



# MEDIA RELEASE

## Council hits the road, inviting participation in this year's draft Budget Consultation 7 June 2023

Community Consultation commenced for Alexandrina Council on the draft Annual Business Plan and Budget 2023/24 on Thursday, 25 May 2023 inviting the community to view the document and provide feedback during the consultation period.

Alexandrina Council, Chief Executive Officer, Nigel Morris said, 'we are so excited to be offering extended community engagement as a Budget Roadshow for the first time this year. Six public meetings will be held throughout the region to gather feedback on Council's proposed Budget 2023-24 to give the community a greater say.

'The Draft Annual Business Plan and Budget presents a proposed rate increase of the bellow the rate of inflation (CPI) minus 0.7% which equates to 7.2% and a surplus budget.

'What we heard from the community in recent months is a desire for Council to reduce spending on major projects and reduce our need for borrowings. This has been achieved in the proposed budget by not introducing any new major projects and focusing on completing existing projects already committed to and on asset replacement, ensuring our assets are being replaced as they wear out,' he said.

Key information included in the draft budget:

**Responsible Rate Increase:** The proposed rate increase is set to be below inflation at 7.2%.

**Surplus Operating Budget:** The draft budget forecasts a surplus operating budget of \$160,000, representing a remarkable financial turnaround from the previous year's deficit. This surplus will enable us to invest in key initiatives, infrastructure, and services that directly benefit our community.

**Enhanced Services and Infrastructure:** The draft budget prioritises the maintenance and improvement of essential services, ensuring that the needs of the community are met effectively. It includes strategic investments in areas such as enhanced verge mowing and weed spraying, which will contribute to the overall wellbeing and appearance of our townships.

**New Initiatives for Community Growth:** The budget allocates \$2.051M to new operating initiatives, driven by valuable feedback from the community. These initiatives include the appointment of a dedicated Climate Change Officer and a Planning Engineer, who will work towards creating a sustainable and prosperous future for our community.

## The Rates Balancing Act - How can rates be lowered?

Reducing rates by 1% results in a decrease of approximately \$400,000 in Council revenue. To achieve a balanced budget, two options exist:

1. Decrease Council expenses by approximately \$400,000 for each percentage decrease in rates.
2. A reduction in revenue of less than \$400,000 per 1% decrease will lead to an additional deficit, necessitating increased borrowings by the Council.

Ultimately, the decision regarding this adjustment in the proposed budget lies with Council Members. We are eager to hear the feedback from our community, as it plays a crucial role in shaping the final budget. We encourage all residents to provide feedback online or join us at the remaining Budget Roadshow Public Meetings:

**Goolwa and surrounds – Tuesday 20 June, 6:30pm, Goolwa Oval Recreation Precinct**  
**Milang and surrounds: Wednesday 21 June, 6:30pm, Milang Institute.**

The community consultation period will be open until 22 June 2023. The My Say consultation website includes the presentation video shown at our Budget Roadshow.

For more information and updates, please visit the My Say Alexandrina website, <http://mysay.alexandrina.sa.gov.au/abp2023-24>



**Photo caption:** CEO, Nigel Morris, inviting participation in this year's draft Budget consultation at the Budget Roadshow events.

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For enquires regarding the publication of this article contact;

Meg Dickson, Acting, Executive Manager Office of the CEO

Phone: 8555 7000 or 0488 555 451

Email: [communications@alexandrina.sa.gov.au](mailto:communications@alexandrina.sa.gov.au)