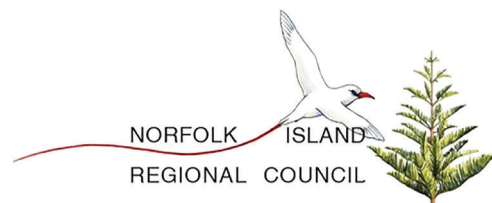


NORF'K FUSS



The Norfolk Island Regional Council Newsletter

July 2021

The new library is almost complete!



Read all about it
Check out the new library! P2

Our plan, for our future



Council is in a difficult position, trying to rectify the uncertain financial position it finds itself in, whilst not

over burdening local residents and visitors, so that it can recover sufficiently to meet the challenges that lie ahead.

The transcripts of the recent public inquiry give considerable insight. They contain repeated criticisms implied by the Council Assisting the Commissioner around the unwillingness of the Council to address the revenue shortfalls that happened

Mike Colreavy

INTERIM ADMINISTRATOR
 Norfolk Island Regional Council

each year, despite having the power to do so. I am conscious of this position, and I am attempting to redress it for Council.

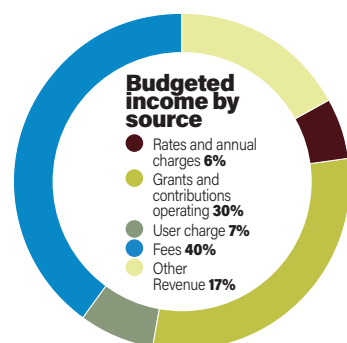
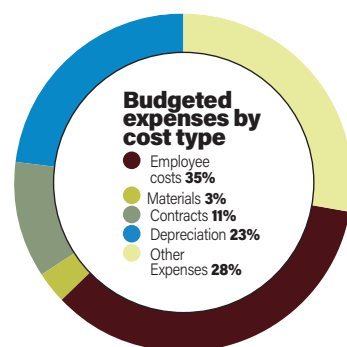
Council has received a healthy 37 submissions on the Draft Operational Plan for the 2021/22 year. I have read all of these submissions, and I have met with 10 individual submitters to gain a better insight into their submission and the community's impressions about the proposed revenue policy, and the rates and charges. I did this specifically to arrive at the best decision for Council moving forward during the Interim Administration period.

At the outset I need to make this comment, Council must and should raise sufficient funds to deliver fundamental services that its community needs and which they enjoy collectively.

Rates are a tax on the community to deliver services. They are not rent. They are a contribution towards service delivery.

Council provides services that far exceed the amount collected in rates. Road maintenance, parks and reserve maintenance, sporting field maintenance, community building maintenance, library services, tourism services, radio station operations cattle management and much more.

> continued P2



Read all about it > continued from P1

Construction of the new library building is progressing, with painting of the exterior in progress, and the interior lining nearing completion to allow plastering and painting to be completed. Windows and doors will be installed in the coming weeks. The library is scheduled to be operational in September, with the current library being repurposed to house Council's records function.



Our plan, for our future

> continued from P1

If not for Commonwealth funding, many of these services would need to be pared back or withdrawn altogether. That would make our community poorer, which it does not deserve.

The charges in the Operational Plan strike a balance between the resident and visitor populations. The business enterprises of the Council, being the Airport, Electricity, Telecom, and Wastewater services will now deliver small surpluses. This is crucial to pay for much needed capital replacement works, or to fund upgrades that have recently occurred.

I accept the community submissions on the electricity price increases are valid in saying that these charges are

comparatively high. Council has already made approaches to the Commonwealth Government to help subsidise this service, as it does for the Indian Ocean Territories.

We are on the path to lower electricity prices within the next few years, but we first need to upgrade crucial systems such as smart meters and inverters, which are now funded in this budget, before we can turn the corner to cheaper prices. The most important part of this program upgrade is a review of the current moratorium on new solar systems being lifted later this year. An extensive report on this will be considered by Council in December 2021.

Having listened carefully to the Community submissions, and accepting that a 4 cent/kilowatt hour increase is a large impost on residents and businesses alike. I therefore propose to halve the proposed increase in the charge from four cents to two cents,

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

\$500k
Surplus

\$1.8m
Road Construction

\$5.66m
Assistance Grant

\$888k
Waste Deficit Halved

resulting in a charge per kilowatt hour of 72 cents in 2021-2022.

The Waste Management charge has had the most

commentary in the submissions from the community. During very detailed conversations with those that met with me. There was a strong focus on the efficiencies that Council could achieve by changing or improving our service delivery arrangements at the Waste Management Centre.

Our General Manager has taken these suggestions on board and will be making changes over the next 6-12 months.

But that aside, I need to make clear what our decision regarding the increase in waste management fees is all about. We need to redress the situation of waste management here on Norfolk. We can no longer throw our waste into the ocean, and we need to continue to educate our community on separation and waste reduction. This new fee is a first step. Our process will mature, and we will continue to make changes as we develop.

For more information, please visit:
<http://www.norfolkisland.gov.nf>

Revolving our waste

In 2021/22, NIRC is planning to make several changes to the way it manages waste and recyclables for the community. Some changes have already been implemented, while others will be implemented progressively throughout the year. We are also committed to updating Council's Waste Management Strategy, which will fundamentally change the way waste is managed on Norfolk Island.

The current management of waste at Headstone is not sustainable. NIRC is committed to ceasing the pushing of waste into the ocean. The next step in achieving this is to ensure that all waste types are delivered by the community to the Waste Management Centre, including builder's and bulky waste. To do this, NIRC will close Headstone to the public. All bulky non-domestic waste will be delivered to the Waste Management Centre, where a new

delivery area will be created for dropping off used timber, gyprock, steel, hard plastics and other waste types. This renewed practice will ensure better segregation of waste and allow greater opportunities for recycling and reuse of materials by the community.

NIRC has now removed the cost to deliver green waste to the Waste Management Centre. This will assist in providing greater feedstock for NIRC's Hotrot composter, resulting in compost product for the community to purchase. The result will deliver on Council's commitment to make better use of the Island's green waste and find alternatives to backyard burning.

There are currently multiple ideas and proposals amongst the community to assist in reducing waste and find useful ways to make recycled products. These range from developing a specific reuse- or revolve-shed for repurposing used



Processing our beloved green waste

materials, developing island-specific packaging products to reduce the need for disposable plastic, cardboard or glass and piloting a program that would fundamentally change the way waste and recyclables are collected, resulting in an on-Island plastics recycling program.

For more information, please visit: <http://www.norfolkisland.gov.nf/services/waste-and-environmental-service>

FAQS FOR COUNCIL

Why have Waste Disposal Fees increased?

Council waste management services must increase revenue to fund its operations. The waste levy and previous waste disposal fees are significantly less than the required revenue.

What is the Community Waste Management Charge?

This is a charge applied to residents', business' and tourist accommodation premises to assist in operational waste management costs. This is separate to the waste levy.

What do I receive for my Community Waste Management Charge payment?

Each liable property would receive a nominal number of Waste Disposal Tickets for payment of their Community Waste Management Charge.

For more information, please visit: <http://www.norfolkisland.gov.nf>

Footpaths and roundabouts

Footpath Airport to Burnt Pine

Construction work commenced in mid-May, with the section from the Airport carpark to Ferny Lane completed in early July. Construction of the section from Ferny Lane to the Leagues Club has commenced with the arrival of cement on the Southern Tiare V034. Completion of the concrete works is now scheduled for September. Installation of solar lighting has been delayed until October as their manufacture has been delayed due to COVID-19 restrictions.

channel, at the southern end of the roundabout is currently under construction. This work has required detours and speed restrictions. Council appreciates the public's positive response and acceptance to these restrictions.

For more information, please visit: <http://www.norfolkisland.gov.nf>



Airport to Burnt Pine footpath works

Roundabout Corner of Taylors and Grassy Roads

Construction works commenced in June and are scheduled for completion in August. The aims of the project are to improve safety for both vehicles and pedestrians, improve traffic flow, and improve drainage in the area. Under-road drainage work has been completed and the northern section of concrete kerb and channel has been completed. The concreting work, including kerb and



Roundabout works on the corner of Taylors Road and Grassy Road

BiCentennial Centre Refurbishment Project

Council was one of the many recipients of the federal governments' External Territories Infrastructure Stimulus Project; funds have been allocated to Council to refurbish the BiCentennial Centre as well as works associated with Rawson Hall. Additional funding is allocated for the completion of the footpath from the airport to join the existing footpath at Doodsie's Paddock; as well as funding for waste initiatives.

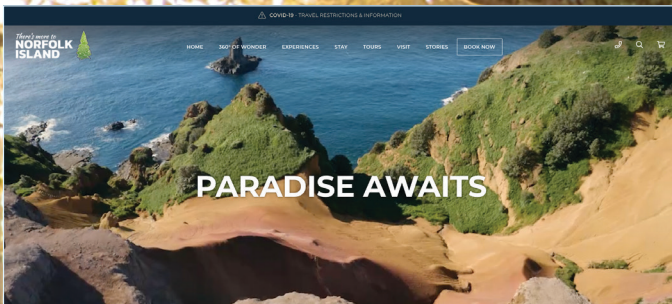
The project scope of the BiCentennial Centre Refurbishment Project includes the refurbishment of the Bicentennial building and expansion of the Visitors Information Centre to include a space for the Public

Library. Funds have also been allocated to allow renovation and refurbishment works at Rawson Hall.

For more information, please visit: <http://www.norfolkisland.gov.nf>



White Tern Project



www.norfolkisland.com.au
2020/21 vs 2019/20

Users = 195,801 vs 122,193

▲ 60.24%

Sessions = 272,666 vs 166,809

▲ 63.46%

Page views = 1,661,505 vs 1,081,200

▲ 53.67%

Revenue = \$395,985 vs \$221,782

▲ 78.55%

More details @ www.norfolkisland.com.au

As part of the Australian Government's COVID-19 economic stimulus package for Norfolk Island, \$240,000 tourism promotion funding was provided to reinvigorate tourism via a digital online strategy. The White Tern Project was developed with solid digital marketing foundations to support Norfolk Island in attracting both younger and higher-yielding customers. The White Tern project was led by Brisbane based company Tourism Media, who partnered with Norfolk Island Tourism to provide a long-term capability which goes beyond just providing a one off service.

The White Tern Project has assisted Norfolk Island Tourism to successfully deliver the message that the island is open for business. New imagery and content, new writing styles, and new strategies have assisted Norfolk Island Tourism to attract a broader demographic of audience and reach a different clientele.

What has changed?

Since the end of 2020, there has been a positive growth in social media interaction and rapid evolution of website traffic and bookings. Booking habits have had a distinct change, with the average lead-time for bookings now much less than typical (e.g. clients want to book their travel 1 to 3 months ahead, rather than 6 to 12 months ahead).

Over the last few months, Norfolk Island Tourism have observed that visitors now appear to have more spending money. This may be attributed to the fact that overseas holidays are currently impossible, and people are eager to board a plane to a destination they haven't been to before to spend their vacation savings. Tourism Media introduced the clever tag line "Overseas is just over here" which has been used in all digital promotions and has been extremely successful in attracting the higher-yielding clientele. There has been an obvious change in clientele visiting Norfolk Island. They are typically searching for a high end experience and are not concerned with prices – therefore the high-yielding travellers now have the island in their sights.

For more information, please visit: <http://www.norfolkisland.gov.nf>

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