

Budget 2018/19 Media Release

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Council works towards financial sustainability

The Balonne Shire Council is working towards financial sustainability following years with an operating deficit which is forecast to continue into the future, Mayor Richard Marsh said at today's Budget Meeting.

"To reach financial sustainability we have looked at our revenue and the need to balance an increase in rates with ability to source our own revenue," he said.

"We have worked hard to investigate our depreciation, we are looking to improve our asset management and to set responsible service levels in an effort to contain costs.

"This year the Budget delivers an operating deficit before capital revenue of \$3,462,525 with a modest operating surplus of \$285,493.

"Our capital budget of \$5,505,018 for 2018/19 is significantly less than that of 2017/18. Of this capital budget \$3,748,018 is funded through State and Federal Government initiatives."

Cr Marsh told the meeting Council's general rate revenue represented 34% of council's total revenue and was insufficient for long-term financial sustainability.

"Federal and State Government grant opportunities continue to diminish or are for new infrastructure projects only and new infrastructure commits Council to increased depreciation and maintenance costs - it does not assist in renewing and maintaining our current assets," he said.

"So we need to work hard at adopting strategies to source our own revenue into the future.

"In that regard, we have applied for funding to achieve accreditation to secure recoverable works with the Department of Transport and Main Roads.

"Council has this year engaged a fully funded Grants Officer to actively pursue grant funding opportunities and a fully funded Economic Development Officer to boost the local economy over the longer term.

"Overall, the budget is conservative which recognises our limited revenue and resources."

Cr Marsh acknowledged the budget process involved extensive input and workflow from many people.

"I thank everyone involved – Councillors and staff – for the effort put in over the lengthy period taken to prepare the 2018/19 budget. It was a great team effort," he said.

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