
MEDIA RELEASE

Northern Midlands individual property rates will vary from last year within primary land use categories due to revaluation

Northern Midlands Council adopted a \$21 million budget for 2019/2020 at Monday night's Council meeting which included a proactive \$12 million capital works program.

Mayor Mary Knowles OAM advised that Council agreed to increase the General Rate by 2.1% (which is in direct line with the Hobart consumer price indexation for the March quarter) plus a further 1% to allow for provisions in Council's Long-Term Financial Plan bringing the total general rate increase to 3.1%. This level maintains existing service levels, funds a small number of new initiatives, and continues to allocate required funds to renew municipal infrastructure, and also aims to achieve a small underlying operating surplus in 2019/2020.

All properties within the Northern Midlands area were revalued last year and the new valuations provided by the Valuer General will be used to calculate rates for the first time in July 2019. Council will continue to use Differential Rating for different land use categories to raise the same amount of revenue as the previous year within each land use category (plus indexation and development). However, ratepayers are advised that within the primary land use categories, the property values have reset the rate relativities between individual properties, and variances will occur from last year in accordance with movements above and below the average movement for each category.

Generally, for residential areas higher valued properties increased in value greater than the average, rural properties with irrigation increasing in value more than the average, and some rural residential property values increased significantly.

This year Northern Midlands Council's operating surplus is estimated at \$2.1m, but only an underlying surplus of \$187,000 - after extending the Youth activities program, introducing a controlled weed spraying program for urban nature strips, boosting building facility officer resources, completing a new Land Use Strategy for the municipal area, and allowing for reduction in bank interest due to rate reductions and reduced cash holdings from recent large capital works programs.

This year again by far the biggest emphasis is delivering on major capital works budget items including:

- Evandale Recreation Ground – new changeroom amenities (\$0.9m);
- Cressy Recreation Ground – new changeroom amenities (\$0.7m);
- Extension/upgrades to Longford offices/depot (\$0.7m);
- Campbell Town Recreation Ground redevelopment – completion of tennis centre, cenotaph upgrade, carpark and traffic management (\$0.5m);



- Longford Recreation Ground redevelopment (stage 1) – completion of upgrade including carpark and traffic management (\$0.2m);
- Longford Sports Centre – completion of stage 1 for new gym (\$0.3m);
- reconstruction of sections of Saundridge Road at Cressy and Valleyfield Road at Campbell Town (\$0.8m);
- reconstruction of urban streets (\$0.9m);
- replacement of timber bridges on Storys Creek Road, Gipps Creek Road and Old Coachman's Road; (\$0.5m);
- Ross Town Village Green development stage 1 (\$0.1m);
- Stormwater improvement projects (\$0.5m);
- footpath program (\$0.2m);
- upgrade of major plant and equipment (\$0.6m).

In 2019/20 Council looks forward to confirmation and receipt of several federal election grants promises for improvements to community/ recreational assets (not yet included in the budget), and the extension of the Australian Roads to Recovery Grant Program to assist with road and bridge replacement programs (\$0.9m) included in budget.

From 1 July 2019, the Tasmanian Government increased the Fire Levy by 5.4% with the minimum levy payable to increase by \$1 to \$41. Council is required to collect this revenue on behalf of the State Government, which is then passed onto the Tasmanian Fire Service.

As a result of the revaluation and the above budget adjustments, the property rate bill for an average house may vary +/- 15 percent.

A \$488 minimum general rate will apply to commercial, residential and rural residential properties, and a \$299 minimum to all other land use categories.

Council has developed its budget process with review and consultation to balance the demand for services and infrastructure with prevailing economic conditions which are expected to remain with relatively low levels of new development, as well as the ability of ratepayers to pay.

A three (3) instalment payment system will again be offered in 2019/2020. Ratepayers may also take advantage of a 1 percent discount allowed on Rates & Charges if paid within 30 days of issue which is planned for late July.



**NORTHERN
MIDLANDS
COUNCIL**

Council will provide Management Committee Grants amounting to \$53,992, Special Community Grants to \$61,460, Special Event Grants \$62,050 and other donations allocated to community groups/organisations of \$41,540 in 2019/2020.

Ratepayers are encouraged to obtain a copy of Council's 2019/2020 Annual Plan which outlines Special Projects, Capital Works and other tasks/targets to be achieved over the next 12 months. This is available on Council's website at www.northernmidlands.tas.gov.au

For further information, please contact Mayor Mary Knowles OAM on 0408 766 625.