



Budget shows restraint, builds for future

28 June 2022

Bundaberg Regional Council has released a budget “for the times” balancing fiscal restraint with investments that will cater to the region’s future.

This measured approach has resulted in a general rates increase of 3.9 per cent, significantly lower than Queensland CPI which has soared to six per cent.

Finance portfolio spokesperson Cr Steve Cooper said Council’s focus was maintaining the region’s enviable lifestyle and liveability.

“We know the impact the rising cost of living is having on our community which is why we have delivered what is a budget for the times,” Cr Cooper said.

“Council’s facilities and projects are also facing these rising costs which we’ve minimised through a range of savings and cost-cutting measures including solar installations.

“Around 10,400 pensioners – or 23 per cent of our rateable properties – will continue to receive \$165 rates concessions which is budgeted at \$1.7 million.”

He said the increase in general rates was relative to the on average 12 per cent jump in State Government land valuations earlier this year.

“The valuations were quite volatile throughout most categories however despite significant fluctuations we were able to keep most general rates increases below four per cent,” he said.

“One exception to this volatility was the agricultural sector which remained reasonably constant following significant increases in the previous State Government valuation.

“This saw a general rates increase for agricultural properties of 2.5 per cent.”

Cr Cooper said Council had taken a prudent approach to its capital investment program focusing on priority infrastructure upgrades including the Bundaberg Regional Aquatic Centre and Anzac Park redevelopment.

#BRCbudget22



“Our capital program for the next 12 months is targeted towards addressing infrastructure upgrades that take advantage of grant funding.

“Through borrowings we’ve ensured that today’s ratepayers are not shouldering the financial burden of generational projects like the Bundaberg Regional Aquatic Centre and Anzac Park redevelopment.

“We’ve been able to access loans and borrow from our own cash surplus to share this cost into the future.

“Those costs will be spread over the next 20 years and the benefits of these two major projects will be felt for the next 50 plus years.”

Cr Cooper said, for the average urban residential ratepayer this year’s increases would equate to about \$1.58 per week. This excludes any individual water consumption charges.

The Community Wellbeing and Environment charge will remain constant this year and support a range of projects including Council contributions to emergency services, disaster management, initiatives which promote healthy and active lifestyles, accessibility and shade improvements at local parks and projects which will protect and enhance natural areas.