CEO's Message

Wattle Range Council’s Summary Business Plan for 2016/2017 provides a brief overview of the Annual Business Plan highlighting the services, programs and strategic projects Council plans to deliver to the community. Council’s challenge in framing its Annual Business Plan is to achieve the outcomes within the Plan without presenting an unrealistic rate burden on the community.

In funding the 2016/2017 Annual Business Plan, Council has limited the increase in total General Rate Revenue to 2.5%. This increase is a deviation from Council’s long term forecast increase of 4% due to the following considerations:

- Growth in new rate assessments;
- Lower than expected Local Government Price Index (LGPI) / CPI for the 2015/2016 financial year;
- Increase in the South East Natural Resource Management Levy by 213%;
- Increased spending on the renewal of Council’s existing assets;

Given this challenge, Council continues to maintain its financial sustainability and attainment of Key Performance Indicators in line with Long Term Financial objectives. Key results expected for 2016/2017 include:

- An operating surplus of $471,000 and operating surplus ratio of 2%;
- Debt levels are expected to decline represented by Net Financial Liabilities Ratio declining to 22% with no requirement for additional loan funds; and
- Existing assets are being renewed in a timelier manner with an increase in Asset Sustainability Ratio to 89%.

In developing the 2016/2017 Annual Business Plan, Council has focussed on reviewing the organisation and in particular, the services provided and the future infrastructure requirements of the Wattle Range Council area. For the forthcoming year economic development will continue to be a strong focus as will the finalisation of Council’s 2016 – 2020 Community Strategic Plan.

A key component of the 2016/2017 Annual Business Plan is the $5.34 Million Capital Expenditure budget. Council continues to focus on increasing asset renewals, in 2016/2017 $4.08 Million has been allocated for the renewal of a wide range of existing facilities and infrastructure. Council has also committed $1.26 Million for the upgrade and acquisition of new assets. To assist Council in funding this Capital Expenditure budget, in 2015 the Federal Government announced an increase in funding of Roads to Recovery for 2016/2017. The additional funds have been directed towards addressing the backlog of road infrastructure asset renewals.

On a personal note I wish to thank the Community for welcoming my family and I into the District and I am looking forward to being part of the Community and driving efficiency and the effectiveness of Council over the course of my tenure.

Ben Gower
Chief Executive Officer
Operating Income

Council has budgeted to receive Operating Income of $23.36 Million in 2016/2017, this income is derived from a number of different sources including Rates and Charges, Statutory and User Charges, Grants, Subsidies and Contributions, Investment Income and Other Income.

For 2016/2017 General rates are set to increase by 2.5% and valuations have decreased by 1.6% with decrease in township and rural valuations being the largest drivers of this. Service charges are set to increase by 3% for waste collection as per the collection contract and Community Wastewater Management Schemes (CWMS) to increase by 1.2% for all schemes.

South East Natural Resources Management (NRM) Levy

The South East Natural Resource Management Board (SENRM) have advised that in 2016 / 2017 a substantial increase in the South East NRM Levy will be imposed on Ratepayers in the South East. Council’s share of this increase equates to $653,000 to ratepayers representing a 213% increase in the Levy from 2015/2016. Council has fought strenuously against the increase in this “State Government Tax” and will continue to advocate for the SENRM Levy to be reduced and administration of the Levy to be passed back to the State Government.

Under the direction of the SENRM Board, Council has applied the NRM Levy on the basis of land use categories. The SENRM Board have advised that the methodology is on the basis of “beneficiary pays”.

Operating Expenditure

Every $100 of your rates is spent on:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>2017 Total</th>
<th>2017 Percentage</th>
<th>6 Year Trend 2011-2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Council Capital Valuation</td>
<td>$3,123,171,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Township</td>
<td>-4.87%</td>
<td>0.5805</td>
<td>▲ ▲ ▲ ▲ ▲ ▲</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Living</td>
<td>1.98%</td>
<td>0.5225</td>
<td>▲ ▲ ▲ ▲ ▲ ▲</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>-0.34%</td>
<td>0.4354</td>
<td>▲ ▲ ▲ ▲ ▲ ▲</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum Rate (applicable to 21.8% of Rateable Properties)</td>
<td>$633</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pensioners & Self Funded Retirees are eligible for $50 Remission of General Rates

Waste Collection Service Charge 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Charge</th>
<th>Full Charge</th>
<th>Pensioner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 Bins</td>
<td>$316</td>
<td>$126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Bins</td>
<td>$244</td>
<td>$98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CWMS Service Charge 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Charge</th>
<th>Occupied</th>
<th>Vacant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Penola</td>
<td>$580</td>
<td>$434</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southend</td>
<td>$580</td>
<td>$434</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kalangadoo</td>
<td>$580</td>
<td>$434</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beachport</td>
<td>$661</td>
<td>$496</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Council’s Operating Expenditure Budget for 2016/2017 is $22.88M. Included within the Operational Budget is no change in service delivery. Key operational projects for 2016/2017 include:

- Coles Kilanaoola Road – $200,000 contribution to Naracoorte-Lucindale Council to complete the next stage upgrade of the road.
- McLaughlin Park – $50,000 contribution towards the redevelopment project.
- Business Units – $22,000 towards the review of operations and future sustainability of the Saleyards, Child Care and Caravan Park.
- Mobile Phone Towers – $20,000 co-contribution towards the installation of mobile phone towers at Kalangadoo and Furner.
- Planning Reviews – $32,000 to complete the Section 30 Strategic Development review and Heritage Development Plan Amendment.
- IT Software – $61,000 purchase of software and Licensing for SharePoint and Financial Reporting software.
- Kalangadoo War Memorial Oval Sports Club – $10,000 co-contribution towards plans for public toilet facilities at the grounds.
- Glencoe Hall – $10,000 for treatment / removal of salt damp.
Development Services Update

The Development Services team continue to process significant numbers of planning and building applications with new larger scale Industry proposals increasing in numbers.

The Department welcomes two new staff, including a Cadet Planning Officer and a 3 day a week Clerical Officer. These positions will enhance Council’s capability to continue to process applications in a timely, efficient manner enhance our strategic planning capability.

Work is progressing on a number of initiatives including a Development Plan Amendment (now at the Statement of Intent Stage) that will address a number of planning issues including the re-zoning of some lands.

During the second half of 2016 our focus will resume on progressing the previously advertised “Beachport and Surrounds Heritage Advisory Working Group”. This group will work with Council Heritage advisor and the Heritage Survey contractor to establish a draft Local Heritage Register of the Beachport township and surrounding area.

Council’s Building Fire Safety Committee will be conducting inspections of various properties throughout the Council area, with a view to establishing fire safety improvement programs where applicable.

Economic Development Update

Council’s Economic Development team are continuing work to encourage industry and business to the Council area to create new jobs. The focus is on value adding to local produce rather than the export from the area of unprocessed goods.

Small business sustainability continues to be a focus and any people with new or existing business enquiries should contact Council’s Economic Development Manager, Paula Bennet.

Council staff continue to work closely with a range of new industry initiatives to ensure that developments occur within the Council area, whilst ensuring compliance with building and planning regulations.

The recently announced Blue Lake Dairies project near Millicent has now received development approval for stage one of their dried milk processing plant and have commenced construction of the processing and packaging line at the former Potato processing factory buildings.

Tourism Update

Tourism remains an important economic contributor to the Wattle Range Council. In the last 12 months, the Limestone Coast region has seen a total visitation of 569,000 overnight visitors, 46,000 of whom were international. The growth in international visitors to the region continues with an increase of 17.9% from 2012.

The Wattle Range Council sits strongly within the Southern Ocean Tourist Drive, which connects to the Great Ocean Road and is an important tourism route from Adelaide to Melbourne. The diversity of experiences and products across our Council area means that we cater to a vast range of travellers, from the discerning winery seeker, to nature based tourism, right through to those seeking laid back beach and coastal experiences.

Tourism will continue to be an important platform to the Wattle Range Council’s economic base and will remain a focus of the region.

2015/16 Capital Works Highlights

**Millicent Library and Council Office Solar Panels**

As part of the capital works budget Council allocated funds to install solar panels at the Millicent Library. The scope was to install a 25kw system on the north facing roof of the library building. A very competitive tender was provided by E-Smart Electrical, a local electrical contractor. The tenderer indicated that Council would be able to install a 25kw system for the library and a further 10kw system on the Council office for approximately $35,000. Both buildings have high annual power costs with an anticipated payback period for the solar panels of within 4 years from installation.

Council supported the variation to the contract and engaged E-Smart to undertake the installation of solar panels on both buildings.

**Coles Killanoola Road Upgrade**

Council completed sealing works on a 2.8km section of Coles Killanoola Road, Maaope this year as part of the roads works program. The road received a significant grant of $377,000 from the Commonwealth Government following a successful application to the Heavy Vehicle Safety Productivity Program. The road has been determined as a significant regional freight road with a large volume of logging trucks using this road to cart blue gum hardwood to the port of Portland. The road is a boundary road with Naracoorte Lucindale Council therefore a contribution of $188,500 was provided to the project by each council.

**Beachport Boat Ramp Car Park Construction**

Council appointed Teagle Contracting to complete works associated with the upgrade of the Beachport car park construction. The project is the final stage of works associated with the upgrade of the boat ramp and will see the sealing of the car park area.

The project received a significant grant from State Government through the South Australian Boating Facility Advisory Committee of up to $100,000 as a dollar for dollar grant. Due to the grant announcement not occurring until March the project commencement was delayed, therefore, the project is still being completed with an anticipated completion date of the end of August 2016.

**Millicent Memorial Swimming Lake Works**

Council has completed a number of important improvements to the Millicent Memorial Swimming Lake over the 2015/16 financial year.

Prior to the start of the season Council completed a major refurbishment of the change rooms and toilet facilities which included the installation of hot water for the showers.

Following this Council has also completed the refurbishment of the shade structure to the shallow swimming area, a new path and shade structure over the existing playground.

Further works are still to be completed with the installation of new fencing around the shallow swimming area to be completed prior to the end of August 2016.

**Millicent RSL Car Park & Demolition of CAFHS Building**

Council has completed a number of projects in Millicent this financial year. Two of the more significant projects involved the sealing of the car park to the Millicent Returned and Services League building and the demolition of the Children and Families Health Services (CAFHS) Building both on North Terrace.

These projects have made a significant impact on the presentation of this section of the park, and with the completion of the Jubilee Park BBQ facilities will see a major improvement in assets in this park for the community.
Rate Concessions - State Government Concessions

From 1 July 2015, the State Government elected to replace the concession on Council rates with the "cost of living payment" provided directly to those entitled. This payment may be used for any purpose, including offsetting Council rates. To check eligibility contact the Department for Communities and Social Inclusion Concessions Hotline 1800 307 758 or at [www.sa.gov.au](http://www.sa.gov.au/).

The separate concession entitlements for Council Community Waste Water Schemes (CWMS) remains unchanged. Should you be entitled to the State Government funded concession on CWMS rates this will be reflected on the rate notice.

In addition to the above concessions Council will continue to offer an additional remission of $50 from the General Rates for eligible pensioners and self-funded retirees, to assist in providing relief from increased costs of living.

Renew Your Dog Registration Now

Responsible dog owners are reminded that the last day to pay dog registration renewals is Wednesday, 31 August 2016. All dogs aged three months or older are required to be registered.

Changes to the Dog & Cat Management Act 1995 require Councils to maintain specific details relating to dog owners. This includes up to date postal/residential addresses, contact details, owners date of birth details together with a Proof of Identity document (e.g. drivers licence, proof of age card, or passport).

Owners are be asked to complete any missing details on their registration renewal forms and return to Council.

Remember, registration is your best chance at being reunited with your pet if they get lost.

Council Grant Applications Invited

Round one applications for Council’s annual Financial Assistance Grants programs are now open.

Funding is available to Community and Sport & Recreation groups for projects and events in the Wattle Range Council area.

Application forms and guidelines can be obtained by visiting [www.wattlerange.sa.gov.au](http://www.wattlerange.sa.gov.au) or any of Council’s offices.

Applications close on Friday 19 August 2016.

Round 2 applications will be invited in December and will close in January 2017.

Single Farming Enterprise Applications

All rural ratepayers who own and operate two or more portions of rateable land as one entity are reminded that they can apply to Council to be treated as a Single Farm Enterprise.

Application forms are available from each of Council’s offices or the website. When granted, the Single Farm Enterprise status will enable Council to apply one fixed NRM Levy to the Enterprise. For further details contact Council’s Rates department on 08 8733 0900.

Methods of Payment to Council

Ratepayers can make arrangements to pay their rates via Direct Debit on a weekly, fortnightly, monthly, quarterly or annual basis. Direct Debit Request forms are available from each of Council’s Offices or on the website [www.wattlerange.sa.gov.au](http://www.wattlerange.sa.gov.au).

BPAY is another easy and efficient method of payment when paying your rates and/or dog registrations. Those choosing to use this method are reminded that each property or dog has its own unique BPAY reference number (in the case of dogs, this changes annually). These numbers need to be used in separate transactions in order to ensure your accounts can be identified and settled correctly.

Dogs registered via BPAY will receive their replacement tags via post in the week following their payment.

Upcoming Events

**AUGUST**

7 - 31 SALA Exhibition: From A to C and Arts Trail from Contemporary to Abstraction – Art Gallery and Visitor Information Centre, Millicent

12 2016 Tour of the Great South Coast Road Cycling Classic, Penola

**SEPTEMBER**

9 Sep - 20 Oct Exhibition: Time and Tide artworks by Peter Dunn, Millicent Gallery

23 - 25 Teagle Excavations ARB Pines Enduro, Millicent

**OCTOBER**

1 - 31 Coonawarra Cabernet Celebrations

2 Beachport Market Day

28-29 Penola PA & H Show

28 Oct - 10 Dec Wattle Range Art Show, Millicent Gallery

Census of Population & Housing

August 9 is Census night.

Our moment to pause and make a difference

The Census of Population and Housing (Census) is Australia’s largest statistical collection undertaken by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). The Census has provided a snapshot of Australia, showing how our nation has changed over time, allowing us to plan for the future. The next Census is on August 9.

The 2016 Census will be Australia’s first predominantly digital Census. From August 1, households will receive a letter with a unique Census Login. Every household must use it to complete the Census online, or follow the directions to order a paper form. In some locations, households will receive a paper form upfront, with the option to complete it online.

Council App available to residents & visitors

Have you downloaded Council’s App yet? Council news, events, services and incident reporting all available on your smartphone or device. You can even receive reminders to put the bin out. Download it today by visiting Council’s website at [www.wattlerange.sa.gov.au](http://www.wattlerange.sa.gov.au) and clicking on the ‘My Local Services’ icon.

Did you know Council’s website has been revamped?

Check it out today at [www.wattlerange.sa.gov.au](http://www.wattlerange.sa.gov.au)