

MEDIA RELEASE

Date: 22 June 2017
Embargo: None
Pages: 2
Publication: All Media

2017/18 Council Budget / Rates

The Town of Gawler is set to adopt its 2017/18 Budget and Rates at its 27 June 2017 meeting, which are underpinned by a \$681,000 operating surplus (after adjusting for the distortion of 50% of Council's 2017/18 Federal Government grant funding being received early in June 2017) and a 3% (\$44) General rate increase (excluding the State Government NRM levy) for the average residential ratepayer. "The average residential ratepayer will actually only incur a 2.2% increase (excluding the NRM levy), due to a \$7 reduction in the Waste Management Charge", Mayor Karen Redman said.

"Gawler is one of the fastest growing Council's in the State, which presents both unique challenges and opportunities for the Council", Mayor Redman noted. "In terms of opportunities, 2017 will see construction commence on the keenly anticipated Gawler East Link Road which, on completion in 2019, will alleviate considerable traffic congestion currently experienced in the town centre. From a challenge perspective, Council is continually working to ensure the rapid development and population growth being experienced is well planned, managed, and financially sustainable", Mayor Redman said.

The estimated surplus of \$681,000 will be the fifth consecutive year that Council has achieved an operating surplus, in keeping with its financial sustainability target. "The Council has worked diligently in maintaining a financially sustainable position, despite the challenges faced of being a growth Council", Mayor Redman said.

The proposed budget incorporates the following major capital initiatives:

- Ongoing works to refurbish and revitalise the Heritage-Listed Town Hall and Institute buildings
- Stage 6 upgrade of Murray Street (southern end)
- Installation of underground drainage through lower Willaston
- Resealing of 5.2kms of sealed roads
- 3.1kms of new footpaths
- Design and construction of a Dog Park
- Continuing the rehabilitation of the Gawler Aquatic Centre (Stage 3 of 5)
- Structural remediation of the Gawler Mill Bridge

“Council is committing to a major capital works investment program of \$18m in 2017/18, which will be funded from an appropriate mix of General Rates, Government grants, loan borrowings and asset sales”, Mayor Redman said. “In recent years, Council has significantly reduced its debt such that it now has the financial capacity to deliver on important capital initiatives for the community – our debt is reflective of a \$90,000 mortgage on a \$300,000 house”, Mayor Redman further said.

Following extensive analysis and public consultation with affected landowners and property developers, the Council is proposing to introduce new Separate Rates, as a financial security mechanism to secure developer contributions towards \$80m of various identified infrastructure (including the \$55m Gawler East Link Road which will be predominantly funded by the State Government) earmarked to be provided within the new development areas of Gawler East over the next 15 years. “Council has worked tirelessly across the last two years with the State Government and Springwood Communities to secure optimum development and funding outcomes for the growing population in Gawler East”, Mayor Redman noted. “The proposed Separate Rates are designed to simply act as a financial security mechanism, and will only be triggered upon development of land within the affected development areas of Gawler East”, Mayor Redman also said.

Connect with Gawler:

Facebook: www.facebook.com/townofgawler

Twitter: www.twitter.com/townofgawler

Instagram: @townofgawler

You Tube: www.youtube.com/townofgawler

ENDS

The media may also wish to make contact with
Mayor Karen Redman on 0421 839 359 or
Chief Executive Officer, Henry Inat on 8522 9221