



CHANGES TO BUDGET REFLECT IMPORTANCE OF PROVIDING FEEDBACK

A number of changes have been made to the Dubbo Regional Council (DRC) draft Budget and Operational Plan as a result of the public exhibition period, showing how important it is for the community to review draft documents and provide feedback. A number of changes have been made to the budget, as a result of the public exhibition period, including reduced hire fees for some facilities, and funding reallocated to different projects such as the Victoria Street Beautification. Even with these important additions, DRC has also been able to deliver a balanced budget.

Dubbo Region Mayor Stephen Lawrence says the changes in the budget show that DRC is listening to residents when adopting plans and documents, and encourages the community to make their concerns heard.

“Some of the public submissions received about the draft budget and Operational Plan were taken on board by staff, with a reduction in hire

fees at the Dubbo Regional Theatre and Convention Centre foyer, from \$456 to \$220 for Community and Not-for-profit groups, and from \$345 to \$200 for schools and registered charities,” said Councillor Lawrence.

An amendment was also made at the Council meeting, that the River Repair Bus will receive an additional \$45,000 over the next 12 months. Staff are now looking at ways it can be funded, as part of the September 2021 quarterly budget review. And while the budget for Council’s Street Tree Planting Program was reduced to ensure DRC has a balanced budget, staff will attempt to identify additional savings in the September 2021 quarterly review that will be allocated to help with the continuation of the program.

“We recognise that the River Repair Bus and the Street Tree Planting Program are both incredibly important to the region, because they ensure our rivers are clean, and our streets are cooler during the summer months, because as we know, the Dubbo Region can get very hot,” said Councillor Lawrence.

Changes to fees for the hire of the Junior Rugby League canteen have also been taken into account with the request of a \$500 bond now excluded. Instead, to cover the cost of any damages incurred as a result of using the facilities, DRC will invoice clubs the actual amount. This removes the administrative difficulty of having to refund \$500, while also ensuring the facilities are taken care of, should the facility be left untidy or damaged.

Council acknowledged all submissions received throughout the public exhibition period, regardless of whether their suggestions were added to the budget or not. However, unfortunately there are some instances

where Council is unable to make changes to the budget, because the fees and costs associated are necessary to continue adequate operation of that particular service or area of Councils.

“We want the community to know that DRC is operating a conservative, balanced budget, which will ensure vital services remain accessible for the community. We do not want to disadvantage anyone, but we are also trying to find the right balance, to ensure the services can continue operating,” said Councillor Lawrence.

The adopted budget documents will be found on Dubbo Regional Council’s website at www.dubbo.nsw.gov.au from 1 July, 2021.



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