adoption of the allowances for the financial year 2017/18.

Summary

The Department of Housing and Community Development has provided details of the maximum level of Council Member Allowances for the financial year 2017/18, as set out in the table below (document attached to report). There has been no increase to the allowances from the 2016/17 year. Councils can resolve to pay less than the maximums.

Allowance	Mayor	Deputy Mayor	Ordinary Council Member
Base Allowance	\$73,125.37	\$27,039.81	\$13,151.83
Electoral Allowance	\$19,247.18	\$4,812.67	\$4,812.67
Professional Development Allowance	\$3,653.68	\$3,653.68	\$3,653.68
Maximum Extra Meeting Allowance			\$8,767.88

Base Allowance

The Base Allowance is paid to Elected Members to cover their time spent in the following activities: agenda study and meeting preparation, attendance at regular Council meetings, attendance at social functions as Council representatives, constituency responsibilities, and Council representation outside of the municipality, including delegations interstate and overseas.

Electoral Allowance

The Electoral Allowance is paid to assist Elected Members with electoral matters at the discretion of the individual Member

Professional Development Allowance

This is payable to Council members to attend appropriate and relevant conferences or training courses which sustain a member's professional competence by keeping the member informed of, and able to comply with, development in professional standards applicable to their role as a Council member.

Extra Meeting Allowance

The Extra Meeting Allowance is paid for ordinary Council members only after an approved claim has been made in line with Council's Policy.

Council has applied the maximum rates in 2016/17 with an Extra Meeting Allowance set at \$140.

Recommendation

That Council:

- (a) Set the Elected Member allowances for the year 2017/18 as follows:
 - 1. Mayor \$92,372.55 for the year paid on pro rata monthly basis in arrears (base allowance \$73,125.37, electoral allowance \$19,247.18) and subject to individual activity and prior approval a professional development allowance not more than \$3,653.68.
 - 2. Deputy Mayor \$31,852.48 for the year paid on pro rata monthly basis in arrears (base allowance \$27,039.81, electoral allowance \$4,812.67) and subject to individual activity and prior approval a professional development allowance not more than \$3,653.68.
 - 3. Councillors \$17,964.50 for the year paid on pro rata monthly basis in arrears (base allowance \$13,151.83, electoral allowance \$4,812.67) and subject to individual activity and prior approval a professional development allowance not more than \$3,653.68.
- (b) Set the Extra Meeting Allowance at \$140 dollars per meeting with conditions as set out in EM05 Elected Member Benefit and Support Policy.

Background

A council must resolve allowances for the financial year when it adopts the budget for the financial year (section 71(3) Local Government Act). A council must adopt its budget on or before 31 July (section 128(1) Local Government Act).

Links with Strategic Plan

An effective and sustainable Council

Legislative and Policy Implications

In line with Section 71 Local Government Act, Council must resolve allowances to be paid for each financial year in line with the maximum allowances issued from the Minister (Local Government Guideline 2 Allowances for Council Members).

Council's Policy EM05 Elected Member Benefits and Support Policy sets out details for benefits provided to Elected Members.

Risks

A council needs to consider allowances in the overall context of its budget. Once a council has resolved the level of allowances for a financial year they cannot be changed by amendment (section 128(2) Local Government Act).

Financial Implications

The maximum cost to Council for allowances to be paid for the financial year 2017/18 would be \$222,690.57. The full cost is reflected in the Budget 2017/18.

Community Engagement

The Elected Member Allowances have been detailed in the Draft Municipal Plan 2017/18 that has been published for a 21 day public consultation period.

Recommending Officer: **Silke Reinhardt, 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.

(8) Maximum Council Member Allowances

Amounts applicable 1 July 2017

Note: A council must resolve allowances for the financial year when it adopts the budget for the financial year (section 71(3)). A council must adopt its budget on or before 31 July (section 128(1)). The amounts in these tables indicate the maximum level at which allowances may be set. Councils can resolve to pay less than the maximums. A council needs to consider allowances in the overall context of its budget. Once a council has resolved the level of allowances for a financial year they cannot be changed by amendment (section 128(2)).

Ordinary Council Member

Council Members other than Principal Member and the Deputy Principal Member				
	Category 1:	Category 2:	Category 3:	Category 4:
	Darwin	Alice Springs Palmerston	Katherine Litchfield Barkly Central Desert East Arnhem MacDonnell Roper Gulf Tiwi Islands Victoria Daly West Arnhem West Daly	Belyuen Coomalie Wagait
Base Allowance	\$21,918.53	\$15,343.80	\$13,151.83	\$4,383.95
Electoral Allowance	\$8,019.95	\$5,614.79	\$4,812.67	\$1,604.22
Professional Development Allowance	\$3,653.68	\$3,653.68	\$3,653.68	\$3,653.68
Max Extra Meeting Allowance	\$14,612.35	\$10,229.59	\$8,767.88	\$2,923.41
Total Claimable	\$48,204.51	\$34,841.86	\$30,386.06	\$12,565.26

Acting Principal Member

	Category 1:	Category 2:	Category 3:	Category 4:
	Darwin	Alice Springs Palmerston	Katherine Litchfield Barkly Central Desert East Arnhem MacDonnell Roper Gulf Tiwi Islands Victoria Daly West Arnhem West Daly	Belyuen Coomalie Wagait
Daily Rate	\$421.67	\$296.82	\$254.42	\$84.80
Maximum Claimable (90 days)	\$37,950.30	\$26,713.80	\$22,897.80	\$7,632.00

Deputy Principal Member

	Category 1:	Category 2:	Category 3:	Category 4:
	Darwin	Alice Springs Palmerston	Katherine Litchfield Barkly Central Desert East Arnhem MacDonnell Roper Gulf Tiwi Islands Victoria Daly West Arnhem West Daly	Belyuen Coomalie Wagait
Base Allowance	\$45,065.53	\$31,546.25	\$27,039.81	\$9,014.07
Electoral Allowance	\$8,019.95	\$5,614.79	\$4,812.67	\$1,604.22
Professional Development Allowance	\$3,653.68	\$3,653.68	\$3,653.68	\$3,653.68
Total claimable	\$56,739.16	\$40,814.72	\$35,506.16	\$14,271.97

Principal Member

	Category 1:	Category 2:	Category 3:	Category 4:
	Darwin	Alice Springs Palmerston	Katherine Litchfield Barkly Central Desert East Arnhem MacDonnell Roper Gulf Tiwi Islands Victoria Daly West Arnhem West Daly	Belyuen Coomalie Wagait
Base Allowance	\$121,874.05	\$85,312.54	\$73,125.37	\$24,375.52
Electoral Allowance	\$32,077.45	\$22,454.45	\$19,247.18	\$6,415.73
Professional Development Allowance	\$3,653.68	\$3,653.68	\$3,653.68	\$3,653.68
Total claimable	\$157,605.18	\$111,420.67	\$96,026.23	\$34,444.93



COUNCIL REPORT

Agenda Item Number:	5.4
Report Title:	Council and Thorak Regional Cemetery Fees and Charges
Meeting Date:	5/07/2017
Attachments:	Attachment A - Council Fees and Charges 2017/18 Attachment B - Thorak Regional Cemetery Fees and Charges 2017/18

Purpose

This report presents the Fees and charges schedules for Council and Thorak Regional Cemetery for the financial year 2017/18 for Council's adoption.

Summary

A review of fees and charges for Council and Thorak Regional Cemetery has been undertaken by management. The proposed fees and charges are in line with the Long Term Financial Plan increases set by Council.

All fees and charges for Council have increased by 5% unless statutory requirements exist. Furthermore, fees and charges for Howard Park Reserve have been included. At this stage, no new animal management fees or fines have been included for the 2017/18 year.

Thorak Regional Cemetery fees and charges have been adjusted by 5% and include a new administrative charge of 10% charged on all fees and charges for non Litchfield residents. Thorak Regional Cemetery continues to run at a loss due to the changes in consumer behaviour and competition in the market. Litchfield Council is working on a long term plan to ensure Litchfield residents will not have to bear the burden of the service through rates increases.

Recommendation

THAT Council:

1. Adopts the Council Fees and Charges for 2017/18 as presented in Attachment A of this report; and
2. Adopts the Thorak Regional Cemetery Fees and Charges for 2017/18 as presented in Attachment B of this report.

Background

Fees and Charges for Council and Thorak Regional Cemetery are set annually as part of the Annual Budget process. As those charges are the basis for the projected income, the fees and charges are presented to Council in line with Part 10.5 Local Government Act 2014.

Links with Strategic Plan

An effective and sustainable Council

Legislative and Policy Implications

Section 128 Local Government Act requests Council to adopt its Annual Budget on or before 31 July for the relevant financial year. The fees and charges are the basis for the projected income in the forthcoming budget, therefore Council is required to adopt the , as attached to this report.

Section 13 Cemeteries Act gives the board (Council) the power to set fees and charges.

Risks

Council's financial sustainability relies on the collection of adequate fees and charges. It is important that fees and charges are reviewed and benchmarked annually to ensure Council is setting its fees and charges at a sustainable level.

Financial Implications

The proposed fees and charges reflect 7% of Council's (including Thorak Regional Cemetery) budgeted income for the financial year 2017/18.

Community Engagement

Fees and charges are the basis for the annual budget which has been published for 21 days public consultation period. The Local Government Act does not require Council to publish the fees and charges schedule for public consultation before adoption.

Recommending Officer: **Silke Reinhardt, 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 of 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.

LITCHFIELD COUNCIL

Fees and Charges

2017/2018

Effective from 1 July 2017



**LITCHFIELD
COUNCIL**


Community effort is essential

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ADMINISTRATION FEES

<u>Rate Book Inspection Fee</u>	2017/18 Including GST
	\$
Pursuant to Section 152 (4) of the Local Government Act any person is entitled, when the Council Office is open to the public, to inspect the Rate Book free of charge.	No charge 

<u>Rates Notice Reprint</u>	2017/18 Including GST
	\$
Current year rates reprint for any zoning	19.00
Prior year rates reprint for any zoning	25.00

<u>Written Rate Search Fee</u>	2017/18 Including GST
	\$
A charge for each "Certificate of Liabilities" pursuant to Section 256 of the Local Government Act will be levied for the furnishing of written information of details from the Rate Book. This information will only be supplied upon receipt of the required sum together with the written request in the required format.	71.00 

<u>Freedom of Information</u>	2017/18 Including GST
	\$
FOI - Information Request (non-personal information)	\$30.00 + \$25/hour 

<u>Disabled Parking Permits</u>	2017/18 Including GST
	\$
Parking Permit for Disabled Persons	10.00 

<u>Women's Business Network</u>	2017/18 Including GST
	\$
Attendance to Women's Business Network Functions	20.00

COMMUNITY SERVICES



<u>Howard Park Reserve</u>	2017/18 Including GST
Community Organisations (non-profit)	\$
Room Hire - Casual (per hour)	20.00
Room Hire – Full Day (8 hours)	130.00
Functions	330.00
Bond for Functions	330.00
Key Deposit	50.00 per key
Oval Hire – Casual (per hour)	10.00
Oval Hire – Full Day (8 hours)	65.00

	2017/18 Including GST
Commercial / Government	\$
Room Hire - Casual (per hour)	25.00
Room Hire – Full Day (8 hours)	200.00

	2017/18 Including GST
Permanent Rates	\$
External Sheds (per annum)	1,000.00
External Buildings (per annum)	1,700.00
Internal Rooms (per annum)	1,000.00



REGULATORY SERVICES

	2017/18 Including GST
	\$
Microchip	30.00
Microchip (Concession for Pensioners)	20.00
Pound Release Fee	146.00
Pound daily maintenance fee	25.00
Dispose of dead animal/dog	80.00
Surrender Fee - fee per dog	95.00
Hire of animal trap - fee per week	20.00
Hire of animal trap - fee per month	60.00
Delivery of animal trap	20.00
Pick up animal trap	20.00
Cage animal trap (<i>bond</i>)	80.00 
Hire Barking collar fee - fee per month	20.00
Barking collar (<i>bond</i>)	100.00 
Infringement Reminder Letter	31.00
Abandoned Vehicle Release Fee	250.00

Charges for the following offences are referred to in Litchfield Council Rural Dog Management By-Laws and are set in accordance with the Northern Territory Penalty Units Act and Penalty Units Regulations.

Dog at Large





Dog Attack



Dog Menace including chasing vehicles

Dog not microchipped




PLANNING FEES

<u>Subdivision Fees</u>	2017/18 Including GST
	\$
Application Fee for review of Subdivision plans and Clearances (includes one inspection for each required Construction hold point, one handover inspection at time of Clearance of General Conditions, and two final inspections at time of Release from Defects Liability Period; charged at time of request for Clearance of General Conditions)	2% of estimated Value of Assets or \$143.00, whichever is greater 
Inspection Fees (as required, applies for each inspection additional to those detailed above; charged prior to issuing requested Clearance)	118.00
Defect Liability Period Bond (charged prior to issuing Clearance of General Conditions)	5% of estimated Value of Assets 
Outstanding Works Bond (charged prior to issuing Clearance of General Conditions)	As determined by Council, based on current industry rates 
Permit to Work within a Road Reserve (inspection fees included in Application Fee)	84.00 


<u>Plan/Report Review Fees</u> (excluding subdivisions)	2017/18 Including GST
	\$
Application Fee for review of: Access plans Stormwater Design plans Construction and Environmental Management Plans Traffic Management Plans Traffic Impact Assessments Road Safety Audits (per submission per type of plan/report, charged at time of application submission)	84.00 
Permit to Work within a Road Reserve (inspection fees are additional)	84.00 
Inspection Fees (as required, applies for each inspection; charged prior at time of inspection)	118.00

<u>Road Openings/Road Closings</u>	2017/18 Excluding GST
	\$
Road Opening involving Private Land	Actual Cost + 10% + GST, or \$3,000.00, whichever is greater
Road Opening involving Crown Land (may also include private land)	Actual Cost + 10% + GST, or \$5,000.00, whichever is greater
Road Closing	Actual Cost + 10% + GST, or \$5,000.00, whichever is greater

WORKS FEES

<u>Wide Load Permits</u>	2017/18 Including GST
	\$
Wide Load Permits - Refundable bond Permit Deposit Required before move is undertaken ** Must be paid by MVR permit holder.	2,500.00 
Administration Cost (non-refundable) (Inspection fee and damages at cost will be deducted from refundable bond). ** Must be paid by MVR permit holder.	221.00
Inspection Fees	118.00

<u>Reinstatement Charges</u>	2017/18 Excluding GST
	\$
Charge for replacement of all Litchfield Council assets (includes but is not limited to bitumen/gravel roads, bitumen/concrete/gravel accesses, and excavation; charged at completion of works)	Actual Cost + 30% + GST

<u>Permit to Work within a Road Reserve – No Development Permit</u>	2017/18 Including GST
	\$
Application Fee for Permit to Work within a Road Reserve (includes one inspection, charged at time of application submission)	84.00 
Additional Inspection Fees (as required, applies for each additional inspection; charged prior to issuing Permit)	118.00

WASTE DISPOSAL

<u>Sales</u>	2017/18 Including GST
	\$
Mulch cubic metres	10.00
Crushed Concrete cubic metres	15.00

Dumping Fees

Humpty Doo Waste Transfer Station

Waste	Commercial/Non-Residents *	Litchfield Municipality Resident
Uncontaminated Green Waste	\$51.50 per tonne	Utility or single axle trailer \$5.00 per load #
Contaminated Green Waste**	\$136.00 per tonne	\$113.00 per tonne
Contaminated & Unsorted Waste**	\$136.00 per tonne	Utility or single axle trailer free of charge #
Uncontaminated Construction Waste (concrete, tiles, bricks, sand and clean fill soil)	\$51.50 per tonne	\$41.00 per tonne Utility or single axle trailer free of charge
Tyres - non-commercial vehicles less than 4.5 tonnes	\$6 per tyre	

* A minimum charge of \$15.00 per load applies for Commercial and Non-Litchfield Municipality residents.

Other vehicles will be charged at the Commercial/Non-Resident Rates

**This waste is sent to Shoal Bay and Litchfield Council is charges accordingly to cover costs.

Howard Springs Waste Transfer Station

Waste	Non-Residents	Litchfield Municipality Resident
Uncontaminated Green Waste	Utility or single axle trailer \$15.00 per load^	Utility or single axle trailer \$5.00 per load^
Unsorted Waste	Not Accepted Must be dumped at Humpty Doo Waste Transfer Station	No Charge

^ Other vehicles not accepted



THORAK REGIONAL CEMETERY

Fees and Charges 2017/2018

Effective from 1 July 2017



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Administrational Charge	2017/18 Including GST \$
<p>All mentioned fees and charges in this schedule underlie an administrational charge of 10% for customers that are not Litchfield residents at the time of purchase.</p> <p>Customers have to show evidence of residential address by way of drivers license or recent (no older then 90 days) government correspondence with a residential address within the Litchfield Municipality.</p>	10% on fee or charge


Burial / Interment Fees (Ground Maintenance Fee applies)	2017/18 Including GST \$
<u>Section A</u>	
• Adult	3,418
• Child	2,118
<i>2nd Interment (extra depth charge applies first interment)</i>	
• Adult	3,032
• Child	1,887
<u>Section B</u>	
• Adult	4,928
• Child	2,712
<i>2nd Interment (extra depth charge applies first interment)</i>	
• Adult	4,465
• Child	2,712
<u>Section C&D</u>	
• Adult	6,405
• Child	4,410
<i>2nd Interment (extra depth charge applies first interment)</i>	
• Adult	5,876
• Child	4,179
<u>Orthodox Section</u>	
• Adult	6,416
• Child	4,421
<i>2nd Interment (extra depth charge applies first interment)</i>	
• Adult	5,887
• Child	4,189
<u>Muslim Section (Monuments)</u>	
• Adult	5,017
• Child	2,901
<u>Muslim Section (Flat Marker)</u>	
• Adult	4,554
• Child	2,636
<u>Baha'i Section</u>	
• Adult	4,554
• Child	2,636
<u>Garden of Angels</u>	
<i>Garden of Angels graves accommodate caskets up to 1100 mm long by 450 mm wide only</i>	
Section A (under 10 yrs of age) Plaque only	2,039
Section B (under 10 yrs of age) Headstone and Plaques	2,514
Un-Registrable Foetus burial	342

<u>Cremation Services</u>	2017/18 Including GST \$
• Adult Cremation	1,247
• Child Cremation (under 10yrs of age)	575
• Un-Registrable Foetus Cremation	267
• Additional Ash Containers	26
• Viewing of Cremation (per family group)	108
• Packaging and posting of cremated remains	160

Cremation Services	2017/18 Including GST \$
<p><u>Interment of Cremated Remains</u> (does not include ground maintenance fee)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Memorial Palm Garden (single interment only) 545 • Niche Wall (Limited size) 671 • Niche Wall (Lower two rows of niche walls) 447 • Memorial Beam – B Section 607 • Memorial Palm Scattering Garden 108 • Cremated remains interred into a full vacant burial grave (max 6ea) Refer to section Price List • Cremated remains interred into an existing occupied grave (max 6ea) 585 • Children's Cremation Interment Garden 545 • Children's Cremation Interment Garden with plaque 869 <p><u>Courtyard of Tranquillity</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Row 5,6,7 & 8 (single interment only) 543 • Row 5,6,7 & 8 including brass plaque (at-need only) and install 948 • Row 1,2,3 & 4 (two interments per plot) 1,087 <p>(First interment includes ground maintenance fee)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Row 1,2,3 & 4 (second interment) 447 <p><u>Courtyard of Tranquillity- Columbarium</u></p> <p>Row # 1, 2, 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single Niche B (1 urn) 1,247 • Single Niche A (1 urn) Second urn \$578 1,407 • Double Niche C (2 large urns) 2,121 <p>Row #4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single Niche B 1,247 • Single Niche A - Second urn \$578 1,407 • Double Niche C 2,121 <p>Row # 5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single Niche B 1,140 • Single Niche A - Second urn \$ 472 1,247 <p>All prices include Niche Front Engraving, Name, Dates and 26 letters Note: Niche "A" second urn must be correct size to fit limited space.</p> <p><u>Courtyard of Tranquillity -Family Tree Cremation Garden</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permits up to sixteen cremation interments under one tree. 5,424 • Interment fee for each individual cremated remains. 213 <p><u>Courtyard of Tranquillity – Memorial Trees</u> (Covers the cost of a tree, concrete plinth and standard plaque) 980</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extra Plinth and Plaque (max 4 per tree / per family) 480 <p>Urns for cremated remains See Office</p>	

<u>Exclusive Rights</u>	2017/18 Including GST \$
<p><u>Exclusive Right (reservation only) Full Burials*</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue of Exclusive Right of Burial Reservation (inc's ground maintenance fee & certificate fee) <p>Only one Grounds Maintenance Fee per grave or lot</p> <p><u>Exclusive Right (reservation only) Cremated Remains Interment**</u> (inc's ground maintenance fee & certificate fee)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Into an existing occupied grave • Into Memorial Palm Garden • Into Niche Wall • Into Courtyard of Tranquillity Row 5,6,7 & 8 • Into Courtyard of Tranquillity Row 1,2,3 & 4 • Into Courtyard of Tranquillity- Columbaria single • Into Courtyard of Tranquillity- Columbaria double • Memorial Beam B Section <p><u>Cremation Packages</u></p> <p>Pre-purchase cremation and single lot in Court Yard of Tranquillity Rows 5,6,7 & 8</p> <p>Exclusive Right Certificate Fee</p> <p>* Names of intended person/s must be specified at the time of purchase for any Exclusive Right</p> <p>** Exclusive Right reservation prices are for plot reservation only. At the time of burial, the full price of the plot interment at the current rates (less ground maintenance fee) must be paid.</p>	<p>868</p> <p>213</p> <p>365</p> <p>365</p> <p>365</p> <p>467</p> <p>254</p> <p>416</p> <p>254</p> <p>1,736</p> <p> 10</p>
<p><u>Transfer of Exclusive Right</u> (Burial and Cremated remains interment) into another person's name</p>	<p>181</p>
<p><u>Refund of Exclusive Rights</u> Upon proof of purchase, 75% of the original fee will be refunded less a \$37.00 administration fee and the certificate fee of \$16.00 (pre-1st July 2013), \$10.00 after 1st July 2013</p>	<p>Refund amount varies based on price paid at the time of purchase</p>

<u>Miscellaneous Charges</u>	2017/18 Including GST \$
<u>Ground Fees</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ground Maintenance Fee (applicable to all full burials) • Ground Maintenance Fee (for all cremated remains interments) • Extra Depth fee (when two burials are planned for one grave) • Exhumations Full Body (Ministerial Approval) • Disinterment of Cremated Remains from ground • Removal of Cremated Remains from Columbarium/Niche Wall 	267 133 352 3,367 107 53
<u>Chapel Services</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapel Hire, includes private family viewing room • Chapel Hire with the use of the Kitchenette • Chapel Overtime Fee (any time past the 1/2 hour to the 3/4 hour) 	315 365 152
<u>Non-regular hour service charges (Per Service – max 2 hours)</u> Monday - Friday: Cremations after 15:00pm Weekends: Full Grave interment Cremation interment Cremations Public Holidays: Burial Cremation interment Cremations <u>After Hours Labour Rate</u> per hr after 2hrs has been exceeded	457 809 528 543 1,086 649 757 202
<u>Memorial Permits (GST Exempt)</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plaques • Headstones • Monuments 	 107  181  266

<u>Miscellaneous Charges</u>	2017/18 Including GST \$
<u>Memorial Installation Fees via Thorak Staff</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plaque • Removal and/or re-installation of memorial plaque 	<div>107</div> <div>107</div>
<u>Other Charges</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supply of Plaque or Headstone • Marquee Rental 4 x 4 m • Marquee Rental 6 x 3 m (includes 20 chairs) • Funeral Directors Permit Fee per annum (GST Exempt) 	<div>Priced on Application</div> <div>107</div> <div>159</div> <div>  1,172 </div>

<u>Ministerial Approved Burials</u>	2017/18 Including GST \$
<u>Second Interment: Section A</u> Where the upper surface of coffin is below 750mm from ground level	3,282
<u>Third & subsequent Interment: Section A</u> Where the upper surface of coffin is 500mm from ground level	3,133
<u>Second Interment: Section B</u> Where the upper surface of coffin is below 750mm from ground level	4,699
<u>Third & subsequent Interment: Section B</u> Where the upper surface of coffin is 500mm from ground level	4,699
<u>Second Interment: Section C</u> Where the upper surface of coffin is below 750mm from ground level	6,170
<u>Third & subsequent Interment: Section C</u> Where the upper surface of coffin is 500mm from ground level (includes excavation and ground maintenance)	5,913
<u>Concrete Seal</u>	3,719
<u>Grave Investigation</u> – To ascertain depth & compliance with legislation	1,502
<u>Administration Charge Ministerial Approved Burials</u>	554

Notes:

- Exhumations – excavations to coffin depth recorded at time of burial only.
- Coffins over 75cm wide but less than 1200 mms are subjected to extra fees for larger grave preparation. **\$250.00.**

An Infant subsidy is available with the following conditions;

- For burial or cremation costs of children up to the age of two years, including stillborn children. This does not include un-registrable foetus.
- The subsidy will be available up to a maximum of fifty percent (50%) of the interment cost or 50% of the cremation cost or \$900.00 whichever is lesser, at any section of Thorak Regional Cemetery.
- The parent or legal guardian is a resident within the Darwin, Palmerston or Litchfield municipalities.
- The subsidy will be for the interment cost or cremation cost (not both) and will be applicable at the time of service as a one-off only payment. One claim per infant.
- The subsidy will be paid to individual residents only and will not be available to organisations or government agencies carrying out interments or cremations for children in their care.
- The subsidy will only be available on receipt of proof of residence within the Darwin, Palmerston and Litchfield Municipalities. Proof of residence will require photo identification with a current address shown, or a letter or account for utilities service including Power Water, a current rental agreement, rates notice or any other identification document as approved by the Chief Executive Officer.



COUNCIL REPORT

Agenda Item Number:	5.5
Report Title:	Long Term Financial Plan 2017/18 to 2026/27
Meeting Date:	5/07/2017
Attachments:	Long Term Financial Plan 2017/18 to 2026/27

Purpose

This report presents the Long Term Financial Plan 2017/18 to 2026/27 including the 10-year operating statement for Council's adoption.

Summary

The Long Term Financial Plan attached to this report, provides a framework for Council's future funding of services to the community and Council's asset management.

The Long Term Financial Plan is designed to ensure that the financial sustainability of Litchfield Council continues to improve over the next 10 Years by supporting sound financial decision making. The Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP) is based on the following strategies:

- Constrain growth in operating costs
- Explore opportunities for increased income from sources other than property rates
- Advocate strongly for grants from other levels of Government
- Improve the approach to Asset Management
- Use discretionary Reserves to increase capital spend in the short term
- Increase rate income to fund an increase in capital spend

A ten-year Operating Statement has been prepared based on a series of assumptions about the movement of each income and expenditure type. This ten-year view provides the context for the annual Municipal Plan and budget process and is a key input into the development of the Strategic Plan. The LTFP is updated and included as part of Council's Municipal Plan each year.

Recommendation

THAT Council pursuant to Section 23 Local Government Act adopts the Long Term Financial Plan 2017/18 to 2026/27.

Background

The NT Local Government Act requires Council to prepare and maintain a Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP). The Plan must cover a minimum period of four years however, many of the decisions that Council makes have impacts that go well beyond this time horizon. Litchfield Council has therefore developed a ten-year plan to ensure that the decisions made today are truly sustainable in the long term.

Links with Strategic Plan

An effective and sustainable Council.

Legislative and Policy Implications

Section 23 Local Government Act requires Council to prepare and maintain a Long Term Financial Plan as part of the Municipal Plan. The plan must be reviewed annually and published in draft for a minimum period of 21 days for public comment. Furthermore, in line with Section 24 Local Government Act the plan must be adopted by Council between the 1 April and 31 July in each year.

Risks

Should Council not adopt the draft plan for public consultation at this stage, time constraints could risk meeting the legislative requirement for Council to endorse the final plan by latest 31 July.

Financial Implications

Not applicable.

Community Engagement

Council has published the Draft Long Term Financial Plan for public comment and no submission have been received.

Recommending Officer: **Silke Reinhardt, 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 of 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.



LITCHFIELD COUNCIL

Community effort is essential

Long Term Financial Plan

2017/18 to 2026/27

Executive Summary

This Long Term Financial Plan is designed to ensure that the financial sustainability of Litchfield Council continues to improve over the next 10 Years by supporting sound financial decision making.

Sustainability in the context of Litchfield means the community has well maintained facilities and infrastructure and receives good quality services at an affordable level of property rates both now and into the future.

Council currently has strong cash reserves and no debt which provides a good foundation in the short term. In the long term however, Council faces several challenges including:

- very large operating deficits
- inadequate funding for capital expenditure to maintain the existing asset base.

These challenges are not easily resolved and can only be addressed through a long term, disciplined approach to the allocation of financial resources.

The Long Term Financial Plan is based on the following strategies:

- Constrain growth in operating costs
- Explore opportunities for increased income from sources other than Property Rates
- Advocate strongly for grants from other levels of Government
- Improve the approach to Asset Management
- Use discretionary Reserves to increase capital spend in the short term
- Increase rate income to fund an increase in capital spend

The combination of these strategies will improve the sustainability of Litchfield gradually over time with the key objective of increasing the level of capital expenditure which is currently inadequate.

A ten year Operating Statement and Cash Flow Statement has been prepared based on a series of assumptions about the movement of each income and expenditure type. This ten-year view provides the context for the annual Municipal Plan and budget process and is a key input into the development of the 4-year Strategic Plan.

Introduction

The Local Government Act requires Council to prepare and maintain a Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP). The Plan must cover a minimum period of four years however, many of the decisions that Council makes have impacts that go well beyond this time horizon. Litchfield Council has therefore developed a ten-year plan to ensure that the decisions made today are truly sustainable in the long term.

A long-term financial plan provides a framework to consider:

- The level of funding required to deliver essential services required by the community
- Is the current condition of assets providing an acceptable level of service?
- Are new or upgraded assets required and how can they be funded?
- What income sources are available and how can these be maximised?
- What property rating strategy should be adopted?

The goal of the LTFP is to ensure financial sustainability which can be defined as:

‘...a government’s ability to manage its finances so it can meet its spending commitments, both now and in the future. It ensures future generations of taxpayers do not face an unmanageable bill for government services provided to the current generation.’ (Commonwealth Government, Intergenerational Report, May 2002)

Sustainability in the context of Litchfield means the community has well maintained facilities and infrastructure and receives good quality services at an affordable level of property rates both now and into the future.

The directions of the LTFP are informed by Council’s Strategic Plan and Asset Management Plan. The LTFP also provides the context and financial limits that need to be considered in the development of long term plans and the management of expectations about what can be achieved.

The LTFP is developed using a series of assumptions about future growth in income and expenses. These assumptions have been based on the best available information and will be reviewed on an annual basis in the lead up to the development of the Municipal Plan. The strategies contained in the Plan will help set the parameters for the development of the annual budget.

Current Financial Position

The following section of the Plan provides analysis of Council's current financial situation based on a set of criteria that are generally accepted measures of sustainability. These measures were used in a report by the accounting firm Deloitte in its Review of Councils Financial Sustainability in the Northern Territory (May 2012). Litchfield Council was not included in that review but the measures are highly relevant.

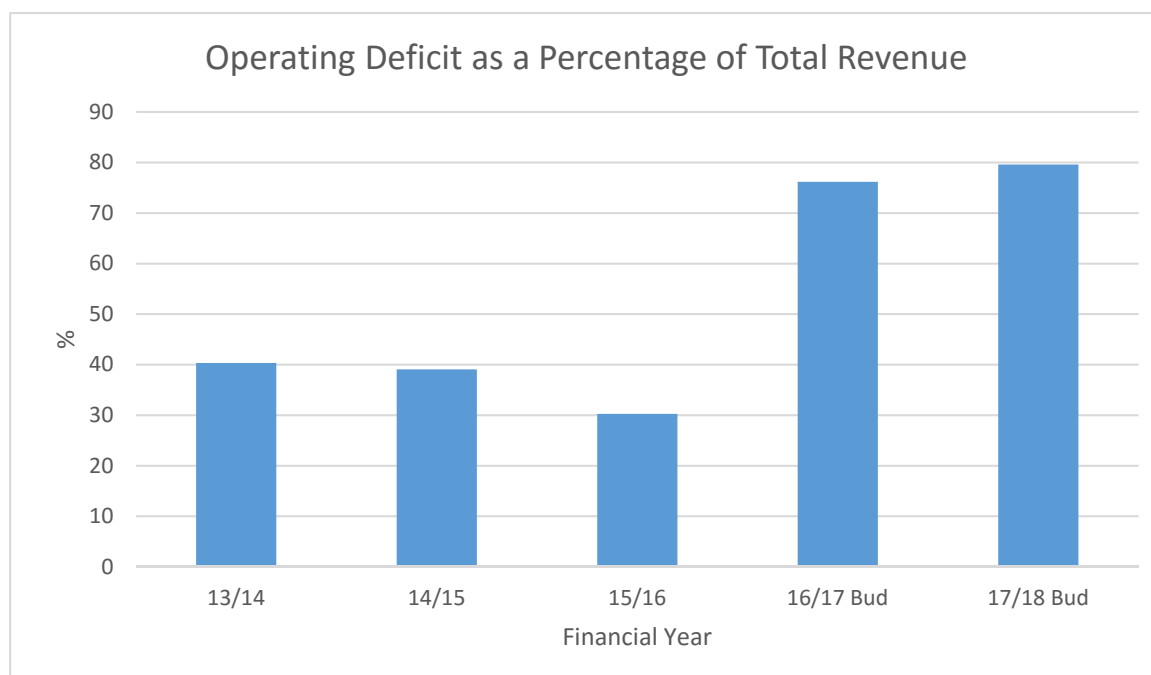
Operating Surplus/Deficit Ratio

This ratio expresses the Operating result as published in the annual financial statements as a percentage of total revenue. Ideally, Councils should run modest operating surpluses as this ensures that sufficient revenue is being generated to meet the costs of delivering services and to maintain the value of its assets over time. Large operating deficits indicate that long term sustainability is at risk as there is insufficient funds to maintain assets and infrastructure in an acceptable condition.

The graph below sets out the ratio for Litchfield Council in recent years. The result for 2015/16 is artificially low as total revenue for the year was substantially increased by large government grants. This masked the impact of the revaluation of assets and other changes to the calculation of depreciation that occurred in that year. The depreciation expense increased from \$8.9 million in 2014/15 to \$16.8 million in 2015/16.

Further work will be undertaken to ensure the depreciation calculation is as accurate and robust as possible.

The full impact of the increase in depreciation can be seen in the 2016/17 budgeted result.



Depreciation is a non cash item in the Operating statement but that does not mean it is irrelevant.

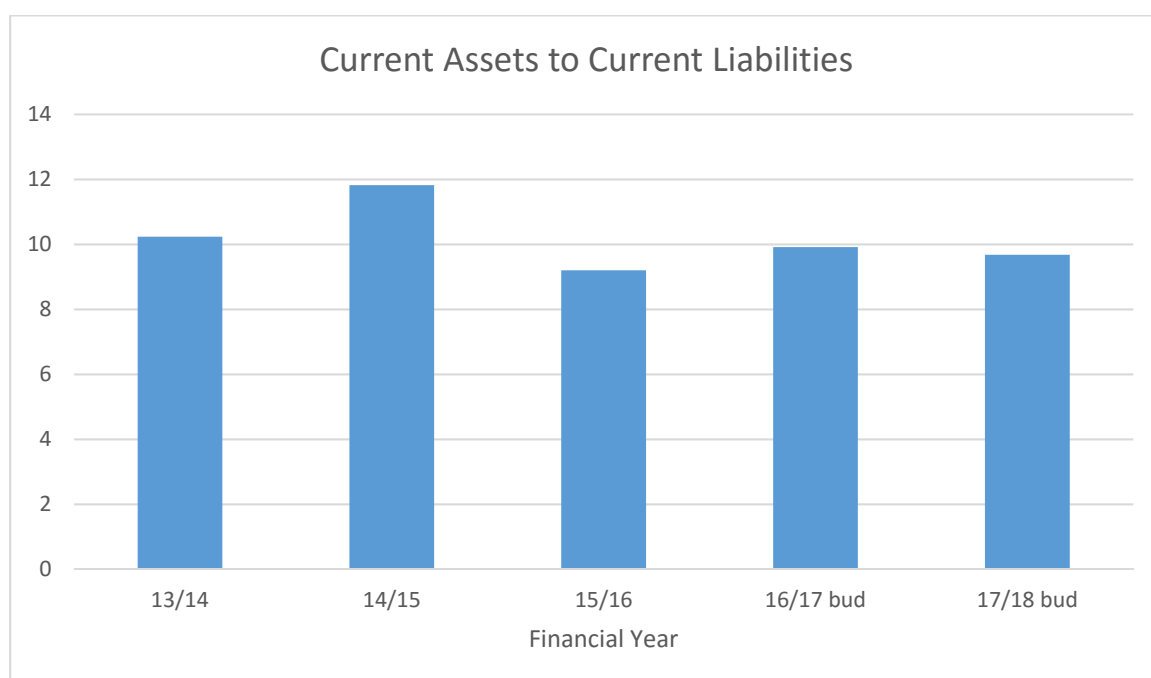
Depreciation is a measure of the deterioration of the Council's asset stock during the year. An Operating deficit implies that Council is not raising sufficient revenue to fund the renewal of existing assets.

Litchfield is consistently running large operating deficits and the recent change to the calculation of depreciation has worsened the situation substantially. The size of the operating deficit does raise concerns about long term sustainability and the ability of Council to adequately fund the renewal of its infrastructure in the future.

Current Ratio

The current ratio compares current assets to current liabilities and is an indicator of Council's capacity to meet its short term financial obligations. The ratio should be greater than 1 to provide assurance that Council has sufficient funds to meet short term debts.

Council has strong cash reserves and minimal short term liabilities. This is represented in the graph below which shows that Litchfield Council has current ratio in excess of 10.



Debt

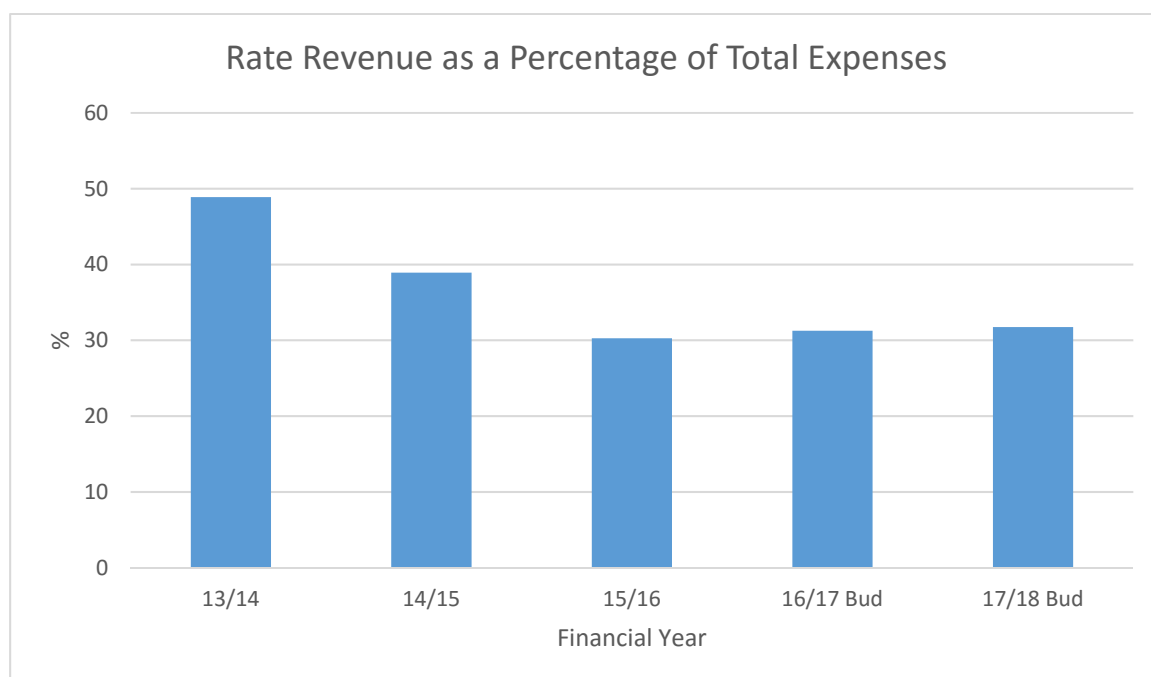
To assess an organisation's exposure to interest on debt the Interest Coverage Ratio would normally be used. Council currently has no debt and therefore no interest expense.

There is a role for debt in financing large, long lasting community assets as the repayments spread the cost to ratepayers both now and in the future who will enjoy the benefits of the asset created by the debt. However, loans need to be repaid with interest and this has an impact on Council's operating result which must be funded.

The debt free position of Litchfield does provide flexibility to allow for future borrowings for critical community infrastructure.

Rates Coverage Ratio

The Rates Coverage Ratio measures the percentage of total expenses that is met by rates revenue. The higher the percentage, the more self-reliant Council is and the lower the risk is of external impacts on revenue. A ratio of greater than 40% is considered low risk.

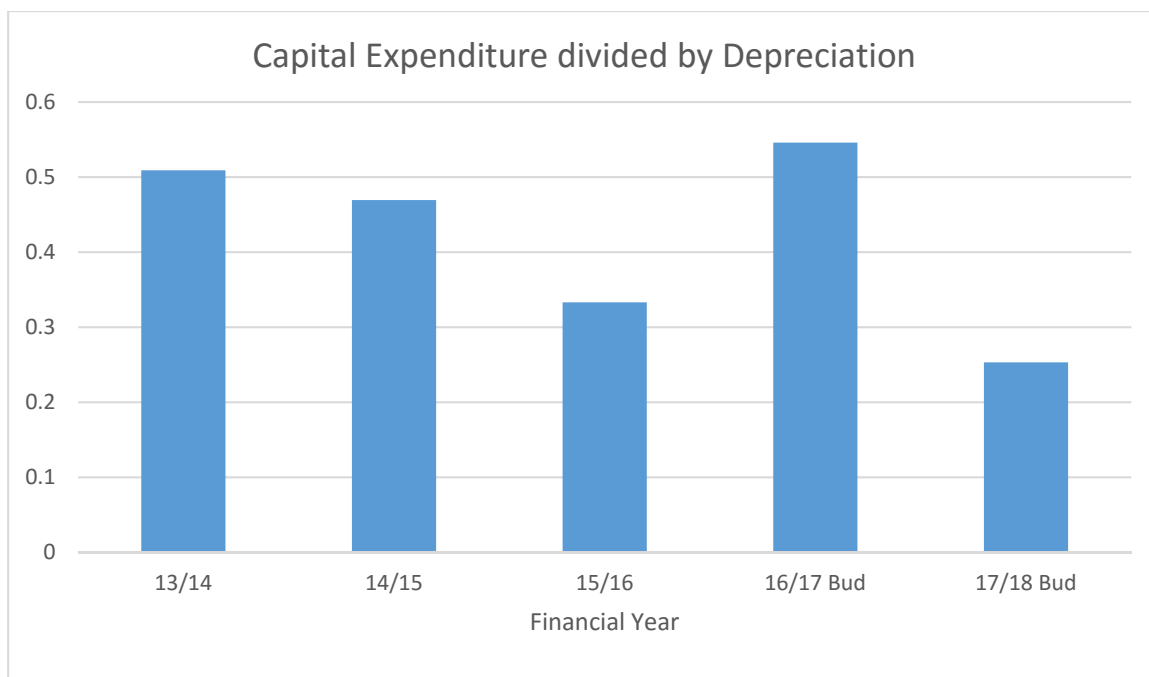


The reduction in this ratio in 15/16 and 16/17 relates to the large increase in the depreciation expense in these years. The ratio is currently sitting at around 30% which indicates that Council is quite dependent on external sources of revenue, mainly government grants. This does present some risks as Governments can reduce or freeze grants with little regard to the financial impact on councils.

Sustainability Ratio

The Sustainability ratio compares the level of capital works expenditure to depreciation. A ratio of greater than 1 means that Council is increasing the value of its asset base. A ratio of less than 1 means that Council's asset stock is losing value as it is deteriorating more quickly than it is being renewed.

Council is spending substantially less on capital works than the depreciation expense and the sustainability ratio is around 0.5. This is a concern as over time the quality and value of Council's assets will continue to decline.



Summary of Financial Position

Litchfield Council has strong cash reserves and no debt which means in the short term it will be able to continue to deliver services and a limited amount of capital works to its community.

In the long term however, Litchfield faces several challenges including very large operating deficits and inadequate funding for capital expenditure to maintain the existing asset base.

Emerging Issues

The Impact of Growth

Litchfield municipality has experienced substantial growth in population over the last 10 years with the addition of 6,500 new residents which represents a 47% increase. Accurate population growth numbers are not available for the next 10 years although it is anticipated that Litchfield will continue to grow at a moderate pace.

The Greater Darwin Land Use Plan estimates that 500 dwellings will be required to meet likely growth in population in Litchfield over the next 5-10 years.

Population growth can impact on the financial position of Council in a number of ways. Additional properties provide more income to Council through property rates and waste management charges. Whilst there are also costs in providing services to an expanding population, there are economy of scale benefits for some services particularly if the new dwellings are in an urban area.

Another potential impact of growth is that community expectations for an expanded range and quality of services may emerge, 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 despite the additional rate income generated.

The rate of growth in the number of new assessments created for rating purposes has only been around 30 per annum.

The Long Term Financial Plan has factored in growth in rateable properties of \$25,000 per annum with the additional revenue and expense implications included in the forward projections.

Maintaining and Renewing Assets

Council has an extensive network of infrastructure assets with a current value of approximately \$238.14 million. Sealed roads account for the vast bulk of this amount with road culverts and unsealed roads being the next largest categories. Maintaining these assets in good order and renewing them as they approach the end of their useful life requires substantial expenditure each year.

The 2017/18 Budget provides for \$2.2 million in expenditure on infrastructure maintenance and this is considered sufficient to maintain the road network in an acceptable condition. In addition, the Capital Expenditure program for 2016/17 is \$4.2 million of which \$3.05 million relates to roads and related infrastructure.

In the 2014/15 year a revaluation of Council's infrastructure assets was undertaken along with a review of the useful life of each asset type. The outcome of this revaluation was that the depreciation expense for 2015/16 increased by \$7.9 million to a total of \$16.79 million.

Depreciation is designed to be an estimate of the value of assets consumed during each financial year. It is calculated on a straight line basis linked to the useful life of the assets. Many assets do not deteriorate in a straight line way so the depreciation charge may not align to changes in the condition of assets on the ground on a year to year basis. However, provided the useful life and asset values used in the depreciation calculation are correct, over time the accumulated depreciation should give a reasonable approximation of the condition of the asset.

This is why depreciation is included in the financial statements as an expense and over time capital expenditure on asset renewal should match the annual rate of depreciation. This ensures that the asset base maintains its value and assets remain in an acceptable condition.

This issue creates long term sustainability challenges for Litchfield Council and many other councils in the Northern Territory.

Other Potential Pressures

The financial performance of **Thorak Regional Cemetery** has deteriorated over the last few years due to a reduction in income from cremations, burials etc. The forecast for the 2017/18 year is that the Cemetery will make an operating loss of \$66,530. The Cemetery financial reserve is expected to have a balance of \$12,241 at 30 June 2018.

On the current trajectory, the Cemetery reserve will be completely exhausted in 2018/19 and the Cemetery will become a financial drain on Litchfield Council. Given the other pressures on Council's budget, it does not have the capacity to support ongoing financial losses at the Cemetery.

Ongoing advocacy to the Northern Territory Government is being undertaken to ensure a more equitable funding model for the cemetery given the majority of burials and cremations are for people from outside the Litchfield municipal district.

The LTFP assumes that this issue will be resolved in the 2017/18 year and that from 2018 the Cemetery will not have an impact on Council's financial position.

An **Aquatic Facility Community Needs Analysis** has highlighted a community need for an aquatic facility in the Litchfield municipality. This Needs Analysis is Step One in Planning a Community Facility process and although the report will include reference to the cost of running aquatic facilities, the detailed financial implications of building and operating the facility are part of a feasibility study (Stage 2). The capital cost of building even a relatively small scale aquatic complex will be substantial. In addition, the ongoing operating costs would need to be funded and the capacity to do that within the existing financial settings of Council is quite limited.

The Northern Territory Government has unilaterally determined to transfer responsibility for **street lighting infrastructure** to local councils, effective from 1 January 2018. The estimated

cost to Litchfield of this decision is \$130,000 per annum. This type of cost shifting adds to the pressures being faced by all councils in the Territory and ultimately the costs will be borne by ratepayers.

The Way Ahead – Improving Long Term Sustainability

As indicated in the section of this Long Term Financial Plan relating to the current financial position, Council has strong cash reserves and no debt which means in the short term it will be able to continue to deliver services and a limited amount of capital works to its community.

In the long term however, Litchfield faces several challenges including very large operating deficits and inadequate funding for capital expenditure to maintain the existing asset base. These long term challenges will require a concerted and disciplined approach to the management of financial resources so that sustainability can be improved.

The aim of the Long Term Financial Plan is to improve sustainability by:

1. Decreasing the size of the operating deficit
2. Increasing the funding available for capital expenditure

The following strategies are designed to address both of these challenges.

Constrain Growth in Operating Costs

The major expenditure categories to which this strategy applies are Employee costs, Contractors and Materials. The Northern Territory is experiencing negative inflation and in fact there was -0.4% movement in the Consumer Price Index for the year to December 2016. The low levels of price movements are forecast to remain the case for some time.

The movements in the Wage Price index published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics also points to slow growth in wages in the broader Northern Territory economy. In the latest published data, wages in the Northern Territory have increased by 2.9% in the 2016 year.

The LTFP assumptions reflect these trends and growth in operating costs are expected to be much lower in the coming years than has historically been the case. The LTFP allows for 2.1 to 2.7% growth in employee costs and 1.5% growth in contractors and materials.

The LTFP provides for a small pool of New Initiative funds to be allocated to high priority one-off projects and activities each year. Whilst the amount is modest, it does provide a small amount of flexibility in what will otherwise be a constrained budget. It is important that these funds not be allocated to recurrent programs as this will reduce the amount available in future years. Recurrent increases in operating expenditure must be funded from matching income sources or reductions in expenditure in another part of the budget.

Explore Opportunities to Increase Income from sources other than Rates

Council receives income from a range of user fees and charges. A comprehensive review of the adequacy of these charges will be undertaken to identify areas where users should be making a greater contribution to the cost of delivering some of these services.

Increases for all fees and charges set by Council will increase by a minimum of 5% for 2017/18, with increases in future years to be determined following the outcome of the review.

Advocate Strongly for Grants from other levels of Government

Council has received substantial grants for one-off capital projects in recent years and continuing to advocate strongly for grants relating to road works, in particular, will be an important part of bridging the gap between the amount that is currently spent on infrastructure renewal and what should be spent to maintain asset condition.

Given the uncertainty about the allocation of grant funding, the LTFP has taken a conservative approach to forecasting future grant income. However, advocacy efforts and grant applications will be stepped-up to ensure that any available funding that is consistent with meeting Council's strategic objectives is targeted.

Improve the Approach to Asset Management

Council has an extensive network of infrastructure assets and the ongoing maintenance and renewal of these assets is one of its biggest challenges. To ensure that decisions about the allocation of funding to infrastructure works is sustainable, further work is required to continue to improve the data and analysis of asset condition, valuation and useful life.

Based on the work done to date, it is clear that the current level of capital expenditure is inadequate to maintain the condition of roads, in particular and the Long Term Financial Plan seeks to allocate an increased level of funding for capital expenditure. This is very challenging to achieve in the current context and it will take many years of disciplined decision making to reach a point where the level of capital expenditure is adequate.

Use Discretionary Reserves to Increase Capital Spend in the Short Term

Council has very strong cash reserves made up of a number of specific purpose reserves and a significant amount of unallocated cash. The discretionary reserves and unallocated cash balance as at 30 June 2016 was approximately \$14.1 million. These reserves provide a short term opportunity to deliver a higher level of capital works but do not represent a long term solution as once they are spent, they are spent.

The current use of a large number of very specific purpose reserves is of little value and it is intended they be reviewed. Funds in the Infrastructure reserve will be used to reduce the pressure on the assets and will be drawn down at the rate of \$1million per annum for the next 5 years. This will support the capital works program until some of the longer term solutions start to take effect.

The Waste Management Reserve will remain separate as these funds were raised specifically for waste management purposes.

There will still be sufficient cash reserves remaining after this draw down to meet ongoing working capital requirements and provide a buffer for unforeseen events.

Increase Rate Income to fund Increased Levels of Capital Expenditure

Rates and the waste management charge provide approximately 50% of the total revenue for Council and is the most stable and predictable source of revenue for Council.

The growth in the number of properties will generate some additional revenue over the coming years and a review of the rating system is currently underway to ensure that the rating system is structured in a fair and equitable manner.

This Review presents potential opportunities to create a more sustainable rate base. The current level of rates is insufficient to fund the level of capital expenditure required to maintain the condition of existing assets and over time this will lead to noticeable deterioration of the asset stock, particularly roads.

All new dwellings created must be captured and rated separately to ensure the owners of these dwellings are contributing to Council services.

There is also a strong case to move to a valuation based rating system and to introduce a minimum rate to ensure low value properties continue to make a reasonable contribution and high value properties contribute more. Without a fundamental change to the rating system long term financial sustainability will be a very difficult outcome to achieve.

The LTFP has been based on annual increase in Rates of 5% on existing properties, with an allowance for growth in the number of rateable assessments. The waste charge has been indexed to reflect the full recovery of the costs of maintaining waste management services.

Attachments

- 1 Assumptions for 10 year Operating Statement
- 2 10 Year Operating Statement

Assumptions for 10 year Operating Statement

The Litchfield Council Long Term Financial Plan ("The Plan") is prepared in accordance with Section 126 of the Local Government Act. The Plan details the expected activities over the duration of the plan from the year ended 2017/18 to the year ended 2026/2027.

Long Term Financial Plan Assumptions

ITEM	INCREMENT 2017/18 to 2020/21	INCREMENT 2021/22 to 2026/27
INCOME		
General Rates	5.0% + \$25,000 growth	5.0% + \$25,000 growth
Waste Charge	3.0% + \$10,000 growth	3.0% + \$10,000 growth
Statutory Charges	0.0%	0.0%
User Charges	5.0%	5.0%
Grants, subsidies and contributions	1.5%	1.5%
Investment Income	-3.0%	-3.0%
Other Income	Thorak Cemetery Assistance	Thorak Cemetery Assistance
EXPENSES		
Total Employee Costs	2.1 – 2.7%	2.4%
Auditor Fees	1.0%	1.0%
Elected Member Expense	2.0%	2.0%
Election Expenses	10% growth every 3 years	10% growth every 3 years
Cemetery Operations	1.5%	2.0%
Contractors	1.5%	2.0%
Energy	2.0%	2.5%
Insurance	2.0%	2.5%
Maintenance	1.5%	2.0%
Legal Expenses	0.0%	0.0%
Donations and Community Services	1.5%	2.0%
Computer / IT Costs	1.5%	2.0%
Parts, accessories and consumables	1.5%	2.0%
Professional Services	1.5%	2.0%
Sundry Expenses	1.5%	2.0%
New Initiatives	0.0%	0.0%

	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	2026/2027
Income	Budget	Budget	Plan	Plan	Plan	Plan	Plan	Plan	Plan	Plan	Plan
Rates											
<i>General Rates</i>	6,442,326	6,953,357	7,323,025	7,714,176	8,124,885	8,556,129	9,008,936	9,484,382	9,983,601	10,507,782	11,058,171
<i>Waste Charge</i>	2,642,844	2,743,838	2,836,153	2,931,238	3,029,175	3,130,050	3,233,952	3,340,970	3,451,199	3,564,735	3,681,677
<i>Waste Levy</i>	407,200	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Statutory Charges	41,500	33,500	33,500	33,500	33,500	33,500	33,500	33,500	33,500	33,500	33,500
User charges	1,192,859	1,217,955	1,278,853	1,342,795	1,409,935	1,480,432	1,554,454	1,632,176	1,713,785	1,799,474	1,889,448
Grants, subsidies and cont	3,977,099	5,294,974	4,168,498	4,171,881	4,215,976	4,260,071	4,304,167	4,348,262	4,392,357	4,436,453	4,480,548
Investment Income	505,000	725,000	703,883	683,382	663,478	644,153	625,391	607,176	589,491	572,322	555,652
Reimbursements	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other Income	-	43,000.00	70,000.00	70,000.00	70,000.00	70,000.00	70,000.00	70,000.00	70,000.00	70,000.00	70,000.00
Total Income	15,208,828	17,011,624	16,413,913	16,946,972	17,546,949	18,174,336	18,830,399	19,516,467	20,233,935	20,984,266	21,768,996
Expenses											
Total Employee Costs	5,650,888	5,973,624	6,136,102	6,294,948	6,426,178	6,582,370	6,742,467	6,906,566	7,074,768	7,247,174	7,423,891
- <i>Salaries</i>	4,880,142	5,174,390	5,320,308	5,462,892	5,580,344	5,719,853	5,862,849	6,009,420	6,159,656	6,313,647	6,471,488
- <i>Superannuation</i>	492,695	519,188	533,829	548,136	559,921	573,919	588,267	602,973	618,048	633,499	649,336
- <i>Workers Compensation Insurance</i>	121,551	101,546	103,465	105,421	107,413	110,098	112,851	115,672	118,564	121,528	124,566
- <i>Fringe Benefit Tax</i>	24,900	24,300	24,300	24,300	24,300	24,300	24,300	24,300	24,300	24,300	24,300
- <i>Other</i>	131,600	154,200	154,200	154,200	154,200	154,200	154,200	154,200	154,200	154,200	154,200
Prescribed Expenses											
- <i>Auditor Fees</i>	39,000	41,000	41,410	41,824	42,242	42,665	43,091	43,522	43,958	44,397	44,841
- <i>Bad and doubtful Debts</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
- <i>Elected Member Expenses</i>	250,691	242,787	247,643	252,596	257,648	262,800	268,056	273,418	278,886	284,464	290,153
- <i>Election Expenses</i>	-	136,710	-			150,381	-			165,419	-
Other Materials, Contracts and Expenses											
- <i>Cemetery Operations</i>	309,600	266,500	270,498	274,555	278,673	284,247	289,932	295,730	301,645	307,678	313,831

	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	2026/2027
- Contractors	4,887,650	4,447,358	4,579,068	4,647,754	4,717,471	4,811,820	4,908,057	5,006,218	5,106,342	5,208,469	5,312,638
- Energy	192,800	231,600	236,232	240,957	245,776	251,920	258,218	264,674	271,290	278,073	285,025
- Insurance	226,633	223,599	228,071	232,632	237,285	243,217	249,298	255,530	261,918	268,466	275,178
- Maintenance	486,950	522,628	530,467	538,424	546,501	557,431	568,579	579,951	591,550	603,381	615,449
- Legal Expenses	138,000	173,000	130,000	70,000	70,000	70,000	70,000	70,000	70,000	70,000	70,000
- Donations and Community Support	96,000	116,250	117,994	119,764	121,560	123,991	126,471	129,001	131,581	134,212	136,896
- Computer / IT Costs	272,500	281,290	285,509	289,792	294,139	300,022	306,022	312,143	318,385	324,753	331,248
- Parts, accessories and consumables	209,500	188,000	190,820	193,682	196,588	200,519	204,530	208,620	212,793	217,049	221,389
- Professional Services	228,700	343,070	348,216	353,439	358,741	365,916	373,234	380,699	388,313	396,079	404,000
- Sundry	367,330	374,357	379,972	385,672	391,457	399,286	407,272	415,417	423,726	432,200	440,844
- New Initiatives	503,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000
Depreciation	16,787,411	16,787,411	16,787,411	16,787,411	16,787,411	16,787,411	16,787,411	16,787,411	16,787,411	16,787,411	16,787,411
Total Expenses	30,646,653	30,549,184	30,709,414	30,923,451	31,171,669	31,633,996	31,802,638	32,128,899	32,462,565	32,969,225	33,152,796
Underlying Operating Result	- 15,437,825	- 13,537,560	- 14,295,501	- 13,976,479	- 13,624,720	- 13,459,661	- 12,972,239	- 12,612,432	- 12,228,630	- 11,984,959	- 11,383,799
One off Capital grants	3,858,656	-	600,000	600,000	600,000	600,000	600,000	600,000	600,000	600,000	600,000
Operating Deficit	- 11,579,169	- 13,537,560	- 13,695,501	- 13,376,479	- 13,024,720	- 12,859,661	- 12,372,239	- 12,012,432	- 11,628,630	- 11,384,959	- 10,783,799
Operating Surplus / (Deficit) less Depreciation	5,208,242	3,249,851	3,091,910	3,410,932	3,762,691	3,927,750	4,415,172	4,774,979	5,158,781	5,402,452	6,003,612
Capital Spend											
Operating	1,349,586	3,249,851	2,491,910	2,810,932	3,162,691	3,327,750	3,815,172	4,174,979	4,558,781	4,802,452	5,403,612
Capital Grants	3,858,656	-	600,000	600,000	600,000	600,000	600,000	600,000	600,000	600,000	600,000
Reserve	3,954,386	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000					
Funds available for renewal and replacement of assets	9,162,628	4,249,851	4,091,910	4,410,932	4,762,691	4,927,750	4,415,172	4,774,979	5,158,781	5,402,452	6,003,612
Financial Reserve Prediction	8,997,281.00	8,075,901.00	7,075,901.00	6,075,901.00	5,075,901.00	4,075,901.00	4,075,901.00	4,075,901.00	4,075,901.00	4,075,901.00	4,075,901.00