

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Positive 2019-20 Council budget

June 27, 2019
COOKTOWN

Renewing existing infrastructure and maintaining services are the priority for a “responsible and realistic” 2019-20 Cook Shire Council budget, adopted at yesterday’s special meeting.

Cook Shire Mayor Peter Scott said Council’s budget was a positive and realistic response to the financial challenges presented by a lack of own-source revenue. “Our general rates of \$3.7 million contribute just 11.7 per cent of Council’s operating expenditure,” Cr Scott said. “All other expenditure, including staff costs, operational programs and capital works, is grant funded. I would like to highlight that this funding is not guaranteed, and we are reliant on our highly skilled Council staff to secure this financial support that ensures the financial stability of our Shire.”

Cr Scott said Council’s operating position was an improvement on the past two financial years, with a deficit of \$7.6 million budgeted for 2019-20, compared to \$8.8 million in 2018-19. “Council’s improved financial position is a result of our strong budgeting process, with clear guidelines around expenditure increases, limited contingency budgeting and a competitive submission budgeting process for capital works and operational initiatives,” Cr Peter Scott said.

General land rates have gone up by a responsible 3 per cent, as have sewerage, rubbish collection and water charges. “Our capital works budget is over \$51 million, however only \$3.5 million of that will be funded by Council, with the remainder from grant funding. Key capital works projects include upgrades to all Council airports, a dog off leash area, sealing of Savage Street and renovation of the Shire Hall and the Gateway to the Cape project.”

A budget snapshot will be published in this paper, and the full budget documents and snapshot will also be available on Council’s website this week.

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