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Continued levels of service and laying foundations for the future of Cook, as Council adopts 2021-22 Annual Budget

**23 June 2021
COOKTOWN**

Cook Shire Council adopted its 2021-22 budget at a special Council meeting held yesterday, 22 June 2021.

In the face of increasing costs and financial challenges, Cook Shire's 2021-22 Budget is a sustainable budget that seeks to uphold current levels of service across the whole of the Shire and support its many townships and community groups. The 2021-22 Budget provides for free recycling programs and continued access to many community facilities, as well as Council's extensive community development and engagement programs.

"Cook Shire Council continues to focus on making the local region an amazing place that residents are proud to call home, where businesses thrive and that people want to visit," said Mayor Scott.

After Council sought community feedback on the proposed budget, the 2021-22 Budget was adopted with an amendment that allows for a \$100 discount per annum to ratepayers who pay their rates by the due date.

"As a remote council with a limited rate base, Cook Shire is continually challenged to provide and maintain the services and amenities that our ratepayers expect across the more than 100,000 km² that our Shire covers," said Mayor Scott, adding that general rates and revenue goes only part of the way to meeting the needs and expectations of the community.

"Council also owns and manages 226 buildings and community facilities. Funding the ongoing management, maintenance, and renewal of these assets is also imperative to laying the foundation for the financial future of Cook Shire, and will require continued focus over a number of years."

Recent State Government revaluations of rateable properties saw an average Shire-wide increase to property valuations of 12.86% and while Council is required to use these



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valuations to calculate general rate increases, it has been able to structure the general rates to minimise the effect of these valuation increases to hold Council rate increases to 5% or less for 91% of properties.

The 2021-22 budget also plans for the delivery of key Operational Plan initiatives over the 12 months. These include:

- An economic appraisal of revenue generation opportunities in the Cape to identify new revenue streams
- A comprehensive revaluation of asset classes
- Development of Council's 2022-2027 Corporate Plan
- Development of Council's Reconciliation Action Plan
- Stage 1 of rural numbering audit and replacement to Oaky Creek, Poison Creek and Endeavour Valley Road
- Beautification of Laura and Coen Townships

"It's not been easy, but I feel confident that the 2021-22 Budget is a positive first step towards ensuring the sustained growth and development of our Shire."

Rate notices are expected to be issued in August 2021.

For more information on how your rates are calculated and your payment options, visit <http://www.cook.qld.gov.au/council-desc/rates-fees-and-charges>

For more information contact Cook Shire Council via email at mail@cook.qld.gov.au or by phone on 4082 0500.

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