



SOUTHERN DOWNS REGIONAL COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING OF COUNCIL

Dear Councillors

Your attendance is hereby requested at the Special Meeting of Council to be held in the Council Chambers, Southern Downs Regional Council, 64 Fitzroy Street, Warwick on **Monday, 29 April 2019 at 9:00AM**.

Notice is hereby given of the business to be transacted at the meeting.

David Keenan

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

26 April 2019

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1. **ATTENDANCE**
2. **APOLOGIES**
3. **DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

4. CORPORATE SERVICES REPORTS

4.1 Draft 2019/2020 Budget - Submission Presentations

Document Information

 Southern Downs REGIONAL COUNCIL	Report To: Special Council Meeting	
	Reporting Officer:	Meeting Date: 29 April 2019
	Director Corporate Services	ECM Function No/s:

Recommendation

THAT Council consider the submissions presented to the Special Council Meeting held on 29 April 2019 as part of Draft Budget 2019/2020 deliberations.

Report

On the 13th March 2019 the Draft Budget for 2019/2020 was presented to Council. At this meeting Council received the Draft Budget and resolved to place the Draft Budget for 2019/2020 on public exhibition for 28 days to receive feedback from the community.

As part of the Budget consultation process, the community was given the opportunity to provide feedback and make budget submissions on the Draft Budget through various forms; these included submitting a form on Council's Website, directly to the Community Contact Centre, in writing and/or by making a presentation to Council.

The following individuals/groups have taken up the opportunity to present their submission to Council at the Special Council Meeting on 29 April 2019 being held in Warwick:

9.00am Rose Coburn

Budget Implications

As detailed above

Policy Consideration

Council's Long Term Financial Forecast
Queensland Treasury Corporation Credit Review

Community Engagement

The following Draft Budget Information Sessions were held:-

2 April 2019 - Warwick
4 April 2019 - Wallangarra
9 April 2019 – Killarney
10 April 2019 - Leyburn
11 April 2019 - Maryvale
16 April 2019 - Stanthorpe

18 April 2019 - Allora

Online Submissions were sought via Council's Website and Community Contact Centres.

Legislation/Local Law

Local Government Act 2009

Local Government Regulation 2012

Australian Accounting Standards

Options

1. Consider the submissions presented to the Special Council Meeting held on 29 April 2019 as part of Draft Budget 2019/2020 deliberations.
2. Do not consider the submissions presented to the Special Council Meeting held on 29 April 2019 as part of the Draft Budget 2019/2020 deliberations.

Attachments

1. Submission received from Rose Coburn [↓](#)
2. Extract from Draft Budget - 1.1.1 Water Charges [↓](#)

2019/20 Budget Submissions

Topic: Change to wording of Draft Budget Statement

Submitted By: Rose Coburn

Date Submitted: 25 April 2019

Submission from Rose Coburn, Finneys Lane Stanthorpe

I am the owner of Lot 2 SP238032 located off Finneys Lane Stanthorpe. I am a resident and ratepayer. I wish to make two comments about the 2019-20 Draft Budget.

1. Need for easy to understand guidance on the changes.

I believe that a short factsheet on the policy changes in the draft budget from the previous year will enable people to find the relevant information more easily. If people are not able to read the whole 70 odd pages and pick out the changes themselves they will not know if they are affected or whether they should make a submission.

I am not referring to a list of changes to individual charges, e.g. sewage charges, but a guide to any policy changes in the document. A short explanation of the reasoning for the proposed change would also be most valuable. Not everyone can attend a public meeting and get that feedback and in some cases knowing which changes have been made, and the reasoning behind that change would influence whether someone would need to attend a meeting.

A case in point is the change to the way base water access charges are proposed to apply under the 2019-20 Draft Budget. Unless you are familiar with complex documents and are looking for a change it is unlikely the average reader would have found that change or understood it. The intent of the change is not explained anywhere in the document either.

I hope Council can consider this suggestion as a way of providing more targeted information to ratepayers.

2. Changes to the way the base access charge (water) is levied.

Under the 2018-19 Revenue Statement (page 15) a base access charge could be charged *to a property within the water area that is not connected to the Council's reticulated water supply system if the parcel is located within 100 metres of a water main and where Council is currently able to provide a reticulated water service.*

The proposed new policy is detailed under section 5.7 on page 43 of the document and states;

A base access charge is also applied to each parcel that is not connected to the Council's reticulated water supply system if the parcel is located within 100 metres of a water main and where Council is currently able to provide a reticulated water service.

The base access charge does not apply to properties that meet the above criteria and:

- ❑ in the Planning scheme as "Rural Residential"; or*
- ❑ have a Primary Production Valuation concession issued by Department of Natural Resources Mines & Energy.*

The change in policy is that reference to "within the water area" has been deleted and the two cases where the charge does not apply have been added. I understand that the intent is to charge the water access charge only in areas that are traditionally considered as urban, (i.e. the Industrial, Principal Centre, Mixed Use, Medium Density Residential and Low

Density Residential Zones under the Planning Scheme). These are areas where Council water supply infrastructure has been provided by Council and potable water supply is an expected service. Therefore it could be reasonable to charge properties which have not yet connected an access charge.

The intent of the first dot point above is that properties within the Rural Residential Zone are exempt. That exemption is reasonable as potable water supply is not traditionally an expected service in those areas and Council does not normally fund and install a water supply in those areas as is usually the case in the Medium and Light Density Residential Zones. However the same reasoning also applies to properties in the Rural Zone. It is also relevant that the Stanthorpe water area does **not** include **any** property which is zoned Rural.

I would like to propose that the first dot point be changed to also exempt properties in the Rural Zone. Council may have been unaware of the consequences on properties in the Rural Zone of changing the policy and may have thought that only properties in the Rural Residential Zone would be affected. As this is not the case I would like the Draft Budget Statement to be changed to read:

The base access charge does not apply to properties that meet the above criteria and:

- ❑ *in the Planning scheme are zoned as "Rural Residential" or "Rural"; or*
- ❑ *have a Primary Production Valuation concession issued by Department of Natural Resources Mines & Energy.*

I would like to receive feedback on my submission and am happy to present my issues to Council.

Rose Coburn 25 April 2019

1.1.1 Water Charges

Water charges are determined, collected and used for the purpose of covering the cost of planning, water demand management and constructing water infrastructure (including interest and redemption charges incurred by Council) and the cost of operating, maintaining and managing the water supply system.

In accordance with section 94 of the *Local Government Act 2009* and section 101(1)(b) of the *Local Government Regulation 2012*, the utility charges for water services will be charged partly according to the water used, using a 2-part charge. The charges apply to all ratepayers who have access or may have access to Council's water supply infrastructure and, with limited exceptions, comprise –

- i) An annual access charge;
- ii) A charge for each kilolitre consumed which decreases for higher levels of consumption.

Water Access

Council will levy an access charge on every individual parcel in its land record connected to a water network based on the number and size of the water connection/s (whether metered or not).

A base access charge is also applied to each parcel that is not connected to the Council's reticulated water supply system if the parcel is located within 100 metres of a water main and where Council is currently able to provide a reticulated water service.

The base access charge does not apply to properties that meet the above criteria and:

- In the Planning Scheme as 'Rural Residential'; or (THIS IS TO BE REMOVED)
- have a Primary Production Valuation concession issued by Department of Natural Resources Mines & Energy.

Council believes that it is logical and equitable for all ratepayers who have access or may have access to Council's water supply infrastructure to contribute to the fixed costs of the water supply operation by way of the access charge.

Notwithstanding the above:

- a) Where a single residential building; a single commercial building or any sporting infrastructure is situated across two or more adjoining parcels, Council will treat those parcels as if they were amalgamated into a single parcel, and will levy accordingly a single-parcel water charge.
- b) Council may elect to not levy water charges against land that is effectively incapable of further development (if unconnected).
- c) The ratepayer of a parcel bears the onus of demonstrating to Council it is entitled to the benefit of a qualification or exception in any of paragraphs (a) to (b). Such onus will be taken to be limited to that of reasonable effort having regard to the value of the exemption and Councils obligation to other ratepayers.

Water Consumption

Water consumption is charged for each kilolitre used on land to which water is supplied and measured by meter, per kilolitre or part thereof for that quantity of water used or estimated to be used.

The billing period for water consumption charges shall be October to November and April to May each year and shall be levied biannually.

To avoid doubt, once water has passed through the water meter it is the property owner's responsibility.

Supply Area

Council has split the utility charges for water service into two supply areas:

Supply Area 1 will be properties within 100 meters of the water reticulation network of: Allora, Warwick, Yangan, Killarney, Stanthorpe and Wallangarra.

Supply Area 2 will be properties within 100 meters of the water reticulation network of: Dalveen, Leyburn and Pratten.