

Agenda

Special Meeting (Budget)

Wednesday 13 June 2012

commencing at 9.00am

Council Chambers, Corner Currie and Bury Streets, Nambour

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ITEM	SUBJECT	PAGE NO
1	DECLARATION OF OPENING	1
2	RECORD OF ATTENDANCE AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE	1
3	OBLIGATIONS OF COUNCILLORS	1
3.1	DECLARATION OF MATERIAL PERSONAL INTEREST ON ANY ITEM OF BUSINESS.....	1
3.2	DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST ON ANY ITEM OF BUSINESS.....	1
4	REPORTS DIRECT TO COUNCIL.....	3
4.1	REGISTER OF GENERAL COST-RECOVERY FEES AND COMMERCIAL CHARGES 2012/2013	3
4.2	WASTE AND RESOURCES MANAGEMENT BUDGET	9
4.3	PUBLIC TRANSPORT LEVY INITIATIVES REPORT 2012/2013	21
4.4	SUNSHINE COAST ENVIRONMENT LEVY POLICY AND PROGRAM.....	37
4.5	2012/2013 TEN-YEAR CAPITAL WORKS PROGRAM	47
5	CONFIDENTIAL SESSION	51
6	NEXT MEETING.....	51
7	MEETING CLOSURE.....	51

1 DECLARATION OF OPENING

On establishing there is a quorum, the Mayor will declare the meeting open.

2 RECORD OF ATTENDANCE AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE**3 OBLIGATIONS OF COUNCILLORS****3.1 DECLARATION OF MATERIAL PERSONAL INTEREST ON ANY ITEM OF BUSINESS**

Pursuant to Section 172 of the *Local Government Act 2009*, a councillor who has a material personal interest in an issue to be considered at a meeting of the local government, or any of its committees must –

- (a) inform the meeting of the councillor's material personal interest in the matter; and
- (b) leave the meeting room (including any area set aside for the public), and stay out of the meeting room while the matter is being discussed and voted on.

3.2 DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST ON ANY ITEM OF BUSINESS

Pursuant to Section 173 of the *Local Government Act 2009*, a councillor who has a real or perceived conflict of interest in a matter to be considered at a meeting of the local government, or any of its committees must inform the meeting about the councillor's personal interest in the matter and if the councillor participates in the meeting in relation to the matter, how the councillor intends to deal with the real or perceived conflict of interest.

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4 REPORTS DIRECT TO COUNCIL

4.1 REGISTER OF GENERAL COST-RECOVERY FEES AND COMMERCIAL CHARGES 2012/2013

File No: ECM 13 June 2012

Author: Commercial Analysis Manager
Graduate Business and Costing Analyst
Finance and Business

Appendices: [App A - Register of General Fees and Charges 2012-13](#) (SM Att Pg 2)

Attachments: [Att 1 - Increases over 10%](#) (SM Att Pg 90)
[Att 2 - Product and Price Comparison](#) (SM Att Pg 99)
[Att 3 - Legislation](#) (SM Att Pg 164)

PURPOSE

To seek adoption of the Fees and Charges (Appendix A) as the Register of General Cost-recovery Fees and Commercial Charges 2012/2013 (excluding Development Assessment Fees).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

General cost-recovery fees and commercial charges revenue (excluding development assessment fees) for 2012/2013 is forecast to be in the order of \$47 million. The price increase parameter was 3.5 % in line with the Local Government Association of Queensland Council Cost Index (refer section on Financing and Resourcing for more details).

Managers responsible for cost-recovery fees were advised to set prices at or as close to full cost where possible. Commercial charges may be set above full cost after considering market and other conditions.

A summary showing significant increases in 2012/2013 fees and charges to current fees is provided in Attachment 1: Fee Increases Over 10%.

A detailed comparison of 2012/2013 fees and charges to current fees is provided in Attachment 2: Product and Price Comparison.

A description of the Local Government Act provisions relating to fees and charges is provided in Attachment 3: Legislation.

Development Assessment fees will be presented to Council by the Regional Strategy and Planning department.

Council received a written request in relation to television channels conducting commercial filming with crews of no more than five (5) people to be allowed to have application fees waived and no requirement for a permit to utilise Community Land.

It is proposed that in line with Council's commitment to support the business and tourism sectors that Council require an application for commercial filming on community land but provide for waiver or relief of these fees if they meet certain conditions.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- (a) receive and note the report titled 'Register of General Cost-recovery Fees and Commercial Charges 2012/2013';
- (b) adopt the fees in Register of General Cost-recovery Fees and Commercial Charges 2012/2013 (Appendix A);
- (c) resolve that, in relation to those cost-recovery fees to which Section 97 of the *Local Government Act 2009* apply:
 - (i) the applicant is the person liable to pay these fees; and
 - (ii) the fee must be paid at or before the time the application is lodged; and
- (d) delegate to the Chief Executive Officer the power to amend commercial charges to which section 262(3)(c) of the *Local Government Act 2009* apply.
- (e) continue to require applications and approvals for commercial filming on community land, and provide a nil fee conditional upon an assessment of the activity meeting one of the following criteria, namely:
 - (i) promoting the region as a tourist or visitor destination; or
 - (ii) enabling a local business to market its product or services; or
 - (iii) developing a local industry segment; or
 - (iv) marketing or promoting a major or regional event.

FINANCE AND RESOURCING

General fees and charges revenue for 2012/2013 is anticipated to be in the order of \$46.6 million. This excludes fee and charge revenue of approximately \$9.2 million for Regional Strategy and Planning department. Table 1 below shows the estimated general fees and charges revenue for 2012/2013 by department and branch or unit.

Table 1: Estimated general fees and charges revenue 2012/2013 by department and branch

Department	Branch / Unit	Number of Fees and Charges	Estimated Fee and Charges Revenue \$'000
Finance and Business	Sunshine Coast Holiday Parks	150	\$14,164
	Sunshine Coast Airport	82	\$9,346
	Spatial Management & Information Centre	22	\$1,032
	Quarries Business Unit	27	\$1,351
	Other	31	\$30
Infrastructure Services	Waste & Resources Management ¹	90	\$9,052
	Asset Management Services	12	\$165
	Other	13	\$47
Community Services	Response Services	53	\$4,412
	Aquatic, Leisure and Sport Facilities	187	\$2,884

Department	Branch / Unit	Number of Fees and Charges	Estimated Fee and Charges Revenue \$'000
	Healthy Places	90	\$1,176
	Community & Performance Venues	144	\$1,057
	Cemetery Services	42	\$977
	Community Land Permits	38	\$561
	Community Programs	6	\$171
	Libraries	33	\$151
	Visitor Information Services	73	\$21
	Other	12	\$3
Regional Strategy and Planning	Environment Policy	1	\$1
Executive Office	Legal Services	12	\$11
Total		1,118	\$46,612

Source: T1 Financials Development Budget 2 on 17 April 2012

Note 1: Waste & Resources Management excludes utility charges of approximately \$49 million billed through the rates notice.

As in previous years the price increase parameter for general cost-recovery fees and commercial charges was set in line with the long term financial plan parameter and the Council Cost Index developed by the Local Government Association of Queensland. Accordingly, the price increase parameter for 2012/2013 fees and charges has been set to 3.5%. This increase will ensure fees and charges revenue is adjusted to recover cost increases over the 2011/2012 financial year.

Community & Performance Venues has completed a comprehensive review of the structure of fees changed to more closely align with industry standards. The amended presentation format for these fees is different to the standard format used in Register of General Cost-recovery Fees and Commercial Charges 2012/2013 (Appendix A).

A review of cemeteries pricing was conducted in 2009. To achieve cost-recovery pricing for the Kulangoor cemetery in the medium term, and reduce general rate subsidisation of regional cemetery operations, a price path to full cost was implemented for interment fees. In 2010/2011 and 2011/2012, interment fees were increased by 15% each year. The price path has been amended to increase by 5% from 2012/2013.

Visitor Information Centres will be transitioning to Sunshine Coast Destination Limited effective from 1 July 2012. Commercial charges for Visitor Information Centres will be removed from the Register once the transition is completed.

CORPORATE PLAN

Corporate Plan Theme: *Great Governance*

Emerging Priority: 8.1 Ethical, accountable and transparent decision-making
Strategy: 8.1.1 Develop and implement a governance framework that provides transparent and accountable processes and enhances council's reputation

Corporate Plan Theme: Great Governance

Emerging Priority:	8.2	Effective business management
Strategy:	8.2.3	Implement a business approach that focuses on maximising opportunities, managing risks and improving quality of service

Corporate Plan Theme: Great Governance

Emerging Priority:	8.3	Strong financial management
Strategy:	8.3.2	Ensure council's financial performance is well managed and leads to a strong financial position

CONSULTATION**Internal Consultation**

Managers responsible for fees and charges across council were asked to review general cost-recovery fees and commercial charges relevant to their branch and obtain Executive Director endorsement for the proposed fees.

- Caravan Parks and Projects Manager
- General Manager Airports
- Manager Finance
- Financial Services Manager
- Financial Accounting Manager
- Manager Commercial & Procurement
- Manager Property and Business
- Chief Information Officer
- Spatial Information Manager
- Manager Corporate Governance
- Senior Financial Analyst
- Manager Waste and Resource Management
- Coordinator Business Operations
- Manager Transport and Engineering Services
- Manager Civil Works Services
- Manager Parks and Gardens
- Manager Environmental Operations
- Manager Community Response
- Response Services Manager
- Healthy Places Manager
- Community Land Permits Manager
- Lifeguard Services Manager
- Manager Community Facilities
- Aquatic & Leisure Facilities Manager
- Cemeteries Services Manager
- Community & Performance Venues Manager
- Manager Community Development
- Visitor Information Services Manager
- Manager Library and Gallery Services
- Project Director Regional Strategy
- Manager Environment Policy
- Chief Legal Officer

PROPOSAL

Commercial and Procurement branch staff members facilitate and coordinate with managers the review of general cost-recovery fees and commercial charges for the annual budget process with the exception of Development Assessment fees, which follow a separate process under the control of Regional Strategy and Planning department.

General cost-recovery fees and commercial charges for waste and resources management have been included in the Register and are subject to change after consideration by council of 2012/2013 utility charges at the relevant Special Budget Meeting. The price impact of the Queensland Waste Levy has been removed the fees shown in the Register as a result of the recent State Government announcement.

A fundamental issue in setting general cost-recovery fees and commercial charges is the general principle that the costs of services should be borne by those who benefit from them. A cost recovery constraint is imposed on cost-recovery fees under section 97 of the *Local Government Act 2009*.

Accordingly, advice to managers for 2012/2013 has generally set the default price for cost-recovery fees to full cost, in line with section 97 of the Act. In some instances, this has resulted in significant increases to recover costs or setting a price path to reach full cost recovery.

Charges which are commercial in nature come under section 262(3)(c) of the Local Government Act. These have the default price increase set to 3.5% for the 2012/2013 budget. Commercial charges should be equal to or above cost recovery and managers were requested to provide reasons for those below cost recovery.

The Financial Accounting team conducted a detailed self assessment of the GST treatment of fees and charges to ensure compliance with amendments to the GST legislation.

Commercial Filming on Community Land

Council received a written proposal from a community member in relation to television channels conducting commercial filming with crews of no more than five (5) people, suggesting they be allowed to have application fees waived and no requirement for a permit to utilise community land. A decision for waiver or relief of these fees needs to be determined by Council.

Council is required under Local Law 1 (Administration) 2011 to receive an application and approve events on community land. Applicants are also required to provide public liability insurance to the value of \$20 million which notes Sunshine Coast Council as an interested party.

The fee (\$205.00) that is applied to the application is the cost-recovery fee relating to staff costs to assess and produce the permit. The total amount of fees received from commercial filming permits on community land since 1 July 2011 is \$7,000.

With regard to Council's commitment to support the business and tourism sectors, it is proposed that Council require an application for commercial filming on community land but provide for waiver or relief of these fees, conditional upon an assessment of the activity being associated with:

1. promoting the region as a tourist or visitor destination; or
2. enabling a local business to market its product or services; or
3. developing a local industry segment (eg. Facilitating the development of the local film and television segment of the creative industries); or
4. marketing or promoting a major or regional event.

Legal

Local Government Act 2009

- Section 97 Cost-recovery Fees
- Section 98 Register of Cost-recovery Fees
- Section 262(3)(c) Commercial Charges.

Local Government (Finance, Plans and Reporting) Regulation 2010

- Section 107 Revenue Statement
- Section 134 Revenue Policy

Attachment 3 provides a detailed description of the *Local Government Act 2009* provisions on fees and charges.

A New Tax System (Goods and Services Tax) Act 1999.

Policy

Fees and charges are adopted by council for each financial year and can be amended during the year.

Risk

Where user charges do not meet the cost of providing the service, subsidy from general rates will be required which may risk the achievement of a balanced operating result.

Previous Council Resolution

There are no previous council resolutions relating to the Register of General Cost Recovery Fees and Commercial Charges 2012/2013. However, Council adopted similar recommendations for the 2011/2012 financial year.

Related Documentation

- Register of Development Assessment Fees
- *Local Government Act 2009*
- *Local Government (Finance, Plans and Reporting) Regulation 2010*

Critical Dates

The 2012/2013 general cost-recovery fees and commercial charges apply from 1 July 2012. Adopting the fees and charges at this time allows advance notice for users and the community.

Implementation

The Register provides price information for forms and the subsidiary revenue systems.

Once adopted, the Register of General Cost-recovery Fees and Commercial Charges 2012/2013 will be made public by being published on Council's website.

4.2 WASTE AND RESOURCES MANAGEMENT BUDGET

File No: 1-14054

Author: Manager, Waste and Resources Management
Infrastructure Services

Appendices: [App A - Waste and Resources Management Operational Plan 2012-13](#) (SM Att Pg 168)
[App B - Sunshine Coast Council Waste Minimisation Strategy Implementation Update May 2012](#) (SM Att Pg 187)
[App C - Waste and Resources Management Draft Revenue Statement 2012-2013](#) (SM Att Pg 206)

PURPOSE

This report presents the draft 2012/2013 Budget for the Waste and Resources Management Branch. The report includes recommended adjustments to the Waste Management Core Budget and Operational Projects, Draft Revenue Statement for inclusion in the Revenue Statement and Waste Fees and Charges for adoption by Council.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2012/2013 budget has been developed using a long term financial model developed by Australian Economic Consultants, which predicts costs over a period of 30 years. The model provides for scenarios to be built into the model to predict future costs to council and the community, for initiatives such as construction and operation of an Advanced Waste Treatment System.

The Waste and Resources Management draft budget 2012/2013 is based on full cost pricing for services undertaken by the Branch, however it should be noted that full cost pricing has not been adopted for all of the charges. Some charges are below full cost due to a desire to create incentives for waste minimisation actions by customers, to avoid major price increases where the costs are well below full cost, or where increased prices would encourage unacceptable behaviour such as illegal dumping in the current economic climate. Significant examples include:

- While the standard bin size is 240litres, the Minimum Waste Charge continues to be based on an 80 litre bin volume to provide financial relief for some low waste producers
- the 140 litre wheelie bin is charged less than full cost to encourage use of the smaller bin
- the 240 litre bin is charged more than full cost to discourage use of larger bins
- domestic volumes of self hauled waste disposed at landfills and transfer stations are charged less than full cost. A significant price increase to achieve full cost recovery may encourage further disposal of waste into street litter bins or illegal dumping.

The 2012/2013 budget is important because it positions Council for the next Waste Management Contract due to commence in June 2014. A range of essential projects are required to be undertaken to enable relevant information to be included in the tender documents, due for release in November 2012.

The financial model forecasts the financial performance of the business including Revenue, Operational Costs, Capital Costs, Income Tax equivalent and Council return on investment.. The financial model establishes the charges which should be applied to obtain a balanced budget each year. Prices are generally based on full cost, which takes into account all of the cost drivers that are applied to the cost of operating the waste management business.

Proposed rated charges for all waste collection services are included in the “Waste Management Draft Revenue Statement 2012/2013”, (Appendix C) to this report.

Proposed Disposal Fees and Charges are detailed in Appendix A of the Waste Management Operational Plan 2012/2013 (Appendix A) to this report.

The Waste Strategy Implementation Plan Update May 2012 (Appendix B) details the progress to date of the Waste Minimisation Strategy, adopted by Council in 2009 and outlines, the future implementation plan.

The costs of operating essential waste collection, disposal and diversion services has resulted in a need to increase the charge for Wheelie bins by 9.2% and increase the cost of disposal of waste to landfill by 18%, (from \$110 per tonne to \$130 per tonne). The \$20 increase in disposal charges is significantly impacted by the Carbon Tax (\$9.12 including GST). Liquid Waste Charges are proposed to rise by 4.8%. These cost increases have been caused by:

- Unavoidable rise and fall in contract costs, which impact on collection, disposal and resource recovery contracted services (largely influenced by fuel price rises)
- Fall in commercial disposal volumes and sale of recyclables
- Substantial loan repayments for essential capital works,
- Waste Strategy Implementation,
- Impacts of the Federal Carbon price and
- Adjustments to the core budget.

In recognition of the community concern regarding the minimum waste charge it is proposed to maintain the minimum charge based upon the lowest bin size – the 80 litre bin.

Free mulch will continue to be available in domestic quantities for residents delivering domestic quantities of garden waste for mulching. Residents paying for a Garden Waste collection service will also continue to be entitled to 1 cubic metre of free mulch during each 6 monthly rating period.

The State Government announcement that it will repeal the legislation imposing the landfill waste levy from 1st July 2012 is significant. The current levy is approx \$2.6 Million per annum. This report proposes no levy be adopted in the budget based on the release of a statement by the Government that the relevant legislation will be amended to show \$0 for waste landfill levy which will apply from 1st July. Council will still be required to pay levy costs collected until 30th June 2012 under the current legislation.

Commercial waste disposal is \$148.50 per tonne in 2011/2012 which includes the levy payment. This will reduce to \$130 per tonne in 2012/2013 with the abolishment of the levy and compares with our neighbouring council's current costs as detailed in the attached Comparison.

Comparison of SEQ Disposal and Collection Charges 2011/12				
Council	Disposal Charge per tonne	240L waste 240L recycle bin	140L waste 240L recycle bin	240L Greenwaste Bin
Redlands	\$161.50	\$288.00	\$212.00	\$50.00
Sunshine Coast	\$148.50	\$209.70	158.70	72.00
Brisbane	\$144.30	\$256.00	\$256.00	\$66.16
Moreton Bay	\$135.50	\$237.00	\$219.00	N/A
Toowoomba	\$126.50	\$162.00	N/A	\$35.00
Gold Coast	\$116.60	\$221.00	\$221.00	N/A
Logan	\$84.00	\$244.00	\$234.00	N/A
Ipswich	\$80.00	\$272.00	\$272.00	\$50.00

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- (a) receive and note the report titled “Waste and Resources Management Budget 2012/2013”; and
- (b) note the Waste and Resources Management Operational Plan 2012/2013 (Appendix A); and
- (c) note the Sunshine Coast Council Waste Minimisation Strategy Implementation Update May 2012 (Appendix B); and
- (d) adopt the draft schedule of Waste Management Fees and Charges for 2012/2013 as detailed in Appendix A of the “Waste and Resources Management Operational Plan 2012/13” (Appendix A); and
- (e) agree to the “Operational Projects and Core Adjustments” amounting to \$819,000 for 2012/2013 as detailed in Appendix B of the “Waste and Resources Management Operational Plan 2012/2013 (Appendix A); and
- (f) resolve that in relation to those regulatory fees to which Section 97 of the *Local Government Act 2009* apply:
 - (i) the applicant is the person liable to pay these fees and charges; and
 - (ii) the fee or charge must be paid at or before the time the application is lodged or as specified in the fees and charges; and
- (g) delegate to the Chief Executive Officer the power to amend commercial charges to which section 262 (3) (c) of the *Local Government Act 2009* apply; and
- (h) adopt the “Waste Management Draft Revenue Statement 2012/2013” as detailed in (Appendix C), and these charges be referred to the 2012/2013 budget meeting for adoption by council; and

- (i) agree to fund the Waste Management Community Service Obligations estimated to cost \$1,103,877 from general rates as detailed in the “Waste and Resources Management Operational Plan 2012/2013” (Appendix A); and
- (j) adopt the Landfill Rehabilitation Program of \$2,388,350 for 2012/2013 and endorse the allocations for the 4 years 2013/14 to 2016/17 as detailed in Appendix C of the “Waste and Resources Management Operational Plan 2012/2013” (Appendix A).

FINANCE AND RESOURCING

The expenditure in the proposed waste management budget will be offset by revenue from fees and charges and rated utility charges.

The 2012/2013 budget has a Total Operating Revenue of \$59,122,441 and a Total Operating Expenditure of \$51,008,900 with an Operating Surplus of \$8,113,541.

Further details of a proposed increase in the Rated Charges of 9.2% for domestic waste services, 4.8% increase in liquid waste charges and 18% increase in disposal charges are contained below under Proposal, and all charges are fully detailed in the Waste and Resources Management Operational Plan 2012/2013.

The State Government has announced that legislation incorporating the Landfill Levy of \$35 per tonne is to be repealed from 1st July 2012.

CORPORATE PLAN

Corporate Plan Theme: *Ecological Sustainability*

Emerging Priority: 2.5 Innovative programs to protect our ecology
Strategy: 2.5.1 Develop a waste management and recycling strategy targeted to the goal of zero waste

CONSULTATION

Internal Consultation

The following internal staff were consulted during preparation of this report:

- Executive Director Infrastructure Services
- Executive Director Finance
- Manager Finance and Business
- Manager Financial Services Unit, Finance and Business
- Manager Financial Planning and Performance
- Senior Financial Analyst, Finance and Business
- Senior Management Accountant, Waste

External Consultation

- Australian Economic Consultants (AEC) – (Prepared the long term financial model.)
- Department of Environment and Resource Management - (Waste Levy.)

Community Engagement

Waste disposers who deliver waste to the landfill must be informed of the increase in the cost of waste disposal in sufficient time to enable them to modify their contracts and quotations to recover any increased costs from their customers. Flyers detailing the new fees will be issues to regular customers and details will be available on council's web site.

A series of 3 community consultation meetings at the Mooloolaba Surf club were held to gauge public response to council's proposals to introduce future advanced waste treatment and further engagement of the community is essential when council's official position has been resolved.

A community consultation plan has been previously developed and implemented to inform the public of the diversion of commercial volumes of waste from the Nambour landfill to extend its life while drill and blast contracts are undertaken and new cells are developed.

PROPOSAL**Overview**

During preparation of the 2010/11 budget the council developed and adopted a long term financial model as the basis for developing future budgets for the Waste Management Business. This model was prepared by consultants Australian Economic Consultants to predict the future costs and full cost recovery implications over a 30 year period for waste management operations within the region. The model has been refined each year and used in preparing the draft 2012/13 budget. The Model identifies unavoidable cost impacts in 2012/2013 across all waste collection and disposal activities including:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|
| • Depreciation | \$2,178,445 |
| • Contract Rise and Fall | \$2,096,265 |
| • Landfill Rehabilitation Expense | \$1,911,019 |
| • Decrease in Sales Revenue | \$1,287,913 |
| • Federal Carbon Price | \$1,749,385 |

The Waste and Resources Management Operational Plan 2012/2013 (Appendix A of this report) provides a detailed explanation of past and future activities to be undertaken by the Branch in 2012/2013. This includes:

- Appendix A - Fees and Charges proposed for 2012/2013.
- Appendix B - Operational Projects Core and Non Core Adjustments 2012/13 - full details of the additional costs and operating projects impacting on the 2012/13 budget which amount to \$819,000.

- Appendix C details the Landfill Rehabilitation Program for the next 5 years for reinstatement and ongoing maintenance of closed landfills with \$2,388,350 proposed for 2012/13. The Landfill Rehabilitation Program is further explained in the Finance and Business section of this report.

The Waste Minimisation Strategy Implementation Update May 2012 (Appendix B of this report) provides a snapshot of the Implementation of the strategy at May 2012 and proposed expenditure in 2012/2013. The most significant issue facing council is the Advanced Waste Treatment options available to council. Council has received a Queensland Treasury report and review of Waste to Energy technology and this issue will be presented to council later this year for discussion together with other options for alternative technologies to reduce waste to landfill.

Review of Significant Branch Achievements in 2011/2012

During the 2011/2012 period the Branch has completed a range of capital and operational projects. The following list details the most significant achievements.

- Waste audit of various waste streams (from domestic, Commercial and Industrial Premises, Construction and Demolition waste, Multiple Units) in preparation for new waste collection contract and Alternative Waste Treatment. Further auditing is required in 2012/2013.
- Engagement of a Litter Management Officer and development of a draft Litter Management Strategy for Council.
- Landfill gas flaring at three (3) Landfills is operational and Eumundi Rd due for completion by June 2012 to significantly reduce the impact of Federal Carbon pricing.
- Clearing of Gun Club Land, Pierce Avenue landfill for additional landfill capacity.
- Mattress Processing of an estimated 17,000 mattresses during the 2011/2012 period.
- Officers visited Christchurch and Timaru councils in New Zealand (at no cost to council) to investigate Composting operations and disposable nappy recycling.
- Establishment and operation of an Alternative Waste Treatment working group including staff and 6 councillors to explore the future waste treatment opportunities.
- Review of Waste to Energy by Queensland Treasury.
- Nambour Landfill Drill and Blast project nearing completion.
- Continuing of expansion of bulk bin recycling service to business premises.
- Draft Layout Plan completed for Sustainability Park at Bells Creek.
- Completed design of the upgrade of the Eumundi Rd Landfill to incorporate drop off facility and relieve traffic congestion at the entrance.
- Connection of Eumundi Rd Landfill Leachate to Sewer at a cost of \$1.5 Million to reduce liquid waste transport costs.
- Stage 1 of the construction of the front end of the Buderim Resource recovery centre commenced and to be completed in 2012.
- Installation of a \$100,000 solar tracking energy system to power the Buderim Resource Recovery infrastructure by 30th June.

- Provided special waste collection services to the public after the February/ March floods to facilitate waste disposal from flood damaged houses and extended the operating hours at transfer stations for waste delivered from the public.
- Installation of additional Public Recycling bins through a \$30,000 grant from the Australian Food and Grocery Council's Packaging Stewardship Forum.
- Delivery of a comprehensive Schools and Community Waste Education Program across the region with 7,500 adults and children attending education programs.
- Composting workshops held at Bunnings (3), Council libraries and Community centres (8 will be delivered in 2011/2012. Bunnings have requested 3 more due to the popularity of the workshops.
- Development and circulation of 20,000 home composting DVD's.
- Development is progressing on an Ecobiz DVD including waste management, water conservation, energy minimisation and reduction of associated costs to business.
- Participation in the e-waste Recyclathon 27th March 2012 with 8.5 tonnes of computers, printers and accessories recycled.

Business and Finance 2012/2013

The following proposals relate to the operation of the Waste and Resources Management business during the 2012/2013 period.

- **Waste Minimisation Strategy Implementation Plan Update May 2012** has been developed to update the Council's Waste Minimization Strategy 2009-2014 and provides a forward implementation plan, actions and key decision points for council decision making. Waste Strategy Implementation costs of \$655,000 have been allocated in the Budget to continue implementation of the Waste Strategy in 2012/2013.

Details of the projects that are to be undertaken are included in "Waste and Resources Management Operational Plan 2012/2013" (Appendix A).

- **Proposed Rated Charges** are detailed in Appendix C, "Waste and Resources Management Draft Revenue Statement 2012-2013", with a draft schedule of charges for inclusion in the budget to be referred to the Council Budget Meeting for adoption.

Costs will rise by 9.2% for Wheelie Bin services and 4.8% for Liquid Waste Charges. Bulk Waste Bin Charges will rise by 12%. The Garden waste service is proposed to only increase from \$72 to \$75 per annum to encourage diversion of this organic waste. The increase to collection services charges are driven by higher contract costs which are largely influenced by rising fuel prices; increased disposal costs (including the impacts of carbon pricing); and costs associated with waste strategy implementation projects.

The 9.2% increase in wheelie bin charges can be attributed to:

- 4.8% increase in collection contracts and operations
- 0.7% Waste Strategy Implementation
- 0.6% New Waste Collection Contract Preparation
- 2.0% Increase in disposal cost per tonne and carbon price

- 1.1% Increase in return on capital & depreciation due to recognition of new assets and increased operational costs
- **State Waste Levy.** The State Government announcement that it will repeal the legislation imposing the landfill waste levy from 1st July 2012 is significant. This will provide a significant reduction to disposal of commercial waste (\$35 per tonne). Commercial waste disposal is \$148.50 per tonne in 2011/2012. This will reduce to \$130 per tonne in 2012/2013.
- **Federal Carbon price becomes** effective from 1st July 2012. Landfills are the only council activity which requires Council to be a liable entity for carbon price. This tax will have an impact on the costs of Waste Utility Charges and landfill disposal charges. This amounts to a liability of \$1,749,385 in 2012/2013 which accounts for 7% of the 18% increase in the waste disposal charge per tonne.

Money collected in 2012/2013 for waste disposed in that year will be used to cover the liability for up to 50 years due the complex nature of waste degeneration and carbon pricing for landfills. To offset the exposure, Landfill Gas extraction and flaring facilities have been installed at 3 or the 4 landfills and the fourth landfill is due for completed by June 2012. This reduces the landfill carbon liability.

- **Timber Waste** is currently accepted for the same price as green waste (\$40 per tonne). Council has a current stockpile of 20,000 tonnes of timber waste on hand that cannot be removed for reprocessing. Due to economic circumstances, there is no commercial reuse available for this timber waste. It is therefore proposed to charge the same price for timber waste disposal as general waste, in 2012/2013. This is an increase from \$40 per tonne in 2011/2012 to \$130 per tonne. Past practice of transporting waste to Rocky Point incinerator for generation of electricity is no longer available and recent tenders called for the acceptance of timber waste are not viable. It is possible that timber waste must be buried in landfill unless alternative disposal sources can be found, at which time the disposal prices can be revised by the Chief Executive Officer.

Council is currently stockpiling 20,000 tonnes of this product at landfills but space limitations prevent this continuing. Timber waste is generally delivered by skip bin companies, fencing contractors, and hardware stores (delivering pallets) and this price increase will impact upon an estimated 80 regular customers. Smaller domestic loads of timber waste such as trailer and utility loads will pay the domestic waste charge for mixed waste instead of the green waste charge. This impact is smaller i.e. from \$8 per trailer classified as green waste to \$16 for a trailer of mixed waste. These smaller transactions are irregular and would generally occur for example when a resident demolished a fence.

- **Liquid Waste Charges** need to be increased by 4.8% to accommodate increases in price imposed by Unity Water for treatment charges (to Sewer) and significant anticipated cost increase in rise and fall particularly fuel which influence this contracted service. Details of the new prices are available in the Waste and Resources Management Operational Plan 2012/13. Note the this service operates on a fee for service basis, and residents can choose weekly, fortnightly, monthly or quarterly pump out services subject to waste management staff approval based on historical pump out volumes.

- **Minimum Waste Charge** is paid by property owners who do not pay the equivalent of a 140 litre bin service. A minimum charge equivalent to an 80 litre bin charge was introduced in 2011/12 to accommodate those premises that produce low volumes of waste such as retirement villages and low occupancy accommodation units. The minimum charge applies across the whole region. A minimum waste charge ensures that small waste producers contribute to the corporate costs of operating waste collection and disposal services apart than collecting their waste and recycling bins.
- **Free Mulch** will continue to be provided to residents delivering domestic quantities of garden waste for mulching. A downturn in the demand for mulch and surplus product on hand enables council to make this “popular offer” to the public. It is also proposed to provide residents who receive a Garden Waste Collection Service with one cubic metre of free mulch during each 6 monthly rating period.
- **Community Service Obligations** are services with associated costs beyond the scope of services that would normally be undertaken by a private waste management business. These obligations require consideration by Council each year and council must adopt a resolution endorsing the Community Service Obligations which it agrees to fund from the General Fund. The budgeted expenditure for these services in 2011/2012 was \$811,011. These Community Service Obligations are estimated to increase to \$1,103,877 (based upon 2011/12 actual expenditure). The Community Service Obligations have been identified as activities that clearly provide a Community Benefit that the waste business should not cover. Full details of the Community Service Obligations are detailed in Appendix A, “Waste and Resources Management Operational Plan 2012/2013”.
- **Disposal Fees and Charges** for 2012/2013 are documented in Appendix A of the “Waste and Resources Management Operational Plan 2012/2013” (Appendix A). Waste disposal charges are based upon a disposal charge of \$130 per tonne, (increased from \$110 per tonne or 18% in 2011/2012). The \$20 increase in disposal charges is significantly impacted by the Carbon price (\$9.12 per tonne) as well as a decline in the landfill volumes and reduction in revenue from the sale of recyclable material. The fees are further explained in “Waste and Resources Management Operational Plan 2012/2013” (Appendix A). The minimum waste disposal charge of \$ 7.00 adopted in the fees and charges in the 2011/2012 budget is proposed to be maintained at \$7.00.

The 18% increase in disposal charges per tonne can be attributed to:

- 7.3% Carbon Price
- 3.3% drop in sale of recyclables
- 1.8% increase in disposal processing costs
- 3.1% drop in volume
- 2.5% Core budget adjustments, Operational Projects

Capital Works Program

The capital works program for 2012/2013 requests \$15,238,550 for essential projects. The major projects to be undertaken are included below:

Project	Cost
Buderim RRC - Construction of shop car park and sales area	\$1,692,800
Nambour Landfill – Cell A construction	\$1,220,000
Nambour Landfill - Expansion Drill and Blast Rock	\$2,442,500
Noosa Landfill – Installation of engineered landfill liner	\$2,300,000
Caloundra Landfill - Construction of Cell 9	\$2,600,000
Caloundra Landfill - Construction of tank farm and leachate perimeter drain - Stage 2 (Closure Plan item)	2,400,000
Regional Waste - Sustainability Park primary infrastructure preliminary works	\$500,000

Landfill Rehabilitation Provision

The Landfill Rehabilitation Provision exists so that council meets its obligations under the Australian Accounting Standards to recognise future landfill closure and restoration costs as liabilities. There are two elements of the provision which affect the annual budget and project delivery.

- An estimated annual amount that is placed in a fund and set aside each year to fund the required work over 30 years, and
- The amount that is allocated from that fund each year to fund the actual works undertaken.

Under the full cost pricing model, waste management recognises an estimated annual expense to fund future rehabilitation works over 30 years, amounting to \$1,911,019 in 2012/2013. This amount is calculated based on smoothing the costs of a thirty year rehabilitation program so that the annual expense does not fluctuate as project costs are incurred.

The provision fund is then utilised to fund the Landfill Rehabilitation Program of works. Projects for 2012/2013 amount to \$2,388,350 and full details of the items that have been provided for are included in Appendix C of the "Waste and Resources Management Operational Plan 2012/2013" (Appendix A).

In previous years the council has only approved a one year provision, without adoption of the future costs in following years that will occur. The operational plan for 2012/2013 now includes details of the 5 year Landfill Rehabilitation Program. It is requested that council approve the 2012/2013 year allocation and endorse the years 2013/2014 to 2016/2017 by adopting a similar practice used for approval of the council's capital works program.

Budget Summary

The Waste Management budget development results in a 9.2% increase in the wheelie bin charge and an 18% increase in disposal charges, (based on increasing the tonnage rate from \$110 to \$130 per tonne) at landfills. This provides the necessary revenue to meet the costs of waste management operations, adjustment to core budget and the waste strategy initiatives that need to be undertaken to prepare for the new waste management contract which is currently being developed for tendering late in 2012.

The 2012/2013 budget has a Total Operating Revenue of \$59,122,441 and a Total Operating Expenditure of \$51,008,900 with an Operating Surplus of \$8,113,541. Details are show in the following table.

STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE	
Operating Revenue	2012/13
Rates & Utility Charges	46,461,556
Fees & Charges	7,410,379
Grants & Subsidies - recurrent	0
Operating Contributions	410,754
Other Revenue	2,414,809
Internal Revenue	1,321,066
Community Service Obligations	1,103,877
Interest Received from Investments	0
Total Operating Revenue	59,122,441
Operating Expenditure	
Employee Costs	2,805,248
Contract Costs	33,780,506
Other Materials & Services	4,977,031
Internal Expenditure (incl corporate overheads)	3,627,131
Depreciation	2,178,445
Finance Costs	3,171,995
Other Expenses	226,017
Competitive Neutrality Adjustments	242,527
Total Operating Expenditure	51,008,900
OPERATING SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)	8,113,541
Targeted Earnings Before Tax Under FCP *	5,660,454
Achieved Earnings Before Tax	8,113,541
Transfer To/(From) Reserves **	2,453,087

* Contribution to Council in the form of Income Tax Equivalent & Shareholder Return

** Reserve transfer required to fund Landfill Rehabilitation Expense & Capital Funding Shortfall

Legal

The Federal Carbon Tax is scheduled to be implemented by 1st July 2012 and this budget is built assuming the tax will be implemented in accordance with current government policy, despite ongoing political debate at the federal level.

Policy

The draft Budget for Waste and Resources Management Branch has been prepared based on full cost of providing services wherever possible. The fees and charges and Revenue Statement are developed in recognition of the Carbon Tax Liability for councils landfills.

Risk

- **Waste Levy**

There is risk for council associated with implementing utility charges and disposal charges without inclusion of a waste levy component. The state government has indicated the waste levy will be repealed effective 1st July 2012 but this could be deferred or delayed and expose council to payment of the levy after 1st July.

The decision not to include the levy component is based upon advice from the government that they have undertaken to reduce the levy to \$0 from 1st July.

- ***Timber waste***

Timber waste was previously sent to Rocky Point Incinerator for incineration and electricity generation. This disposal outlet is no longer available and recent tenders calling for an alternative disposal source have not resulted in a viable alternative. There is a significant cost to disposal of this waste to landfill and the proposal is to charge the same charge as mixed waste (\$130 per tonne) until an alternative disposal source can be located. This is likely to be unpopular with domestic and commercial waste transporters. The Chief Executive Officer has the authority to reduce the charge if another disposal source can be found.

Other Councils are facing similar difficulties with disposal of timber waste and finding alternative markets while competing with other councils will be difficult. Timber waste is currently being stockpiled on landfill sites in the short term but limited space will determine that ongoing stockpiling is not feasible and burial is the only option available if alternative markets cannot be found.

- ***Commercial and Industrial Waste***

Council has previously been informed of the risks associated with the commercial and industrial waste collection services and the monopoly held by council on delivering these services. Following a complaint by the waste management industry, council referred this matter to the Queensland Competition Authority and council has recently responded to a confidential draft report forwarded to council. Council is awaiting the final report due in June.

Previous Council Resolution

No previous council resolutions relate to this budget.

Related Documentation

A draft report regarding discussion on the possible implementation of a two tiered waste charge has been withheld awaiting the outcome of the Queensland Competition Authority report.

Critical Dates

Information contained in this report must be considered in time to allow preparation of the Sunshine Coast Council Budget for 2012/2013.

Fees and charges should be adopted and publicized well in advance of the implementation date 1st July 2012 to allow members of the public and particularly waste contractors to be informed of the increased costs to enable them to pass those costs on to their customers.

Implementation

A communication plan will be developed to notify the public of changes to prices where there will be an impact from 1st July 2012.

4.3 PUBLIC TRANSPORT LEVY INITIATIVES REPORT 2012/2013

- File No:** ECM 13 June 2012
- Author:** Project Manager State Transport Projects
Regional Strategy and Planning
- Appendix:** [App A - Proposed Update of Public Transport Levy Policy 2012](#) (SM Att Pg 212)
- Attachments:** [Att 1 - Timeline Relating to Public Transport Levy](#) (SM Att Pg 217)
[Att 2 - Map of Public Transport Levy service initiatives](#) (SM Att Pg 223)
[Att 3 - Summary List of PT Levy Initiatives](#) (SM Att Pg 224)
[Att 4 - Sunshine Coast Public Transport Information](#) (SM Att Pg 233)
[Att 5 - Information supporting Proposed 2012-13 Initiatives](#) (SM Att Pg 242)
[Att 6 - Indicative 5 Year Investment Program & Possible Program of Network Improvements](#) (SM Att Pg 245)
[Att 7 - 2011-12 Initiatives and Projects](#) (SM Att Pg 249)
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PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the Public Transport Levy including a brief history of the Public Transport Levy, along with a summary of the achievements to date. This report also seeks approval for continuation of the levy and includes an indicative listing of initiatives for 2012/2013 and an outline for a 5 year plan.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On 21 April 2009 Council directed officers to report back with a policy for influencing public transport based on a levy to focus on the rapid improvement of public transport for the Sunshine Coast, as part of its vision to more sustainable travel and provide a real alternative to the private car. A summary of the history to date is at **Attachment 1**.

Council adopted the *Public Transport Levy Policy* on 2 June 2009 and requires that it be reviewed in line with all policies upon the election of a new Council every 4 years. The updated policy is at **Appendix A**.

The funding raised by the levy has been applied to many initiatives. Service based initiatives are indicated by map at **Attachment 2** and the full list of initiatives is provided at **Attachment 3**. The outcomes of the application of the Public Transport Levy are outlined in **Attachment 4**.

A summary of the primary initiatives, to date, include:

- The Beerwah to Landsborough to Maleny bus service trial;
- A permanent Sunshine Coast Airport bus service which connects the Airport with Noosa Junction and Maroochydore directly;
- Improvements to existing routes 601, 602, 607, 612, 613, 614, 619, 620 and 622, with a bring forward of increased service frequency for routes 600, 613, 614, 619 and 620;
- Bus stop improvements;
- Council Cabs;

- Flexilink trial services;
- Support for the introduction of the U Pass scheme at the University of the Sunshine Coast;
- Development and implementation of workplace programs and destinations programs;
- Free public transport (buses, Flexilinks and Council Cabs) across the whole Sunshine Coast for the Christmas holiday period of 26 December 2011 to 9 January 2012;
- Development and introduction of a trial bus service between Coolumburra and Nambour;
- Continuing support for the Hinterland Connect service to be made a permanent service administered by TransLink for the Department of Transport and Main Roads; and
- Community engagement workshops to help refine initiatives as needed.

It is proposed to continue the Public Transport Levy for 2012/2013 and maintain the rate at \$20 per rateable property per annum. **Table 1** in the report outlines the indicative list of initiatives proposed for progress in 2012/13. Further information supporting this listing is included as **Attachment 5**.

A proposed 5 year plan for service improvement is provided in **Attachment 6** to guide future consideration of levy investment and be used for advocacy with State agencies with the responsibility for planning, managing and operating public transport.

All initiatives are monitored which resulted in the decision to cease some flexilink initiatives in areas with little or no demand. This demonstrated the 'use it or lose it' principle that has been a clear message with every service initiative under the Public Transport Levy.

Council has a significant challenge to demonstrate the value of public transport to individuals and the community when 85% of daily travel is by the private car.

The other major challenge has been the continued education of how the levy can and would be applied with the relevant State Departments with responsibility for public transport. There is now a much improved understanding of what Council will aim to do with the levy and how this could link with State programs.

The Public Transport Levy is an important tool which enables Council to leverage financial advantage and provides significant influence into State public transport programs for the Sunshine Coast.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- (a) receive and note the report titled “Public Transport Levy Initiatives Report 2012/2013”;
- (b) confirm there is no change to the Public Transport Levy amount and the method of application for 2012/2013, being \$20 per rateable property per annum;
- (c) adopt the Public Transport Levy Policy 2012 at Appendix A to this report;
- (d) adopt an indicative program of projects/initiatives as listed in Table 1 of the report for implementation in 2012/2013 and authorise the Chief Executive Officer to progress the listing in Table 1 subject to further advice from TransLink and the Department of Transport and Main Roads as necessary and appropriate planning, development and analysis prior to implementation; and
- (e) request the Chief Executive Officer to make arrangements for meetings to occur with the Minister for Transport and Main Roads and Minister for Public Transport and their relevant Departmental officers to brief them on the public transport goals of the Sunshine Coast.

FINANCE AND RESOURCING

It is not proposed to alter the amount of the Public Transport Levy which is currently set at \$20 per rateable property per annum for 2012/13.

For 2011/2012 a total of \$3,039,356 was raised by the levy. The levy is expected to raise an estimated \$3,040,000 in the 2012/2013 financial year. This report considers a listing of initiatives for 2012/13 based on the expected revenue.

In terms of progress in 2011/12, the following applies (as at 31 March 2012):

• Total Approved Budget (incl. carryover)	\$ 3,632,162
• Expenditure to date	\$ 2,354,690
• Existing committals	<u>\$ 534,562</u>
• Total Applied funding	\$ 2,889,252

With the additional initiatives to be progressed and implemented, it is currently estimated that funds totalling \$3,100,000 will be expended or be contractually committed at 30 June 2012.

Any unallocated funds will be placed into the Public Transport Levy Reserve.

Each year, unallocated funds are returned to the Public Transport Levy Reserve which had a balance of \$3,976,812 at 30 June 2011. Advice was distributed to councillors in terms of the proposed use of the funds in Reserve by leveraging a partnership with the State or others for a specific Council required outcome. Any investment must directly benefit public transport and be in line with the *Public Transport Levy Policy 2009*. The following major initiatives are identified:

- Elements along the CoastConnect corridor (including Brisbane Road);
- Elements of early works related to the State’s Sunshine Coast Transport Project;

- Investigations related to the future public transport needs of the Sunshine Coast (eg CAMCOS, Light Rail, Integrated Public Transport Network, etc); and
- Investment reserve (building of annually unexpended funds) to support future investment in high profile public transport facilities.

There are some specific allocations from the reserve due to the need to continue existing service initiatives beyond 30 June 2012 until Council has considered this report. These are (approximately):

• Council Cabs	(monthly)	\$6,000
• Flexilink Service Peachester-Beerwah	(3 monthly)	\$4,500
• Flexilink service Conondale-Maleny	(3 monthly)	\$18,000
• Flexilink Service Kenilworth-Mapleton	(3 monthly)	\$4,000
• Flexilink Service Boreen Point-Tewantin	(3 monthly)	\$18,000
• Beerwah-Landsborough-Maleny bus service trial	(3 monthly)	\$40,000
• Coolum-Nambour bus service trial	(to 30 Oct 2012)	\$90,000
• Route 619 (Maroochydore-Kawana) weekend services	(12 month)	\$50,000

The funding call to The Public Transport Levy Reserve to 30 Sept 2012 (say) is therefore \$205,000 approx. A further funding requirement of about \$70,000 is required to meet current contractual agreements beyond this date.

An indicative 5 year investment program is proposed at **Attachment 6**.

CORPORATE PLAN

Corporate Plan Theme: *Robust economy*

Emerging Priorities: 1.3 Infrastructure for economic growth
Strategies: 1.3.1 Facilitate the delivery of key infrastructure projects for our preferred economic growth

Corporate Plan Theme: *Innovation and creativity*

Emerging Priorities: 3.1 Partnerships and alliances that drive innovation
Strategies: 3.1.1 Foster partnerships with governments, business and the community to encourage innovation and sustainability

Corporate Plan Theme: *Accessibility and Connectedness*

Emerging Priority: 6.2 Better public transport
Strategy: 6.2.3 In partnership with state government, deliver a responsive and affordable public transport system, that considers arterial bus and light rail, which links the major activity centres of the region

CONSULTATION

Internal Consultation

Internal communication has been maintained through the regular email updates to councillors and senior staff. Ongoing contact, liaison and cooperation have occurred for each Public Transport Levy initiative between officers of the Regional Strategy & Planning Department, Infrastructure Services Department and Community Services Department.

External Consultation

External consultation has involved officers of the Department of Transport and Main Roads, TransLink Transit Authority and the public transport service operators.

Community Engagement

Community engagement and consultation in 2011/2012 was carried out for several of the new services or initiatives including the free holiday bus services and other trial services.

During and following the free holiday travel period for both 2010/2011 and 2011/2012, there were surveys of users as well as a web based feedback point for the community to comment on the initiative which provided the following results:

- Number of responses = 1,241 (818 surveys, 423 online) (c.f. 724 in 2010/11);
- 83% had used the service;
- 83% of respondents were residents;
- 93% were satisfied with the service;
- 50% were aware of Public Transport Levy;
- 96% supported this initiative;
- 37% would not have made the trip if there were no free holiday bus initiative;
- Purpose of travel was Recreation (51%), Shopping (33%), Work (10%);
- 58% did not regularly travel by public transport (i.e. less than daily);
- Only 37% travelled alone; and
- 64% would now consider using public transport as a result.

Community engagement also occurred in January/February 2011 for the proposed trial bus service between Coolumburra and Nambour to help finalise the route alignment and the timetable. This was followed up in early 2012 with a survey along the route which resulted in:

- Number of responses = 486 (386 surveys, 80 online);
- 72% of respondents between ages of 40 and 79;
- 80% were aware of the service;
- 58% use the service; and
- Most popular locations travelled between (in order)
 - Nambour Hospital;
 - Sunshine Coast Airport;

- Nambour Rail Station;
- Birtwill St Coolum Beach; and
- Coolum Beach / Nambour Central / Mt Coolum – Jarnahill St.

Community engagement has also occurred for a possible new flexilink service between Lake Macdonald and Cooroy to assist the decision making process which provided the following results:

- Number of responses 50 (44 in favour / 6 not in favour);
- 78% of respondents were aged between 40 and 79 yrs;
- 66% indicated travel for work or personal reasons in Cooroy; and
- 54% indicated travel for public transport connection beyond Cooroy (includes 6% to rail).

Surveys are being prepared for the Beerwah-Landsborough-Maleny bus service and for the flexilink services following the State and Local Government elections.

Regular progress updates were provided to Council's Transport Community Group which exists to enable a broad community based feedback source. A number of the proposed initiatives were discussed with the group to enable their input to refine the initiative. At their most recent meeting, the Transport Community Group requested that councillors and senior officers be made aware of the following position of the members:

- "1. That the Transport Community Group notes the presentation regarding investment for public transport services through the Public Transport Levy and endorses the continuation of the Public Transport Levy by future Councils to encourage mode shift and travel behaviour change on the Sunshine Coast.*
- 2. That the Transport Community Group notes the presentations with respect to the outcomes from the 2011/12 Free Holiday Bus services and endorses the continuing improvement and innovation of this and other services funded by the Public Transport Levy, due to their capacity to deliver innovative, cost effective and sustainable transport outcomes for the Sunshine Coast."*

Other matters discussed within the group included:

- Sustainable Transport Strategy 2011;
- Active Transport Plan 2011;
- Free holiday bus initiative;
- U-Pass initiative; and
- Draft Communications and Marketing Strategy.

The *Sustainable Transport Strategy 2011* and *Active Transport Plan 2011* have now been adopted and assist in shaping the Public Transport Levy program year to year. The strategy requires that a Public Transport Management Plan is developed to support the overall strategy and to assist in advocacy efforts with State and Commonwealth representatives.

PROPOSAL

Two options are available to Council:

1. Continue with the Public Transport Levy broadly in its current form, or
2. Do not continue with the Public Transport Levy.

This report proposes to:

- retain the Public Transport Levy in its current form;
- retain the current amount and method of application of the levy;
- have council note the progress of the implementation of the initiatives to date;
- endorse the program of initiatives listed in Table 1 for implementation in 2012/2013 which incorporates the continuation of some 2011/12 initiatives;
- Adopt an updated Public Transport Levy Policy 2012 containing minor clarifying amendments, and;
- Note the proposed 5 year program.

Should Council not wish to continue with this levy then a further report to Council would be necessary to deal with:

- the Public Transport Levy Reserve and the funds it may contain;
- formally ceasing the referencing and use of the current policy;
- confirming the approach to be taken in terminating each of the current initiatives (and associated Funding Agreements and contractual arrangements) following liaison with partners, operators and stakeholders;
- development of a communication strategy to advise users of the need to make alternate arrangements; and
- providing advice on the resourcing associated with these activities.

Background

A short summary of the history, Council resolutions and important dates which shaped the development and adoption of the Public Transport Levy and the introduction of associated activity is provided at **Attachment 1**.

The Public Transport Levy is an important tool which enables Council to leverage financial advantage and provides significant influence into State public transport programs for the Sunshine Coast.

Since inception of the levy, the following summarised list of initiatives has been implemented to date:

- commencement of a permanent 7 days per week hourly bus service which directly connects the Sunshine Coast Airport to the Noosa and Maroochydore areas;

- bring forward improvements to a number of bus routes including Routes 600, 613, 619, 620, and 622 as part of a wider TransLink service change that occurred on 13 December 2010 (coincided with commencement of operation of a new depot site by Sunbus at Caloundra);
- implementation of the Free Holiday Bus from 26 Dec 2011 to 8 Jan 2012;
- continuation of Flexilink services (with mixed levels of success);
- continuation of Council Cabs (incorporating some minor amendments to respond to user requests);
- development and roll out of a destination program and a workplace program to specific locations;
- support for the introduction of U-Pass by the University of the Sunshine Coast (an Australian first, ground breaking innovation);
- continuation of the trial bus service improvement between Beerwah and Maleny (which has seen good total passenger growth); and
- ongoing development of a trial bus service between Coolumburra and Nambour.

A full listing of initiatives is provided for reference at **Attachment 3** and mapped at **Attachment 2**.

Improving dialogue and planning with TransLink has enabled Council officers to formulate an indicative 5 year initiatives program as well as an investigations listing (refer to **Attachment 6**). Significant work on possible initiatives related to TransLink bus services has been underway to review the existing bus network, identify service improvement opportunities and schedule these in relation to known milestone events (e.g. SC University Hospital commencement).

This will allow more effective advocacy, better holistic consideration of where to apply levy and Reserve funds in the most productive way, identify bring forward opportunities in terms of service improvements and lead to increased centre connectivity with consequential increases in passenger numbers. This 5 year program will need to be provided each year to the State agencies.

More importantly, the investigations list to occur each year may lead to initiatives for implementation. The investigations program in tandem with the proposed 5 year program of initiatives is at **Attachment 6** of this report.

The program of initiatives excludes what are termed 'Business As Usual' initiatives. These are considered to be TransLink responsibility and to which Levy funds should not be applied. It is important to recognise that 'business as usual' interventions, which would be expected if the Public Transport Levy did not exist, include:

- the matching of new services with expected or planned development or other specific milestones;
- the ability to procure improvement through other mechanisms such as conditioning of development, infrastructure arrangements, etc; and
- the improvement is of a minor change or an operationally necessary matter.

A review and analysis (subject to data availability) of the service based initiatives to date together with the public transport characteristics for the Sunshine Coast are outlined in **Attachment 4**.

A draft Communication and Marketing Plan for sustainable transport is being developed and will be reported to Council separately. The over-arching strategic platform of the draft Communication and Marketing Plan is proposed to be around “lifestyle choice” of the individual. It is intended to position choosing more sustainable transport options as a community lifestyle choice linked to living on the Sunshine Coast and leveraging the desire to protect both its way of life and the environment. This premise is proposed to underpin all communications and marketing of the *Sustainable Transport Strategy 2011*. This is emotive and designed to validate existing sustainable behaviour choices and encourage a mind-set where people are open to the possibility of new travel behaviour over time.

The draft Communications and Marketing Plan is a required document under the *Sustainable Transport Strategy 2011* will be placed before Council in the near future.

Progress through 2011/2012

The financial year 2011/12 did have challenges which affected the proposed initiatives. The contractual dispute within Sunbus in finalising an enterprise bargaining agreement with drivers resulted in short notice interruption of services which affected the confidence of public transport users in that period. It culminated in a protracted period in August (about one week) without any public transport bus services.

Unfortunately this service disruption coincided with Census night 2011 and so a valuable planning source of reference data will not be available for the Sunshine Coast. A series of rain events leading to local flash flooding also caused temporary service diversions or cessation.

Considerable progress has nevertheless occurred in the development and implementation of the initiatives and projects for 2011/2012. **Attachment 7** provides more information with regard to individual activities.

Councillors have been kept informed on progress though a variety of methods including individual meetings, memorandums and email updates.

Throughout the 2011/12 financial year, a number of outstanding Council resolutions have also been completed which includes:

- A report was considered at the November Strategy & Planning Committee meeting titled “Maroochy North Shore / Coolool Services to Nambour and Maroochydhore in Public Transport Levy Initiatives”. All the actions associated with this resolution are now completed or well underway.
- During the year information was distributed to councillors examining options for possible contributions to the Public Transport Levy from key destination workplaces. This met the requirements of the resolution but no further progress is proposed on this matter at this time. The upcoming change to the rating system would require reconsideration of its use as a basis for progressing this any further. Advice was also provided, for information only, on the effect to the levy if it were used to fund major projects for identified strategic sustainable transport goals.

Proposal for 2012/13

Some of the initiatives from 2011/2012 will necessarily be continued into 2012/2013 to meet community service expectations, contractual obligations and be subject to their need and satisfactory performance.

The following table identifies an indicative listing of initiatives for 2012/2013. This generally complies with the broad allocation of funding for initiatives previously provided to Council and generally reflected in **Attachment 6**.

The aim is to consolidate and build on the outcomes achieved in 2011/2012. Some new opportunities arise in 2012/2013 related to user access to information, messaging to existing and prospective users and planning for other network improvements, such as area and corridor service reviews, to set the stage for future improvements.

Table 1: Indicative Listing of Public Transport Levy Initiatives for 2012/2013

Public Transport Levy Initiatives	Indicative Budget	Comment
Services		
<u>TransLink</u>		
Improve bus services to the Nambour area	\$200,000	New initiative subject to TTA advices and potential commencement about Nov 2012.
Improvement of the Hinterland Connect bus service frequency	\$150,000	Improve to a maximum of duplicating the resources for this service. (Subject to the service being made permanent).
Continued support to Route 619 (Maroochydore–Mooloolaba) - weekend hourly services	\$50,000	Continue contractual obligation.
Trial Coolum to Nambour Bus Service	\$350,000	Extend trial for up to 12 months.
Trial late night services Fri/Sat to Route 610 (Maroochydore-Nambour)	\$50,000	New initiative subject to TTA advices.
Opportunities to trial services or extend services related to TransLink or DTMR initiatives. Specifically, take advantage of any of the route adjustments to suit the Horton Pde Bus Station opening for other beneficial outcomes in the area.	\$200,000	Take the opportunity to bring forward service initiatives or trial beneficial area services.
Trial peak hour services	\$40,000	Reduce travel time, promote work based trips proposal is Noosa-Maroochydore (Commence end of year).
<u>gconnect (DTMR)</u>		
Beerwah to Landsborough to Maleny Bus service trial	\$165,000	Continue trial service.
<u>Flexilink</u>		
Flexilink – (Boreen Pt, Peachester, Conondale, Mapleton)	\$200,000	Continue selected routes.
Flexilink – new trial proposed for Lake Macdonald-Cooroy	\$40,000	Develop and implement trial new initiative.
<u>Council Cabs</u>		
Council Cabs	\$70,000	Continue and improve.
<u>Other</u>		
Free Holiday Bus initiative (Christmas/New Year period only, 12 days)	\$500,000	Repeat initiative.
Service improvement investigations with TTA and DTMR	\$40,000	Partnered planning of network improvement for 2012/13 and beyond.
<i>Sub-Total</i>	<i>\$2,055,000</i>	
Infrastructure		
Bus Stops supporting PT Levy initiatives only:	\$330,000	New /improve existing sites and

Public Transport Levy Initiatives	Indicative Budget	Comment
-Nambour Area improvements (6) -Hinterland Connect (2) -Maroochydore Area (2)		deal with 2012/13 new initiative needs.
Maroochydore Bus Station on Horton Parade	\$0	Any required funds would be from other sources including General Rates and/or Public Transport Levy Reserve.
<i>Sub-Total</i>	<i>\$330,000</i>	
<u>Support Systems</u>		
Implement "One" public transport system across Sunshine Coast	\$60,000	New initiative in partnership with TTA/DTMR.
Network analysis, initiative performance, develop and maintain performance measures (in house with State agencies and operators)	\$25,000	Monitoring of initiatives with TransLink and DTMR.
Light Rail Feasibility Study	\$250,000	Additional \$500,000 is required to be allocated from the Public Transport Levy Reserve to match Commonwealth Liveable Cities Grant application.
<i>Sub-Total</i>	<i>\$335,000</i>	
<u>User Focus</u>		
Marketing of all initiatives	\$100,000	Miscellaneous activities.
Communicating Sustainable Transport (Elements of the Draft Communications and Marketing Plan)	\$150,000	New initiative, progress elements.
User Information development and distribution	\$30,000	New initiative, guides, web based and smart phone apps, etc.
Third Party initiative support	\$40,000	Continue support third party proposals subject to meeting PT Levy Policy.
<i>Sub-Total</i>	<i>\$320,000</i>	
Total	\$3,040,000	

More information of the proposed intent and scope of each initiative listed for 2012/2013 is available at **Attachment 5** to the report.

Future Outcomes

In the future, apart from service and infrastructure upgrades, there are a number of initiatives that will empower the individual traveller and make travel by public transport easier and more convenient. With the Public Transport Levy, Council will be in a position to influence their implementation to benefit the Sunshine Coast where required.

The first will be a further improvement by TransLink of its Journey Planner which will provide street directory maps showing the walk journey to a bus stop or rail station as well as the public transport journey. This improved facility will be available online and via phone applications. It is expected to provide higher confidence to travellers for new journey destinations by reducing uncertainty. An increase in the number of trips by public transport due to increased confidence in the journey option can be expected. The challenge for the Sunshine Coast is to ensure that all public bus services are accessible for journey planning through this site.

An approach has previously been made to the former Minister for Transport to extend the use of the Go Card to two other services on the Sunshine Coast that are not TransLink bus services, so equitable travel cost and convenience can be had across the Sunshine Coast. This is being promoted as 'One System". A fresh approach to the new Minister for Transport and Main Roads and the Assistant Minister for Public Transport is now necessary. It will enable easier marketing of public transport travel options across the coast and remove a cost inequity that exists on the Sunshine Coast. Council has the ability to influence this essential outcome.

A major improvement for travellers will be the introduction of a real time information system in the near future. It will be on trial in Logan bus services through 2012/13 and rolled out once proven. It will provide accurate, progressive on bus information to keep travellers informed of next stop information and estimated time to destination. At major stops, screens will list coming bus arrivals to remove the uncertainty of whether the bus has been and gone or yet to arrive. In addition, a stop number or bar code would be available at all stops which, when entered into a smart phone, links to TransLink's site and provides the details of the next buses expected and estimated time of arrival. Enquiry of the progress of a specific bus on a route will also be possible to enable travellers to time their arrival at a stop more conveniently and confidently. This personal empowerment is expected to result in a significant increase in patronage on its own as it will minimise wait times and uncertainty.

An ongoing focus should be to ensure there is provision of centre to centre public transport service connectivity at a frequency to meet demands of those centres. The ideal would be a frequency that would not require timetabling but the introduction of real time information may assist in mitigating the immediacy of this need to a point. The aim should be to create a complete base public transport network between identified centres with half hourly frequency as a minimum. Any base network would include the establishment of local services for surrounding areas of higher order centres, or for linking centres of close proximity; these local services could be expected to be part of any base network for the Sunshine Coast. A clear and complete network which can form a base for the future and is able to be communicated is essential for the Sunshine Coast. It also forms the basis for supporting higher frequency services and specialist (express/limited stop/rocket) services between the highest order centres. A Public Transport Management Plan is being developed which can then assist in advocacy efforts.

An ongoing improvement in the quality of bus, stop facilities and other elements within a journey will all contribute to more acceptance of the ability of the public transport system as being a viable alternative to the private car for many regular journeys.

A continued focus on the development of a strong public transport corridor between Caloundra and Maroochydore will be necessary as a key element in the current and future public transport network for the Sunshine Coast. It will be necessary to lobby State Government to ensure that the full CoastConnect project should be a short term goal for both parties.

Many of the above enhancements will assist individuals to make a lifestyle choice to use a more sustainable mode of travel in lieu of the private car as the cost of owning a car and fuel cost increases over time. Other factors will also influence individual decision making in terms of mode of travel, destinations sought and accessibility of public transport.

Working with the State to ensure reliable trip times by implementing bus priority measures where required will assist.

There is a need to establish and maintain strong relationships between Council and the State at both the political level and at officer level, to be able to achieve any of the desired outcomes for the Sunshine Coast. A working relationship with all the transport operators on the Sunshine Coast is also required.

In achieving all these outcomes, it should not be forgotten that public transport has a social equity role in providing accessibility to all. This is particularly true for youth, those who chose not to drive, those who cannot drive due to age, disqualification or disability. Currently there is evidence that the majority of users are concession travellers. Unfortunately this factor is sometimes not regarded as highly as the focus on the return on investment.

There will also be the ability to target certain travel purposes, such as the journey to work trips, as well as the target groups such as youth, seniors or visitors to make more use of public transport.

Legal

There are a range of contractual agreements associated with a range of initiatives operating from funding from the public transport levy. This ranges from Funding Agreements with State agencies and the University of the Sunshine Coast to service contracts with transport operators. The agreements have generally been developed with a review or renewal date of 30 June of each year for the life of the agreement.

The development of initiatives and services are subject to several pieces of legislation, regulation and commercial contracts. The Department of Transport and Main Roads and TransLink respectively have assisted to ensure all legislative requirements and contractual matters are not infringed. Beyond this, there was a need to meet all of Council's policies and processes. Internal legal and procurement advice was sought at various points to clarify matters.

Policy

This report is in line with and supports the recently adopted *Sustainable Transport Strategy 2011* as follows:

Sustainable Transport Strategy Goal 1: *A shift to public and active transport modes is achieved*

- | | | |
|--------------------------|-----|--|
| Integrated Policy | 1.1 | Integrate services, pricing and passenger information systems and improve access to create a connected public transport network. |
| | 1.2 | In partnership with State Agencies, improve public transport travel speed, frequency, reliability and patronage to increase vehicle productivity to more effectively compete with the reliability, speed and convenience of the private motor vehicle leading to increased patronage and revenues relative to service provision costs. |
| | 1.3 | Improve accessibility, safety, convenience, coverage, and comfort of public transport service for all users including the disabled, seniors, and residents with limited access to services. |

The *Public Transport Levy Policy 2009* applies to this report and requires that it be reviewed in line with all policies with the election of a new Council every 4 years. It is proposed to make minor amendments to the wording to improve the clarity of understanding and application of the Policy document. The updated Public Transport Levy Policy is at **Appendix A**.

It is proposed to introduce an expenditure guideline to support the policy along the lines of that endorsed for the Environmental Levy. This will provide further transparency to the use of funding.

Risk

There are no apparent significant legal risks associated with continuing with the Public Transport Levy and its related initiatives.

If, however, the *Public Transport Levy Policy 2009* was to be abolished, it would raise a number of potential risks related to:

- Providing sufficient time for current users of public transport levy funded services to be terminated to make alternate travel arrangements;
- Maintaining community confidence and communicating that public transport is a high priority for the Sunshine Coast;
- Concluding existing contractual arrangements;
- Concluding financial agreements in existence; and
- Maintaining the focus, momentum, advocacy and relationships with State transport agencies on Sunshine Coast public transport issues.

Previous Council Resolution

The following recent resolutions are relevant to this report:

SPECIAL MEETING (BUDGET) 4 APRIL 2011 4.1.3 PUBLIC TRANSPORT LEVY INITIATIVES REPORT Council Resolution (SM11/15)

That Council:

- (a) *receive and note the report titled "Public Transport Levy Initiatives Report";*
- (b) *confirm there is no change to the Public Transport Levy amount and the method of application for 2011/2012, being \$20 per rateable property per annum;*
- (c) *note the status of 2010/11 initiatives;*
- (d) *confirm the cessation of the following initiatives at 30 June 2011 unless a dramatic change in use is recorded:*
 - (i) *Buderim to Mountain Creek flexilink service;*
 - (ii) *Cooroy to Pomona flexilink service;*
 - (iii) *Kunda Park/Buderim/Mons flexilink service; and*
 - (iv) *Mooloolah Valley area flexilink service;*
- (e) *adopt an indicative program of projects/initiatives as listed in Table 1 of the report for implementation in 2011/2012;*
- (f) *authorise the Chief Executive Officer to progress this listing subject to further advice from TransLink and the Department of Transport and Main Roads as necessary and appropriate development and analysis prior to implementation; and*
- (g) *note that a further report will be presented to council regarding public transport investment of previous years reserves funds.*

ORDINARY MEETING 22 FEBRUARY 2012**7.1.1 PUBLIC TRANSPORT LEVY INITIATIVES CONTINUATION REPORT****Council Resolution** (OM12/26)

That Council:

- (a) *receive and note the report titled 'Public Transport Levy Initiatives Continuation Report';*
- (b) *confirms it requires the seamless continuation of existing public transport services to ensure no interruption to users of these services until the new council has considered the Public Transport Levy as part of the 2012/2013 budget process;*
- (c) *authorise the Chief Executive Officer to consider options and negotiate with transport agencies to provide continuation of current public transport service;*
- (d) *note that funds to support the services will be drawn from the Public Transport Levy Reserve with the amounts to be reported to Council when known; and*
- (e) *clarify that the existing services affected include:*
 - (i) *Beerwah to Landsborough to Maleny Bus Service trial;*
 - (ii) *Council Cabs;*
 - (iii) *Improvements to Route 619 (between Maroochydore and Kawana Shopping World);*
 - (iv) *Coolum to Nambour Bus Service trial; and*
 - (v) *Flexilink services between Peachester and Beerwah, Conondale and Maleny, Kenilworth and Mapleton and Boreen Point and Tewantin.*

Related Documentation

The following documents have been referenced for this report:

External documents:

- TransLink Transit Authority Annual Report 2010-2011;
- TransLink Transit Authority and the Department of Transport and Main Roads' bus timetables and routes.

Council documents:

- Public Transport Levy Policy 2009;
- Sustainable Transport Strategy 2011;
- Active Transport Plan 2011;
- Flexilink timetables;
- Council Cabs brochure.

Critical Dates

The only critical dates associated with this report relate to the dates of advice for continuation of existing service initiatives. These are:

- Council Cabs monthly
- Flexilink Service Peachester-Beerwah 3 monthly
- Flexilink service Conondale-Maleny 3 monthly
- Flexilink Service Kenilworth-Mapleton 3 monthly
- Flexilink Service Boreen Point-Tewantin 3 monthly
- Beerwah-Landsborough-Maleny bus service trial 30 September 2012

- Coolum-Nambour bus service trial 30 October 2012
- Route 619 (Maroochydore-Kawana Shopping World) weekends 30 June 2013

Implementation

Implementation of any service will require the co-operation and co-ordination between the responsible state organisation (under legislation), the public transport operators (via its contractual basis) and Council where appropriate due to funding and support marketing.

A number of Council teams are involved in the various stages of progression for each initiative and they include:

- Transportation Strategy;
- Integrated Transport Services;
- Community Programs; and
- Corporate Communications.

Significant marketing and information distribution and coordination will be the key to the success of many of the initiatives proposed. The adoption of an overall communication strategy for sustainable transport will also incorporate the aims and outcomes of the Public Transport Levy.

Monitoring of the performance of each initiative will occur in partnership with TransLink.

Updates of the progress of initiatives will occur through a regular email update to councillors.

4.4 SUNSHINE COAST ENVIRONMENT LEVY POLICY AND PROGRAM

File No: ECM 13 June 2012

Author: Coordinator Biodiversity - Regional Strategy and Planning

Appendix: [App A - Revised Environment Levy Program \(May 2012\)](#) (SM Att Pg 254)

Attachments: [Att 1 - Environment Levy Policy 2009](#) (SM Att Pg 255)
[Att 2 - Revised Environment Levy Program \(August 2011\)](#) (SM Att Pg 262)
[Att 3 - Endorsed Environment Levy Project Descriptions](#) (SM Att Pg 263)
[Att 4 - Land Acquisition Program Map](#) (SM Att Pg 266)
[Att 5 - Community Grants, Incentives and Partnerships Map](#) (SM Att Pg 267)

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to seek Council's support for the continuation of the Environment Levy at a charge of \$60 per rateable property per annum, in accordance with the Environment Levy Policy 2009 and endorsement of a revised Environment Levy Program 2012/2013 (May 2012).

The report also provides an overview of achievements of the Program to date.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Sunshine Coast Council currently operates an Environment Levy which responds to the emerging priorities of Council's Corporate Plan 2009-2014 including:

- Our natural environment preserved for the future;
- Viable ecosystems that maintain biodiversity values; and
- Healthy waterways and foreshores.

In August 2009, Council endorsed an Environment Levy Policy (**Attachment 1**) and five year Program that addressed these emerging priorities through the following three funding themes:

5. Acquisition of environmentally significant land for conservation;
6. Major initiatives and catalyst projects; and
7. Grants, incentives and partnerships.

The Environment Levy supports the delivery of key strategic outcomes identified in the Sunshine Coast Biodiversity Strategy 2010-2020 and Waterways and Coastal Management Strategy 2011-2021 which would not normally be funded through Council's general operating budget.

Other mechanisms such as the Planning Schemes and Local Laws are also utilised to secure and enhance the region's environment values.

The rate for the Levy has been maintained at a \$60 charge per rateable property per annum since 2009. The Levy raises approximately \$9 million annually to fund the implementation of the endorsed Environment Levy Policy and Program.

The implementation of the Environment Levy Program involves numerous departments across the organisation including Infrastructure Services, Community Services, Finance and Business and Regional Strategy and Planning Departments.

Now in its third year (2011/2012) of implementation, the endorsed five year Program (**Attachment 2**) has made significant achievements with associated benefits for the Sunshine Coast. These include:

- The acquisition of 12 environmentally significant properties, contributing over 600 hectares of land for conservation purposes and attracting over \$2 million in federal government funding;
- Delivery of large scale rehabilitation projects across the region including coastal foreshores and major waterway corridors for example the *'Mooloolah River Corridor Restoration Project'* has established over 34,000 native plants;
- Protection and rehabilitation of more than 1500 hectares of land through partnerships with more than 1000 land owners involved in the Land for Wildlife and Voluntary Conservation Agreements Programs; and
- Investment of more than \$700,000 this financial year to strengthen partnerships with not-for-profit community groups to advance conservation and sustainability outcomes for the Sunshine Coast.

The *Sunshine Coast Biodiversity Strategy 2010-2020* identifies over 50% of the region's remnant vegetation as occurring on private land. Private landowners therefore have a major role to play in preserving and rehabilitating natural ecosystems and the biodiversity within those systems. Partnering with private landowners to achieve conservation outcomes is a key strategic outcome of this Strategy. The Environment Levy Program provides highly valued funding support for both private landholders and not-for-profit community groups to assist in achieving this strategic outcome through the *'Grants, Incentives, and Partnerships Theme'*.

The Environment Levy has assisted Council and the Sunshine Coast community to be recognised for environmental outcomes through national, state and regional award programs, including the 2011 \$200,000 National Riverprize. In addition, the *'Mooloolah River Corridors Restoration Project'* has been announced as a finalist 2012 Healthy Waterways Award.

The Environment Levy Policy and Program is considered annually through the budget process. In addition, an annual report is presented to the Council in August / September each year which documents the achievements made under the three funding themes and provides an opportunity for Council to consider new projects and initiatives that meet the policy objectives.

This report recommends Council's continuation of the Environment Levy, at a charge of \$60 per rateable property per annum in accordance with the Environment Levy Policy 2009. In addition, endorsement is sought for a Revised Environment Levy Program (May 2012) (**Appendix A**) which incorporates minor budget amendments to reflect operational requirements which are within policy guidelines.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- (a) receive and note the report titled 'Sunshine Coast Environment Levy Policy and Program';
- (b) continue the Environment Levy at a charge of \$60 per rateable property per annum in accordance with the Environment Levy Policy 2009; and
- (c) endorse the revised Environment Levy Program (May 2012) (Appendix A).

FINANCE AND RESOURCING

Since the endorsement of the Policy in 2009, the charge for the Environment Levy has been maintained at \$60 per rateable property per annum. The estimated annual revenue for 2012/2013 is \$9,153,000.

Outcomes of the endorsed Program are achieved within the Environment Levy Operating Budget funded by annual revenue and the use of Environment Levy Reserve funds. The endorsed Program also contains a 10 year transitional phase out arrangement for funding day-to-day operational activities within the Environment Policy and Environmental Operations Branches historically resourced through the Environment Levy. This transition amount is \$336,641 annually.

An Internal audit of the Environment Levy Program was completed in 2011 to assess the financial control framework associated with the Environment Levy. The audit identified robust and transparent management of Environment Levy revenue, with recommendations being addressed collectively by Environment Policy, Environment Operations and Financial Services Branches.

Environment Levy Reserves

The Environment Levy Reserves currently stand at \$4.302 million (**Table 1**). As per the endorsed Policy, at the end of each financial year any unspent funds from the three key funding themes are reallocated to the corresponding themes in the Reserve Fund.

Table 1. Environment Levy Reserves as at 01 June 2012.

ENVIRONMENT LEVY RESERVES	AMOUNT (\$M)
Land Acquisition (includes Establishment Management, Planning/Legal Cost and Phase Out Surplus)	2.353
Major Initiatives and Catalyst Projects Theme	1.384
Grants, Incentives and Partnerships Theme	0.565
TOTAL	\$ 4.302M

As per Council Resolution SM10/029, 18 May 2010, the Land Acquisition Environment Levy Reserve can be used to augment the endorsed Environment Levy Land Acquisition Program when operational funds for this theme have been expended. An annual report on the Acquisition Program will be presented to Council in August/September 2012 to highlight achievements to date and a revised Program.

Opportunity to fund new projects from the Environment Levy Reserves under the “Major Projects and Catalyst Projects” and the “Grants Incentives and Partnerships” Themes are possible through the annual review in accordance with the endorsed Policy. All new projects are assessed by a cross organisational panel against the endorsed Policy and a quadruple bottom line criteria.

Environment Levy Program Budget Amendments

Minor amendments to the endorsed five year Program are made annually to reflect operational requirements which are within Policy guidelines to deliver an effective and efficient Program.

In May 2010, some minor budget amendments were made to the endorsed five year program including the phase out arrangement being extended from 5 to 10 years and minor amendments to the Land Acquisition Theme to accommodate establishment and planning costs. A nine year initiative, the ‘*Coastal Dunal Rehabilitation Project*’, was also endorsed and allocated \$300,000 funding per annum.

In August 2011, five new projects were endorsed for funding from Environment Levy Reserves (**Attachment 2**)

This report proposes a Revised Environment Levy Program May 2012 (**Appendix A**), which incorporates the following amendments to the ‘*Major Initiative and Catalyst Projects*’ and ‘*Grants, Incentives and Partnerships*’ Theme (**Table 2**). The revised program does not require funding from the Reserve to fund endorsed projects and redistributes savings across the Program. These budget amendments will also be reflected in the final year of the endorsed Program.

Table 3. Revised Program Budget

	Endorsed Program 2012-2013	Revised Program 2012-2013
Land Acquisition Theme ^{1,2}	\$3,402,000	\$3,402,000
Major Initiatives and Catalyst Projects Theme	\$1,881,000	\$1,628,000
Grants, Incentives and Partnerships Theme	\$1,830,000	\$2,083,000
Transitional Arrangement for Day-to-Day Operations ²	\$2,019,845	\$2,019,845
Surplus	\$20,155	\$20,155
Total Revenue	\$9,153,000	\$9,153,000
Draw from Reserve for Endorsed Projects	\$330,500	-
Total Expenditure	\$9,483,500	\$9,153,000

¹ Includes planning, legal and establishment costs

² As per endorsed Policy, funding for transitional arrangements for day-to-day operations decreases over a ten year period. These funds are redistributed to the Land Acquisition theme annually.

CORPORATE PLAN

Corporate Plan Theme: *Ecological Sustainability*

Emerging Priority: 2.2 Our natural environment preserved for the future
Strategy: 2.2.3 Prepare and implement an environmental levy policy and program that focuses on identified strategic needs

Emerging Priority: 2.3 Viable ecosystems that maintain biodiversity values
Strategy: 2.3.2 Protect and expand our ecological conservation areas

Emerging Priority: 2.4 Healthy waterways and foreshores
Strategy: 2.4.2 Maintain and improve the quality of beaches, waterways, lakes, rivers, canals and wetlands

CONSULTATION

Internal Consultation

Internal consultation was undertaken in preparing the original Environment Levy Policy and Program. This report has been developed in consultation with:

- Manager Environmental Operations, Infrastructure Services;
- Acting Manager Environment Policy, Regional Strategy and Planning;
- Business Manager, Regional Strategy and Planning;
- Senior Management Account, Regional Strategy and Planning;
- Manager Property and Business, Finance and Business; and
- Environment Levy Project Managers from Infrastructure Services Department and Regional Strategy and Planning Department.

External Consultation

No external consultation has been undertaken in relation to this report.

Community Engagement

No community engagement has been undertaken in relation to this report.

PROPOSAL

There are three options available to Council:

1. Continue with the Environment Levy at a charge of \$60 per rateable property per annum in accordance with the Environment Levy Policy 2009 and endorse the revised Environment Levy Program May 2012 (**Appendix A**); or
2. Continue with an Environment Levy and amend the Environment Levy Policy, annual chargeable rate and Program; or
3. Do not continue with an Environment Levy.

This report proposes to continue with the Environment Levy Policy 2009 and maintain the charge at \$60 per rateable property per annum and endorse the revised Environment Levy Program (May 2012) (**Appendix A**).

Background

In August 2009, Council endorsed an Environment Levy Policy (**Attachment 1**) and five year Program (amended August 2011) (**Attachment 2**) for the Sunshine Coast. The purpose of the Environment Levy Policy is to outline environmental and administrative principles that provide direction for allocation of Environment Levy revenue towards agreed projects in an effective, open and accountable way.

Key objectives of the Policy are:

- To protect environmentally significant land through acquisition, as part of a wider strategy for landscape and habitat protection and rehabilitation;
- To respond to the region's key environmental challenges and produce on-ground actions;
- To outline environmental and administrative principles that provides direction for allocation of Environment Levy revenue towards agreed projects and programs in an effective, open and accountable way; and
- To maximise partnerships with a range of stakeholders, community based and government, to improve conservation and sustainability outcomes.

The Environment Levy Policy applies to all programs, activities or incentives that are directly or indirectly funded or supported, wholly or partly, by the Environment Levy.

The Environment Levy Program is delivered through three key funding themes:

1. Acquisition of environmentally significant land for conservation;
2. Major initiatives and catalyst project, which includes major pilot projects and investigations that would not ordinarily be funded by general revenue; and
3. Grants, incentives and partnerships for conservation, sustainability and natural resource management activities.

In addition, the Program incorporates transitional arrangements for funding day-to-day operational activities within Environment Policy and Environmental Operations Branches historically resourced through Environment Levy funds.

The implementation of the Environment Levy Program involves numerous departments across the organisation including Infrastructure Services, Community Services, Finance and Business and Regional Strategy and Planning Departments. **Attachment 3** provides a summary of the current endorsed projects.

Key Achievements

Key achievements of the Environment Levy Program to date are briefly summarised below according to the program funding themes.

Land Acquisition Theme

Since adoption of the Program, 12 properties have been acquired, some with federal government financial support, which has contributed an additional 617 hectares of land owned and managed by Council for conservation purposes (Table 4). **Attachment 4** depicts the Sunshine Coast's conservation network (both State and Council owned), including the contribution of the Land Acquisition Program.

Table 4: Environment Levy acquisitions

Financial Year	No. of Properties	Hectares (ha)	Environment Levy Funding (\$M)	Federal Funding (\$M)
Amalgamation - 2009	2	36	1.64	1.45
2009 – 2010	2	70	1.12	0.825
2010 – 2011	4	323	4.73	-
2011 – to date	4	188	2.45	-
TOTAL	12	617	9.94¹	2.27

¹ Excluding stamp duty, legal fees and other administration costs.

In addition, the Program has contributed funds towards the acquisition of other strategic land which in part delivers on environmental outcomes and provides a range of other corporate and strategic outcomes.

Major Initiatives and Catalyst Projects Theme

Key achievements include:

- Delivery of the '*Coastal Dunal Rehabilitation Project*' which has resulted in ongoing rehabilitation of high profile and significant dunal environments extending from Happy Valley (Caloundra) through to Noosa Spit to mitigate key impacts, particularly weed management;
- Delivery of a region-wide fine scale vegetation map that will underpin Sunshine Coast's inaugural '*Biodiversity Report Card Project*' due for release late 2012;
- Completion of the Coolum Creek Confluence Fish Habitat project through the '*Waterways and Coastal Foreshores Strategy Project*';
- Rehabilitation of over 40 hectares of land within the '*Mooloolah River Riparian Corridor Restoration Project*' through the '*Waterways and Coastal Foreshores Strategy Project*;
- Ongoing support to the regional Healthy Waterways Program to monitor, assess and report on the health of our waterways;
- Commencement of a pilot pest mapping project through the '*Pest Management (Halting the Invasion) Project*'; and
- Sponsorship of intergenerational events such the 2010 International Youth Coastal Conference through the '*Regional Pilots and Catalytic Project*'.

Community Grants, Incentives and Partnerships Theme

The *Sunshine Coast Biodiversity Strategy 2010-2020* identifies over 50% of the region's remnant vegetation as occurring on private land. Private landowners therefore have a major role to play in preserving and rehabilitating natural ecosystems and the biodiversity within those systems. Partnering with private landowners to achieve conservation outcomes is a key strategic outcome of this Strategy. This funding theme provides highly valued funding support for both private landholders and not-for-profit community groups to assist in achieving this strategic outcome.

Key achievements include:

- Establishment of one and three year funding arrangements with 17 not for profit community groups of over \$700,000 through the '*Community Partnerships Project*';

- Over 300 successful private landholder environment grants since 2009 awarding over \$800,000 to undertake natural resource management activities through the '*Equipping the Toolbox Project*';
- Development of the Backyard Biodiversity Module to complement Council's Living Smart Program through the '*Growing the Toolbox Project*';
- The maintenance and support for over 1,000 Land for Wildlife partners and 46 private Voluntary Conservation Agreements through the '*Equipping the Toolbox Project*';
- Development of a '*Pilot Bushland Neighbour Pest Program Project*' targeting landholders adjoining two environmentally significant areas; and
- Endorsement of a new 'look and feel' for the Environment Levy and implementation of a communication strategy to promote to rate payers and the wider community achievements of the program in a consistent manner through the '*Community Information and Education Project*'.

The key achievements clearly demonstrate the valuable contribution the Environment Levy is making to the ongoing protection and management of the Sunshine Coast's environment by Council and the community. **Attachment 5** depicts the distribution of these community engagement projects funded within this theme, in conjunction with the conservation network.

The Environment Levy has assisted Council and the Sunshine Coast community to be recognised for environmental outcomes at a national, state and regional level through winning the following awards:

- \$200,000 National Riverprize Award giving recognition, reward and support to those who have developed and implemented outstanding, visionary and sustainable programs in river management;
- Queensland Landcare Awards - Local Government, recognising an outstanding local government organisation which is collaborating with its community to preserve and manage its local environment and natural resources; and
- Numerous South East Queensland Healthy Waterways Awards recognising and rewarding the hard work that individuals, community groups and organisations undertake to protect and restore the health of our precious waterways. Mostly recently, the '*Mooloolah River Corridors Restoration Project*' has been announced as a finalist for the 2012 Health Waterways Award.

Legal

There are no legal implications to this report.

Policy

The Sunshine Coast Biodiversity Strategy 2010-2020 and Waterways and Coastal Management Strategy 2011-2021 are Council's endorsed policy positions.

The Environment Levy Policy and Program is a key funding source for the implementation of these strategic documents.

Risk

A range of initiatives and achievements to date are growing community confidence in Council's ability to deliver this significant Levy program. This is coupled with positive community feedback on the adoption of the Sunshine Coast Biodiversity Strategy 2010 – 2020 and Sunshine Coast Waterway and Coastal Management Strategy 2011-2012.

Failure to continue to fund the Levy may impact Council's ability to:

- acquire land for conservation purposes;
- deliver innovative and catalytic projects;
- fund existing financial commitments associated with the Program;
- regularly monitor and report on the Sunshine Coast's environmental health; and
- engage private landowners, community groups and other stakeholders in natural resource management activities, thus reducing the community's capacity to assist Council in the delivery of strategic environmental outcomes.

Previous Council Resolution

At the Council's Ordinary Meeting held on 24 August 2011, Council made the following resolution (**OM11/207**) in relation to the Environment Levy Annual Progress Report and proposed revisions to the Program.

That Council:

- (a) *receive and note the report titled "2010-2011 Environment Levy Annual Progress Report and Proposed Program Amendments" and "Environment Levy Program Annual Progress Report 2010-2011" (Appendix A); and*
- (b) *endorse the proposed Environment Levy Projects (Appendix B) and revised Environment Levy Program (Appendix C).*

At the Council's Special Meeting (Budget) held on 28 April 2011, Council made the following resolution (**SM11/28**) in relation to the Environment Levy charge and proposed revisions to the Environment Levy Program.

That Council:

- (a) *note the report titled "Environment Levy Policy and Program";*
- (b) *confirm there is no change to the Environment Levy amount and the method of application for 2011-2012, being \$60 per rateable property per annum; and*
- (c) *adopt the revised Environment Levy Program (Appendix A).*

Related Documentation

- Sunshine Coast Council Corporate Plan 2009 – 2014
- Sunshine Coast Community Plan
- Sunshine Coast Council Environment Levy Policy (Policy Reference Number 23)
- Sunshine Coast Council Biodiversity Strategy 2010 – 2020
- Sunshine Coast Council Waterways and Coastal Management Strategy 2011-2021
- Draft Sunshine Coast Local Government Pest Management Plan 2011-2015

Critical Dates

The annual budget process requires a decision to be made in regards to the charging of an Environment Levy and the recommended chargeable rate.

Implementation

The implementation of the Environment Levy Program involves numerous departments across the organisation including Infrastructure Services, Community Services, Finance and Business and Regional Strategy and Planning Departments.

Coordination and implementation of the revised Environment Levy Policy and Program is overseen by the Environment Policy Branch, in Regional Strategy Department in conjunction with project managers.

Governance on the implementation of the Program is addressed through:

- the Environment Levy Corporate Expenditure Guideline;
- preparation of an annual progress report on the achievements of the Program to Council;
- clear and transparent assessment of new project proposals against quadruple bottom line criteria and Environment Levy Policy 2009;
- continued implementation of low risk actions associated with the internal audit of the Program in 2011-2012; and
- continued implementation of a communication campaign to promote the Environment Levy and its achievements to the Sunshine Coast.

4.5 2012/2013 TEN-YEAR CAPITAL WORKS PROGRAM

File No: ECM - 13 June 2012

Author: Executive Director Finance and Business
Finance and Business

Appendices: [App A - 2012 2013 Capex Total](#) (SM Att Pg 268)
[App B - 2012 2013 Capex New](#) (SM Att Pg 270)
[App C - 2012 2013 Capex Renewal](#) (SM Att Pg 272)
[App D - 2012 2013 Capex Details](#) (SM Att Pg 274)

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to present the final ten-year capital works program for the period 2012/2013 to 2021/2022 for council approval and endorsement.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The *Local Government Act 2009* and the *Local Government (Finance, Plans and Reporting) Regulation 2010* place emphasis on long-term planning and forecasting for councils, requiring a ten-year focus for capital works planning. The focus is designed to ensure that decisions around the allocation of funds towards community infrastructure give consideration to the whole-of-life impact of the investment.

Sunshine Coast Council has been developing a ten-year capital works program on the basis of year 1 approved/adopted; years 2 to 5 endorsed; and years 6 to 10 indicative. Accordingly, there have been detailed allocations down to project level within programs and sub-programs for the first 5 years with the outer years being higher level allocations for some programs.

The final program has been developed after extensive consultation between council officers, management and councillors, through both one-on-one meetings and group workshops.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- (a) receive and note the report entitled 2012/2013 Ten-Year Capital Works Program**
- (b) adopt the Capital Works Program for 2012/2013 (Appendices A, B, C and D);**
- (c) endorse the indicative four-year program for the period from 2013/2014 to 2016/2017; and**
- (d) note the indicative program for the five years from 2017/2018 to 2021/2022.**

FINANCE AND RESOURCING

The ten-year capital works program has been developed giving consideration to the Long Term Asset Management Plans, the funding levels identified in the Long Term Financial Forecast and council's adopted Financial Sustainability Plan.

The total Program of \$145,769,650, as outlined in the Appendices attached to this report has been used to frame the draft budget for 2012/2013 and provides the basis for the ten years of the Long Term Financial Plan.

CORPORATE PLAN

Corporate Plan Theme: *Managing Growth*

Emerging Priority: 7.4 Timely and appropriate infrastructure and service provision

Strategy: 7.4.1 Prepare comprehensive infrastructure plans, policies and strategies in line with long term financial plans

Corporate Plan Theme: *Managing Growth*

Emerging Priority: 7.5 Council's services and assets meet the needs of our growing community

Strategy: 7.5.2 Develop long term asset management plans which are linked to financial management plans

Corporate Plan Theme: *Managing Growth*

Emerging Priority: 7.5 Council's services and assets meet the needs of our growing community

Strategy: 7.5.4 Develop and implement five year and longer term rolling capital works programs according to strategic priorities

Corporate Plan Theme: *Great Governance*

Emerging Priority: 8.3 Strong financial management

Strategy: 8.3.1 Develop long term financial plans and indicators to achieve optimum use of resources and alignment to strategic priorities

CONSULTATION

Internal Consultation

Consultation has been undertaken throughout the development of the Capital Works Program, including the following areas of council:

- Councillors;
- Infrastructure Services;
- Finance and Business;
- Community Services;
- Regional Strategy and Planning; and
- Business Units (Sunshine Coast Airport; Sunshine Coast Holiday Parks; Waste; and Quarries).

The development of the ten-year Program has involved the consultation and engagement of over 100 staff from council departments and numerous councillor meetings and discussions, including:

- Councillor Budget Workshop, 14 November 2011;
- Staff Capital Works Information Session, 22 November 2011;

- Officer-level meetings, January 2012 to May 2012;
- Budget workshop discussions, 29 May 2012; and
- Individual Divisional Councillor meetings, 18 May to 12 June 2012

External Consultation

External consultation is undertaken regularly throughout the financial year with State and Federal Government Departments discussing opportunities for partnerships and funding.

Community Engagement

Community engagement is undertaken throughout the financial year by councillors and staff in the development of prioritisation of projects for the Capital Works Program.

PROPOSAL

The development of the Capital Works Program has involved a thorough review of projects originally proposed in the ten-year program for 2011/2012, initially endorsed in the second year. Regard was also given to the identified funding available through the Long Term Financial Forecast, giving account to the change in economic conditions since the original program was presented.

Conformity to the previously adopted program has provided the framework for the first four years of the current program, with relatively minor changes in the prioritisation and scheduling of works. Additional projects have been added to the outer years on the basis of a stringent scoring process, and taking input from Asset Management Plans, the adopted Strategies, Priority Infrastructure Plans, and business plans for Business Units.

In light of reduced funding in some programs, it has been necessary to stretch the original ten year program out over a longer time frame rather than to cut projects that could not be funded in the first year.

Projects having an estimated cost exceeding \$200,000 required a detailed project bid form, and projects exceeding \$1,000,000 are to be staged over more than one year unless otherwise substantiated, to ensure that the budget contains only those projects that can be delivered within the financial year.

Work is currently being undertaken to finalise the detail of Asset Management Plans, to develop more detailed implementation plans for Strategies and Policies, and a higher emphasis has been placed on obligations under Priority Infrastructure Plans. This will shape the structure and focus for the outer years of the ten-year Program and ensure some of the gaps identified in recent State of the Asset reports can be addressed in preference to other areas of focus.

The Program for 2012/2013 includes a total of \$53,423,000 on the renewal and rehabilitation of infrastructure, against depreciation of \$72,495,000; which translates to an Asset Sustainability Ratio of 72%. This remains an area of focus for Council, with the Financial Sustainability Plan providing a commitment to meet the target of 90% by 2015 through integration of asset management plans into the development of the Capital Works Program.

Due to the shortened consultation process with councillors, last minute changes may be required to incorporate minor adjustments to the detailed program schedules included in the Attachments. As such, a final schedule will be distributed under separate cover at the meeting.

Projects funded either in whole or in part from developer contributions are contained in separate sub-programs within the schedule of works.

The total program value for 2012/2013 is \$145,769,650. Other projects budgeted for completion in 2011/2012 that are not finalised before the end of June will also be carried forward as part of a budget review planned for August 2012. Total expenditure over the ten-year Program represents an investment by council of approximately \$1.3 billion in community infrastructure (2012 dollars).

Budget Guidelines permit adjustments to the projects between and within programs on a monthly basis, and major reviews will be undertaken in October 2012 and February 2013. Reports will be presented to council at that time including full details of any proposed alterations to the Program.

Legal

The Capital Works Program has been developed having regard to the provisions of the *Local Government Act 2009*, the *Local Government (Finance, Plans and Reporting) Regulation 2010*, and the Statutory bodies *Financial Arrangements Act 1982*.

Policy

The Capital Works Program has been developed in accordance with the commitments contained within the adopted Financial Sustainability Plan, and having regard to adopted Strategies and Policies to determine the prioritisation and scheduling of works.

Risk

Recent decision of the newly elected State Government around the potential de-amalgamation of the former Noosa Council area; and around the development of Greenfield sites in Caloundra South have the potential to impact on the scheduling of works in outer years and the ability of council to deliver projects identified in the attached Program.

Further, community expectations for higher standards of service that result from the identified projects creates the potential focus on new works and an expanded infrastructure base rather than meeting asset management requirements for renewal and rehabilitation of existing community assets.

Previous Council Resolution

SM11/13:

That Council:

- (a) receive and note the report entitled 2011/2012 Ten-Year Capital Works Program;
- (b) adopt the Capital Works Program for 2011/2012 (Attachment 1) including a total of \$7.9 million in public realm investment;
- (c) endorse the indicative four-year program for the period from 2012/2013 to 2015/2016 including a total of \$30.9 million in public realm investment; and
- (d) note the indicative program for the five years from 2016/2017 to 2020/2021.

Related Documentation

Included as an attachment to this report is the 2012/2013 to 2021/2022 Ten-Year Capital Works Program. This includes a full listing of all projects proposed to be undertaken.

Critical Dates

The proposed program forms the basis of capital expenditure identified in the 2012/2013 Budget due for adoption 27 June 2012.

Implementation

There are no implementation details to include in this report.

5 CONFIDENTIAL SESSION

Nil.

6 NEXT MEETING

The next Special Meeting (Budget) of the will be held on Thursday 21 June 2012 in the Nambour Council Chambers, Corner Currie and Bury Streets, Nambour.

7 MEETING CLOSURE
