

26 April 2023

Have your say on Council's Draft Operational Plan for 2023/24

Council has placed its Draft Operation Plan for 2023/24 on public exhibition and is seeking submissions from the community.

"This is a great opportunity for residents to provide feedback to Council on our plans for the 2023/24 financial year and beyond," said Warrumbungle Shire Council Mayor, Councillor Ambrose Doolan. "All residents are encouraged to view this draft document during the public exhibition period and provide feedback to Council."

The Draft Operational Plan provides the community with an overview of the projects, programs and activities that council will deliver in the next financial year ending 30 June 2024.

The Draft Operational Plan includes the budget for the financial year ending 30 June 2024, along with proposed fees and charges. The draft plan has a strong focus on maintaining and renewing Council's large infrastructure base.

Included in the 2023/24 Draft Operational Plan Budget are:

- Road and bridges flood restoration – (\$10.5M)
- Water (\$4.1M), Sewer (\$4.3M) and Waste Services (\$50K) capital related improvements.
- Plant and Equipment Improvement and Renewal – (\$2.7M).
- Urban Services including Town Streets related works (Includes trees/gardens, footpaths, kerb and gutter, drainage, pavements), Ovals, Parks, Swimming Pools and other amenities improvements – (\$3.4M).
- Roads Improvement and Renewal – Stage 1 - State Forrest Road Coolah - (\$1.94M)
- Improvements to Council Offices and Other Property, Public Halls and Cemetery Equipment Improvements – (\$1.5M)
- Tourism and Development related improvements – (\$750K).

To fund these works, as well as ongoing services and activities, Council has proposed a number of increases in fees and charges in 2023/24.

The calculated increases have been proposed in order to continue to provide services to all the communities across the local government area, whilst also maintaining and renewing Council's large infrastructure base.

In particular, 'best practice' management of water supply and sewerage guidelines requires local utility providers to achieve ongoing full cost recovery for their water supply and sewerage services and that there be no cross subsidisation across different funds. Full cost recovery involves raising sufficient revenue to cover maintenance and administration costs as well as the cost of the depreciation of water supply and sewerage infrastructure.

In order to achieve this in 2023/24, Council has proposed that water annual access charges increase by 3.70% and usage charges to increase by 5%. Council has also proposed that sewerage annual charges will increase by 3.70% and waste charges by 3.70%.

"Council acknowledges that these are significant increases but are proposed as a result of required maintenance, and costs increasing more than revenue given the current economic conditions," Cr Doolan explained.

The plans on display include Council's Revenue Policy, including fees and charges for 2022/23. To view the draft plans, visit:

- www.warrumbungle.nsw.gov.au
- Warrumbungle Shire Council, 14-22 John Street, Coonabarabran
- Warrumbungle Shire Council, 59 Binnia Street, Coolah

Written submissions on Council's Draft Operational Plan for 2023/24 are invited and can be submitted online under the 'Have Your Say' tab on Council's website, or in hard copy addressed to the General Manager, PO Box 191, Coonabarabran, NSW, 2357.

Submissions will be received until 4:30pm Friday, 19 May 2023. Submissions should include a reference to the draft Operational Plan for 2023/24 as the subject of your submission. Submissions received will be summarised and reported to Council.

For more information contact Council's Director Corporate and Community Services on (02) 6849 2000.

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