



**The Flinders
Ranges Council**

THE FLINDERS RANGES COUNCIL

ANNUAL BUSINESS PLAN 2021-2022

Adopted 29 June 2021

Prepared by Eric Brown, Chief Executive Officer, The Flinders Ranges Council

Introduction

The Flinders Ranges Council Annual Business Plan sets out the services, programs and capital expenditure for 2021-2022 financial year. The Council's objective is to provide programs and services for the community and to progress the achievement of the goals and objectives of The Flinders Ranges Council Strategic Management Plan, which includes the Infrastructure and Asset Management Plan and the Long-Term Financial Plan.

Section 8(k) of the *Local Government Act 1999* states that councils must act to ensure the sustainability of the council's long-term financial performance and position. An independent assessment of council's sustainability in 2010 reported that council was required to increase its rates income by 50% over and above inflation to be sustainable. This requirement by law to be sustainable is the basis for Council's decision to increase rates by above the consumer price index in prior years.

The Annual Business Plan, and the resulting current year budget, focus on ensuring the long-term sustainability of Council's financial performance and maintain or replace infrastructure or operating assets according to approved life cycle statements. Council's policy making decisions are aimed at maintaining and enhancing public assets for the benefit of the community and managing infrastructure to deliver the programs and services required by the community within a financial framework the community can reasonably afford.

The Annual Business Plan also recognises the cost of delivering programs and services imposed on Council by the State Government through legislation, regulation and other mechanisms. These programs and services include (but not limited to) waste management, development control, native vegetation and public health. The State Government has also imposed substantial additional costs by increasing Council's compliance and reporting costs.

The cost of providing programs, services, infrastructure and community assets is funded on a full cost attribution basis which allocates overhead and other indirect costs to the program or service that generated those costs and required resources.

Council has developed a Long-Term Financial Plan and Infrastructure and Asset Management Plans as part of Council's Strategic Management Plan suite, which will help guide sustainable decisions into the future. Further, the Community Plan 2019-2028 has been strongly used to make decision regarding this Annual Business Plan.

Programs and services in the Annual Business Plan may be amended or deleted by Council from time to time, due to the resourcing needs and the capacity of the community to pay for those services and programs and the effects of external events outside Council's control. New legislation by State Government frequently imposes new requirements on local government without any resourcing or funding to offset the increased costs.

Significant Influences and Priorities

Several significant factors have influenced the preparation of Council's Annual Business Plan 2021-2022. These include:

- Consumer Price Index increases on relevant goods and services of 1.2% (March 2021).
- The increase in last years rates being 0%, much lower than the CPI increase of 1.4% and the increase in salaries and wages of 2%.
- The advice from Council's auditors identifying that Council is not currently operating in a financial sustainable manner and must improve its operating position.
- The effect of COVID 19 on the local economy, particularly tourism businesses.
- The severe and ongoing impact of the drought in 2020 and 2021.
- Council's enterprise bargaining agreement wage and salary increases, and National Wage Case increases.
- The effects of Climate change in the region and the increase in frequency of flood events.
- Requirements to maintain and improve infrastructure assets to acceptable standards including roads, footpaths, lighting, storm water drainage, street trees and plantings, open space and Council properties.

- Service and infrastructure needs for a changing population.
- A requirement to address economic development and business investment through an upgrade of community services and infrastructure.
- Commitments to continuing projects and partnership agreements with State and Regional organisations, adjoining Councils involved in shared service delivery and the construction works being undertaken under the much appreciated Roads to Recovery program funded by Commonwealth Government.
- New fees/charges imposed by governments, regional state authorities and state agencies on the wider community as an element of rates payable or a user charge.
- Maintenance of surplus assets retained at the communities request.
- The increased expectation of detailed public consultation on all activities of Council.
- New legislation imposed by State Government with no corresponding resources provided.

In response to these factors, and to minimise the burden on ratepayers, the Annual Business Plan has been prepared within the following guidelines:

- The Annual Business Plan will result in the total revenue raised through general rates increasing by an average of 2.85% per rateable property above last year's rates (Rate Rebate policy for exceptions)
- Consideration given to major projects including those partnered with other entities i.e. Federal, State, community
- Maintenance of program and service levels for continuing Council programs and services
- Shared service opportunities with governmental agencies and other local government authorities
- The application for grants for existing programs, services and infrastructure
- Working with Community Corrections and "Work for the Dole" volunteers
- Working with community groups and sporting clubs to provide and maintain public facilities.

Continuing Services

All Councils have basic responsibilities under the *Local Government Act 1999*. In total, Local Government has 64 Acts of State and Federal legislation which it is required to consider. Approximately 50% of these are applicable to The Flinders Ranges Council. By way of example some of these various Acts influence or control:

- Governance activities e.g. maintaining the voters roll and supporting the elected Council.
- Preparing a Strategic Management Plan, a Long-Term Financial Plan, an Infrastructure and Asset Management Plan, an Annual Business Plan, an Annual Budget, setting rates and service charges, collecting levies for external State agencies.
- Management of basic infrastructure including roads, footpaths, parks, public open space and storm-water drainage.
- Development planning and control, including building safety assessment.
- Dog and cat management.
- Public and environmental health services and planning.
- Safety of food premises.
- Work health and safety standards and guidelines.
- Waste management.
- Natural resources management.
- Native vegetation.
- Cemeteries.
- Community wastewater management systems (CWMS) and reporting to various agencies.
- Community lands.
- Fire prevention.
- Emergency management.

In response to community needs and aspirations the Council also provides further services and programs including:

- Library services
- Swimming pools
- Ovals and other sporting infrastructure
- Community centres/halls
- Economic development

- Tourism services (Visitor Information Centre)
- Environmental programs
- Climate Change programs
- Park management
- Community support programs including Community buses
- Industry support programs
- Youth programs.
- Street and public space lighting
- Corella control
- Flora parks & reserves

Council operates a number of these programs and services on a subsidised fee basis. These provide important community benefits while also generating minimal revenue for programs and services of benefit to the community. Council seeks to be responsive to the changing needs of the community and the impact of external factors such as State Government legislative changes. Community consultation is undertaken periodically to check levels of satisfaction and areas for improvement.

How does Council determine what services it will provide?

Council's suite of Strategic Management Plans outlines the longer-term objectives and priorities for the Council region. These Plans plus this Annual Business Plan determine the infrastructure needs and services Council will provide including the costs required to deliver these services. Council consults the community widely during the formulation of these plans.

Council adopted its Community Plan 2019-28 in June 2019. This Community Plan has been considered in the formulation of the Annual Business Plan.

From the Community Plan 2019 – 2028:

Our Vision

Our community shares a deep respect for the Flinders Ranges region, history and people, and a commitment to its social, economic and environmental sustainability for both current and future generations. Together the people and places that comprise the Flinders Ranges community make this a great place to live, raise a family, conduct business, visit and stay a while.

Our Mission

To support the ongoing development of the Flinders Ranges as a secure, sustainable & vibrant community by:

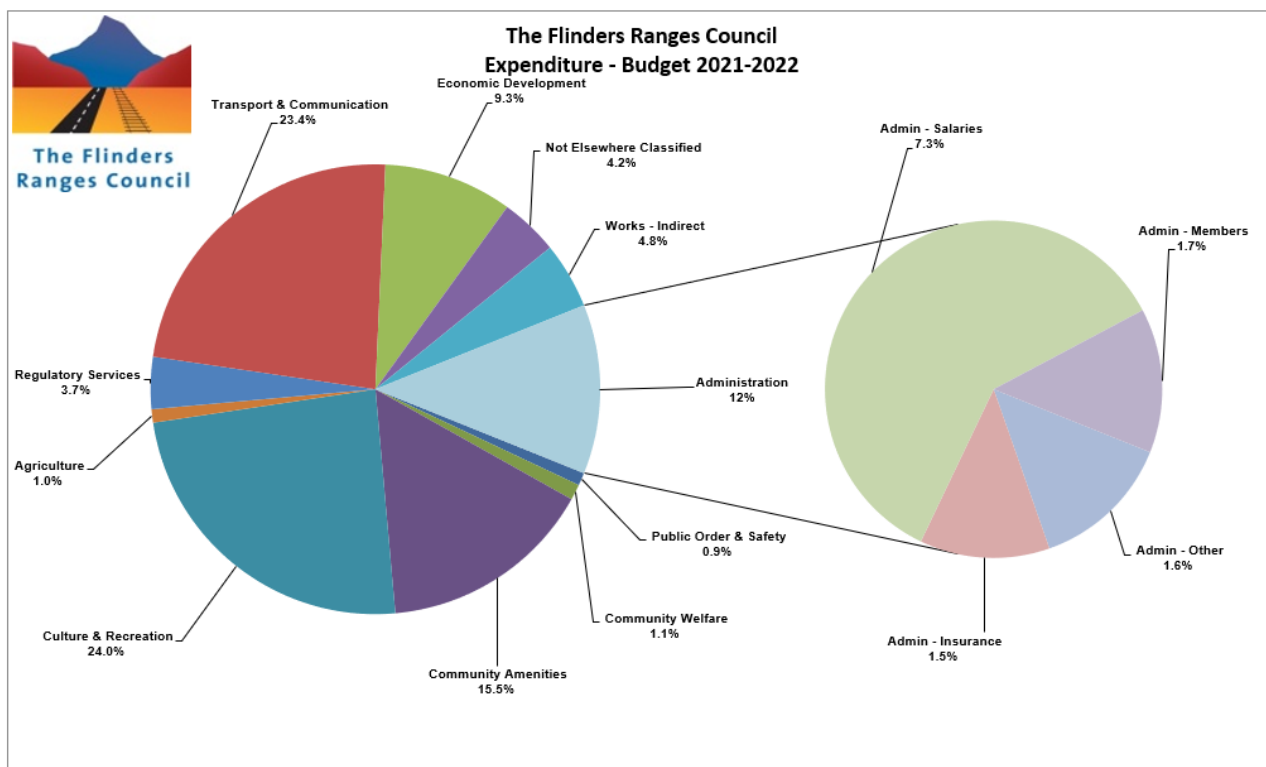
- Demonstrating leadership while consulting with our community.
- Advocating for the retention and enhancement of essential services.
- Acting for the preservation of the unique and natural state of the Flinders Ranges for current and future generations.
- Providing quality services and infrastructure whilst demonstrating fiscal responsibility in our decision making.
- Encouraging sustainable economic development and tourism in support of a growing population and opportunities for all.

Four Pillars of the Plan

1. Lead – Demonstrate leadership and engage with our community.
2. Protect – Protect our environment for current and future generations
3. Service – Provide quality services and infrastructure whilst demonstrating fiscal responsibility in our decision making.
4. Enhance – Encourage economic development and a growing population

Council Services and Annual Business Activities for 2021-2022

Council expenditure for the 2021-2022 Budget and for the Long-Term Financial Plan 2021-2041 is determined by the above strategic objectives. This Annual Business Plan prioritises the strategic objectives for the ensuing year and beyond in the Long-Term Financial Plan. The following summarises the expenditure.



Transport

Council maintains a road network with a total length of 1,263 kilometres. Council undertakes road maintenance works to ensure traffic and user safety, and to sustain the serviceability of the road and associated signs and facilities. Including, flood repairs, footpath maintenance, patrol grading, road re-sheeting and the sealing of unsealed town streets.

Council also provides safe pedestrian footpaths, cycleways and maintains the aerodromes at Hawker and Quorn.

Culture & Recreation

This activity includes public conveniences, playgrounds, swimming pools and recreational facilities, town and community halls, parks and gardens, cemeteries, library funding, emergency management, camping areas and walking trails for residents and visitors.

Community Welfare & Amenities

Provision and management of waste collection and disposal services, street litter bins, weed control in public places, maintaining community wastewater management systems, youth support, and community buses.

Governance

Achieving the goals and objectives of the Community Plan is driven by good governance using open and transparent processes and accountability to the community. Governance includes monitoring performance of the organisation, compliance with continually changing legislation imposing more cost on Council, ensuring appropriate risk management procedures and processes are implemented and actioned, providing a safe work place compliant with work health and safety obligations and responsibilities, continuing strategic alliances with external bodies, and supporting the role of the Elected Members in representing and informing their community. Media and communication include newsletters, website and social media. Public consultation processes. Community feedback mechanisms. Legislative reporting.

Administration

Includes customer service, rates, payroll, debtors, creditors, treasury management, website maintenance, monitoring organisational functionality, achieving work health and safety objectives and risk management minimisation programs, asset and infrastructure management, grants.

Regulatory Services

The activities associated with building control, development plan compliance, food and food premises hygiene, public & environmental health, drinking water testing, swimming pool inspections, parking, litter, building and fire safety, dog and cat management & control.

Community Services and Health

Fire Prevention Officer, fire breaks, ongoing vandalism repairs, support for SES and CFS, Immunisations. Support of aged care and support services.

Economic Development and Tourism

Tourism activities such as the Flinders Ranges Visitor Information Centre, contribution toward a regional Tourism Adviser and Economic Development Officer based with the Regional Development Australia Far North. Support for Pichi Richi Railway Preservation Society. Grant applications. Marketing the council region to prospective investors, businesses and residents. Seeking employment opportunities for residents. Supporting the film industry.

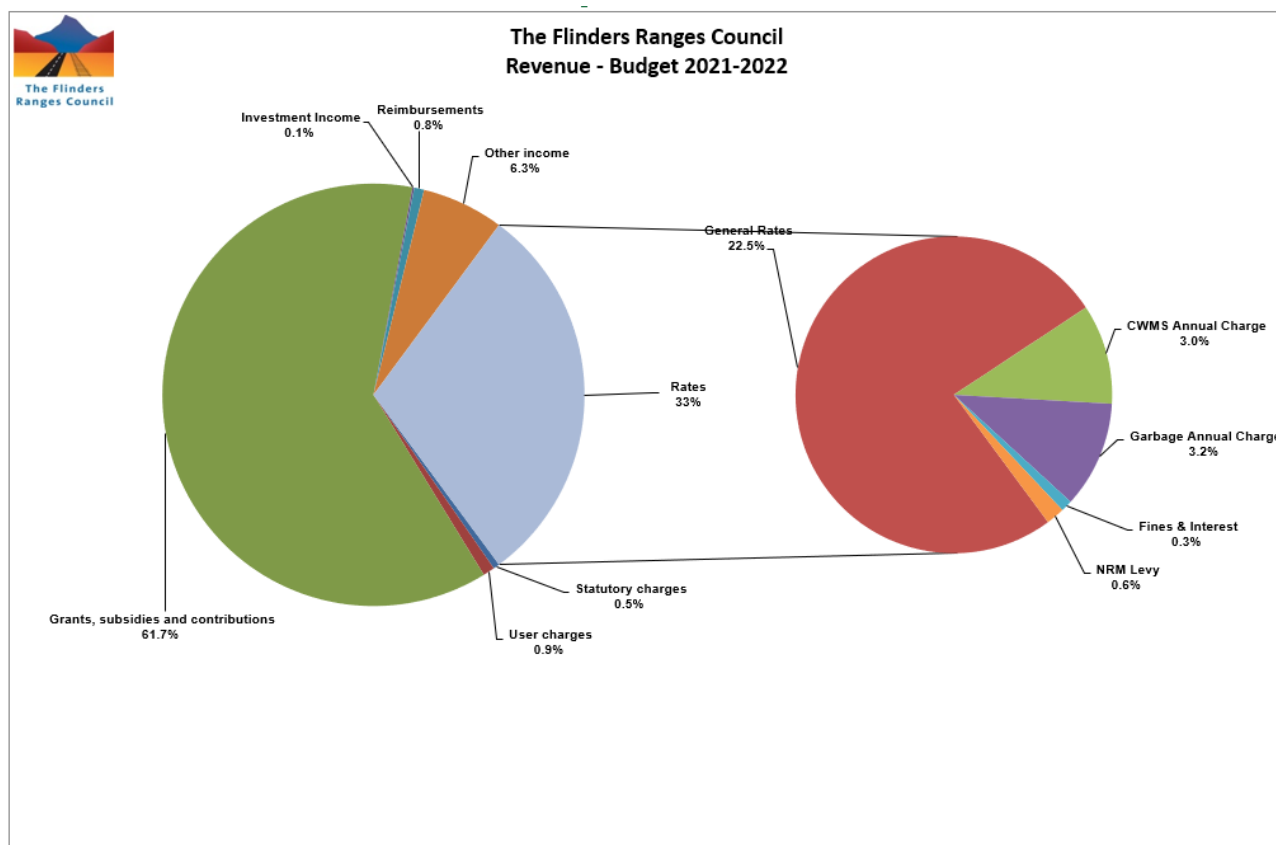
All the above and more is provided by 21 full-time and 2 part-time staff, all of whom perform multiple tasks to deliver services. There are also several part-time, casual and seasonal staff who provide single tasks such as cleaners, tourism officers and pool attendants. There are 7 full-time and 1 part-time staff in Administration, 1 full-time and 1 part-time in the Visitor Information Centre and 13 full-time and 1 part time at the works depots. In the Budget and Long-Term Financial Plan 2021-2041, staff wages are allocated to all tasks on which they work and no single budget line contains the total remuneration of one staff member.

Listed below are some of the proposed significant undertakings for the 2021-2022 financial year (not in any order of priority and are **subject to change**):

- \$35,000 Greening Programs in both Hawker & Quorn
- \$38,000 Footpath Works
- \$50,000 Community Grants Allocation
- 14km Road Re-sheeting Projects
- \$310,000 Patrol Grading
- \$20,000 Quorn Depot Upgrade
- \$209,090 Flinders Ranges Tourist Trail
- \$100,000 Feasibility Study – Hawker Geotourism Centre
- \$200,000 Main Street Façade Upgrade (painting)
- \$374,040 Quorn Pioneer Machinery Park Upgrade
- \$265,000 Hawker Entry Signage and landscaping

- \$858,068 Streetscape Works Hawker and Quorn
- \$115,500 Quorn Aerodrome Upgrade
- \$5,000 New Resident & Business Rates Incentives
- \$12,000 Little Corella Control
- \$302,000 Local Roads and Community Infrastructure
- \$60,000 Renewal of Public Toilets at Thompson Park
- \$20,000 Replace toilets Blue Burt Park

Funding the Annual Business Plan 2021-2022



Council's long term financial sustainability is dependent on ensuring that, on average and over time, its expenses (including capital expenses) are less than its revenue, and its' own revenue raising (i.e. rates) is increased to reduce the reliance on grants and external funding sources.

Council's revenue is sourced from:

- Rates & Landscape Separate Rate – applied on a per property basis calculated on capital value (a **tax**, not a fee for service)
- Annual Service Charges (included under rates in the above chart) – annual service charges for Community Wastewater Management Systems (CWMS) and solid waste management (garbage & recyclables) for properties serviced
- User Charges – hire of facilities and equipment, waste dumping fees, photocopying, swimming pool fees, recreation fees
- Statutory Charges and Fees – charges and fees set by legislation and collected by Council for regulatory services such as development and building assessments, dog licensing and control
- Grants – Council receives financial assistance from the Commonwealth Government under the provisions of the Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act, 1995 for general purpose and road activities, funds under the *Roads to Recovery* program for specific road works, and other grant opportunities accessible by Local Government from time to time.
- Investment Income – Council receives interest on funds deposited in Council's reserves which are mainly held by the Local Government Finance Authority. Council also receives interest from operating accounts held with the National Australia Bank.

- Other Income – Council may receive contributions from community groups to co-fund certain Council projects or activities
- Reimbursements – Council expenditure on a project, service or activity is fully or partially reimbursed by another organisation.

Capital items such as plant purchases / replacements are funded from either loans or reserves created by budget allocations or funded depreciation expense.

Regional Landscape Levy (State Government)

Councils are required, by the State Government, to collect an amount specified by the Landscape South Australia Act 2019 on all rateable properties. Funds are used to manage natural resources by the South Australian Arid Lands Landscape Board.

The South Australian Arid Lands Landscape Board declares a levy payable by The Flinders Ranges Council based on capital value which is \$46,478 for the 2021-2022 year (0.0% increase). Council sets a Separate Rate for the Landscape Levy based on capital value. For 2021-2022 the levy is \$0.0001760 per capital value dollar (\$0.0001770 in 2020-2021).

Any queries relating to the Regional Landscape Levy should be directed to:

SA Arid Lands Landscape Board
Level 1 9 Mackay Street, PORT AUGUSTA SA 5700
P: 08 8648 5300
E: saal.landscapeboard@sa.gov.au

Rating Policy and what it means for Ratepayers

In setting its rates for the 2021-2022 financial year Council considered the impact of the rates to be charged on the well-being of the community. Council will consider during the rate setting process:

- COVID 19 and the longstanding drought and the effect of both on economic activity.
- The availability of hardship provisions to rate payers.
- The 2020-21 rate and fees and charges increase of 0%.
- Council's adopted 2019-2028 Community Plan as informed by the Community.
- The movement in the Construction Industry Cost Indices and the Local Government Cost Index, and movement in the Consumer Price Index as an indicator of community economic activity.
- The Long-Term Financial Plan 2021-2041 developed as part of the Strategic Management suite of documents.
- The current economic climate, as reported by various public bodies, in which major factors are low inflation, higher commodity prices and limited local employment opportunities.
- The need to ensure that appropriate provisions are made for long service leave, annual leave and similar mandated employment costs.
- That reserves are created for the future replacement of infrastructure and the charges for use of the infrastructure to reflect inter generation use of the infrastructure.
- The impact of rates on the community, including but not limited to:
 - The need to distribute the rate burden equitably between ratepayers;
 - The distribution of the benefits received from the services that are provided by Council.
 - The minimising of the general rates by levying annual service charges for the provision of Community Wastewater Management System (CWMS) and solid waste management services on a user pays basis where it's possible to recover the full cost of operating the service, with provision for pensioners concession on CWMS to those members of the community who meet the criteria.
- Recommendations from the Rate Discussion Paper presented to Council on the 16 February 2021.
- The impact of Government Legislative amendments and the burden of continuous cost shifting by the State Government.

- The specific issues of the community including the need to deliver an ever-increasing range of services across economic, environmental and social functions.
- The need to continue to replace and upgrade infrastructure and other assets including both plant and machinery and the road network.
- The objective of attracting and continuing to attract new residents and the support of business activity to generate economic development.
- Householders, businesses and farmers.
- Employed, unemployed & pensioners.
- Taking into account changes in valuations by the State Valuation Office.
- Climate Change.
- The legacy of Government Grant Commission funding decisions (e.g. the freezing of indexation and withdrawal of supplementary road funding - \$400,000 over 3 years)

The Rating Policy is a separate policy document. The Rating Policy 2021-2022 was consulted on concurrently with the Annual Business Plan 2021-2022.

Environmental Stewardship

The unique and attractive natural environment of the Flinders Ranges region is widely renowned, and highly valued by our residents. The significant uptake of renewable energy systems (e.g. solar hot water and power); recycling; energy conservation; and re-vegetation reduces our 'carbon footprint' and enhances sustainability. In our arid climate, we address water shortage through extensive rainwater and stormwater harvesting, water reuse initiatives, water conservation and community education. We are recognised for our conservation efforts, including our heritage streetscapes, town 'greening' to create native fauna and flora havens, domestic energy and water self-sufficiency.

Uniform Presentation of Finances



The Flinders Ranges Council LONG TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2021 - 2041 UNIFORM PRESENTATION OF FINANCES

For Adoption v4

	2020 \$	Budget 2021 \$	YTD 31 Mar 21 2021 \$	Budget 2022 \$	2023 \$	2024 \$	2025 \$	2026 \$	2027 \$	2028 \$	2029 \$	2030 \$	2031 \$	2041 \$
Operating Revenues	5,741,759	4,836,521	4,737,485	4,938,702	4,960,600	5,071,900	5,184,400	5,299,000	5,406,200	5,514,700	5,626,400	5,738,400	5,853,700	# 70,301,700
less Operating Expenses	(6,101,359)	(6,041,671)	(3,410,803)	(6,063,183)	(6,175,262)	(6,284,691)	(6,496,870)	(6,482,897)	(6,601,072)	(6,717,492)	(6,846,256)	(6,966,239)	(7,087,303)	(78,953,825)
Adjusted Operating Surplus / (Deficit) before Capital Amounts	(359,600)	(1,205,150)	1,326,682	(1,124,481)	(1,214,662)	(1,212,791)	(1,312,470)	(1,183,897)	(1,194,872)	(1,202,792)	(1,219,856)	(1,227,839)	(1,233,603)	(8,652,125)
Net Outlays on Existing Assets														
Capital Expenditure on renewal and replacement of Existing Assets	(591,822)	(1,371,503)	(910,087)	(3,438,371)	(941,700)	(816,200)	(1,291,840)	(707,921)	(730,843)	(747,308)	(1,198,516)	(652,169)	(725,766)	(12,141,005)
add back Depreciation, Amortisation and Impairment	1,528,517	1,631,500	1,128	1,653,200	1,682,700	1,707,100	1,830,300	1,726,800	1,747,600	1,767,800	1,802,800	1,819,600	1,838,900	19,895,000
add back Proceeds from Sale of Replaced Assets	-	-	108,623	10,000	107,000	76,600	133,400	41,300	40,000	49,300	160,400	16,000	23,800	1,019,200
	936,695	259,997	(800,336)	(1,775,171)	848,000	967,500	671,860	1,060,179	1,056,757	1,069,792	764,684	1,183,431	1,136,934	8,773,195
Net Outlays on New and Upgraded Assets														
Capital Expenditure on New and Upgraded Assets	(844,362)	(1,617,991)	(1,590,039)	(1,239,335)	(304,000)	(304,000)	(304,000)	(304,000)	(304,000)	(304,000)	(304,000)	(304,000)	(304,000)	(3,344,000)
add back Amounts received specifically for New and Upgraded Assets	466,744	1,977,300	1,734,072	3,427,947	641,000	657,000	958,000	659,100	660,100	661,200	662,300	663,400	664,600	10,500,500
add back Proceeds from Sale of Surplus Assets	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	(377,618)	359,309	144,033	2,188,612	337,000	353,000	654,000	355,100	356,100	357,200	378,300	359,400	360,600	7,156,500
Net Lending / (Borrowing) for Financial Year	199,477	(585,844)	670,379	(711,040)	(29,662)	107,709	13,390	231,382	217,985	224,200	(76,872)	314,992	263,931	7,277,570

Annual Business Plan, Budget and Long-Term Financial Plan

A full copy of the Annual Business Plan is available for inspection at no charge at the principal office 1 Seventh Street Quorn SA 5433 or Hawker Service Centre (Hawker Motors) Corner Cradock and Wilpena Roads Hawker or can be downloaded from Council's website at: www.frc.sa.gov.au

DISCLAIMER

A rate cannot be challenged on the basis of non-compliance with this policy and must be paid in accordance with the required payment provisions.

Where a ratepayer believes that the Council has failed to properly apply a policy they should raise the matter with Council by writing to the Chief Executive Officer, The Flinders Ranges Council, PO Box 43, QUORN SA 5433.

Consultation on changes to Council's method of Rating:

The Rating Policy 2021-2022 contains no changes to Council's rating methodology from the Rating Policy 2020-2021. The budgeted average rate increase is 2.85%. Refer to Council's Rating Policy 2021-2022 for more detail. Please note that monies raised for Service Charges and Separate Rates can only be used for the purpose raised.

Council is required under **Section 151 & Section 156** of the *Local Government Act 1999*, to consult the public on any changes to rating methodologies. Consultation was undertaken in conjunction with the consultation required for the Annual Business Plan, which is expressly allowed under that Act by Section 151(8a).

Suggestions and Feedback on the 2021-2022 Annual Business Plan

Feedback and suggestions regarding Council's draft Annual Business Plan 2021-2022, draft Rating Policy 2021-2022, draft Long-Term Financial Plan 2021-2041 and draft Fees and Charges 2021-2022 were required in writing by 5:00pm on 18 June 2021. Written feedback or suggestions were to be addressed to the Director of Finance and Administration, The Flinders Ranges Council, PO Box 43, Quorn SA 5433.

Council had planned to hold a community information session for the Annual Business Plan on 8 June 2021 from 6.30pm. This was cancelled due to low attendance registrations.

Council also set aside one hour at the commencement of its Ordinary Meeting of Council on Tuesday 15 June 2021 commencing at 6:30pm for Residents or Ratepayers who wished to address the Council on the draft Annual Business Plan 2021-2022, draft Rating Policy 2021-2022, draft Long Term Financial Plan 2021-2041 and/or draft Fees and Charges 2021-2022. Ratepayers were required to phone Council on 8620 0500 to register their interest in making a verbal presentation to Council on the draft Annual Business Plan 2021-2022, draft Rating Policy 2021-2022, draft Long Term Financial Plan 2020-2039 and/or draft Fees and Charges 2021-2022.

Council also accepted email submissions to council@frc.sa.gov.au provided a contact name, address and phone number are included in the email.

All submissions made, both written and verbal, were taken into account and considered by Council at a Special Meeting held on 29 June 2021.

Please Note that Council endeavours to identify cost savings and alternative revenue sources on an ongoing basis to minimise future rate rises. Council continues to utilise shared services as a means of efficient and cost-effective service delivery.