

TOWN OF BASSENDEAN

NOTICE OF A SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING

In accordance with regulation 12(3) of the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996*, public notice is hereby given of a Special Meeting of the Council of the Town of Bassendean. The meeting will be held on Tuesday 24 March 2020, in the Community Hall, 48 Old Perth Road, Bassendean, commencing at 6.00pm.

The purpose of the meeting is to consider the:

- Audit Completion Report for the Year Ended 30 June 2019;
- Adoption of the Local Government 2019 Compliance Audit Return for the Town of Bassendean for the period 1 January 2019 to 31 December 2019;
- Adoption of the Annual Budget Review for 2019/20;
- Town's response to the COVID-19 Pandemic; and
- Notice of Motion relating to FOGO.

Please be advised that due to the rules imposed by the Australian Federal Government on social distancing, the public are strongly urged not to attend in person. An agenda for the meeting will be available on the Town's website www.bassendean.wa.gov.au prior to the meeting. Members of the public may still participate in public question time by providing their written questions to the Town by 5.30pm on 24 March 2020 for inclusion at the meeting. Questions may be sent to the Town at www.yoursay.bassendean.wa.gov.au.

Peta Mabbs
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

23 March 2020

A G E N D A

1.0 DECLARATION OF OPENING/ANNOUNCEMENT OF VISITORS

The Town of Bassendean acknowledges the past and present traditional owners of the land on which we gather to conduct this meeting, and pays its respects to their Elders, both past and present.

2.0 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

3.0 ATTENDANCES, APOLOGIES & APPLICATIONS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE

4.0 REPORTS

4.1 Consideration of Audit Completion Report and Compliance Audit Return (Ref: GOVN/CCLMEET/18 – Paul White, Director Corporate Services)

APPLICATION

The purpose of this report is for Council to:

- Receive the Audit Completion Report for the Year Ended 30 June 2019; and
- Adopt the Local Government 2019 Compliance Audit Return for the Town of Bassendean for the period 1 January 2019 to 31 December 2019;

These items are to be resolved by 31 March 2020 and are therefore presented at this meeting.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment No. 1:

- Audit Completion Report for year ended 30 June 2019;
- Compliance Audit Return 2019

COMMENT

Audit Completion Report 2018/19

The purpose of this report is to inform Council, through the Audit and Governance Committee, the action the Town of Bassendean has taken, or intends to take, with respect to matters identified as significant by the Town's external auditor, Office of the Auditor General (OAG) and Macri Partners, in the Audit Completion Report for 2018-2019.

Compliance Audit Return 2019

All Local Governments are required to submit an annual Compliance Audit Return (CAR) to the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries by 31 March each year for the previous calendar year.

The report was presented to the Audit and Governance Committee for review and to report the results of that review to Council.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION – ITEM 4.1

That Council:

1. Receives the officer's report on matters identified as significant by the Town's external auditor and provides the report, attached to the Special Council Agenda of 24 March 2020, to the Minister for Local Government, The Hon. David Templeman MLA;
2. Makes a copy of the Audit Completion Report to the Minister for Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries; and
3. Adopts the Local Government 2019 Compliance Audit Return for the Town of Bassendean for the period 1 January 2019 to 31 December 2019, as attached to the Special Council Agenda of 24 March 2020.

Voting requirement: Simple majority

4.2 Mid Review of Annual Budget 2019/20 (Ref: FINM/BUGTG/1) – Paul White, Director Corporate Services)

APPLICATION

The purpose of this paper is to present the Annual Budget Review for 2019/20 for adoption.

The budget review must be submitted to Council within 30 days of it being completed. The review was completed on 29 February 2020 and is therefore presented at this meeting.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment No. 2:

- Statement of Financial Activity

Confidential Attachment No. 1:

- List of Proposed Budget Amendments included in Budget Review 2019/2020

BACKGROUND

The *Local Government Act 1995* and Regulation 33A of the Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996 requires that between 1 January and 31 March in each financial year a local government is to carry out a review of its annual budget for that year.

Council is to consider the review and is to determine whether to adopt the review, any parts of the review or any recommendations made in the review.

The budget review must be submitted to the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries (the Department) within 30 days after Council has made its determination.

DETAILS

The Manager Finance has led a detailed review of the annual budget for 2019/20 based on the actual year to date income and expenditure to 29 February 2020, with projections made to forecast the likely end of financial year result compared to the current budget. The review included input from all business units across the Town.

The proposed amended budget for 2019/20 is presented as the Statement of Financial Activity attached. The statement shows:

- The Original Annual Budget 2019/20 (the full year budget adopted by Council in August 2019);
- Budget Amendments (the net difference between the Original Annual Budget and the proposed Amended Annual Budget 2019/20); and
- Amended Annual Budget 2019/20 (the original budget, including recommended budget amendments).

The Original Annual Budget forecast Net Result was a surplus of \$24,680. The amended Annual Budget forecast net result is \$291.

Despite a balanced budget, the detailed review of the budget and consultation with business units requires numerous adjustments, as detailed in the List of Proposed Budget Amendments included in Budget Review 2019/20.

The following are the key variations and recommended adjustments.

Starting Position

Change in actual closing surplus for the 2018/19 financial year from \$1,630,400 to \$1,432,345. This variance created a shortfall of \$198,055 for 2019/20. It is recommended that the transfer to the Future Projects Reserve of \$1,000,000 be reduced to fund the shortfall.

Capital Expenditure

Capital Expenditure (less than Budget by \$316,871).

The major Capital Works amendment is:

- Decrease in the Provision for Road Sealed Surfaces - \$424,716.

Operating Expenditure

Operating Expenditure (more than Budget by \$502,663).

The following factors contributed to this:

- No budget provision for the Mosquito Control Program, swimming pool inspections, water quality monitoring of drains, graffiti removal contract, IT contracts for the Library (Library Management System and photocopier lease), general insurance claims, private works performed under quotes, and vehicle operating costs in the Infrastructure Directorate and Youth Services - \$238,780;
- Additional salaries and wages costs due to terminations including redundancy payments, and relief staff for long service leave coverage offset by savings due to timing of appointment of new positions - \$129,054;
- Error in the superannuation budget including no provision for Infrastructure Directorate - salary and wages staff - \$336,871;
- Increased expenditure for organisational staff training: equal employment opportunity, accountable and ethical decision making, IPA2 certificate of engagement and women in leadership summit - \$70,175; and
- Provision for the COVID-19 pandemic – to prevent and control infection in our workplaces and facilities - \$36,836.

Capital Revenue

Capital Revenue (less than Budget by \$307,990).

The following factors contributed to this:

- Timing of grant funding for FOGO. The grant is split into three milestones with the first being received when the bins are ordered in March 2020. The second and third payments will be received in 2020/2021 - \$139,500; and
- The Town will not receive MRRG funding in 2019/2020 - \$168,490.

Operating Revenue (more than Budget by \$24,273)

The following factors contributed to this:

- Additional income from rubbish charges levied - \$118,576;
- No budget provision for hire of reserves and swimming pool inspection fees and increased revenue from hall hire - \$153,685; and
- Additional income is offset by an end-of-year adjustment for rates received in advance in 2018/19 due to a change in accounting treatment - \$284,237.

Proceeds from Disposal of Assets (more than Budget by \$1,240)

- The proceeds from sale of the Toro Ride on Mower exceeded budget.

Transfers to Reserves

- A reduction in the transfer to the Future Projects Reserve to fund the difference between the 2019/20 Budgeted Opening Surplus and the 2018/19 actual Closing Surplus - \$198,055; and
- A reduction in the transfer to the Future Projects Reserve to fund the end of year adjustment for rates received in advance in 2018/19 due to a change in accounting treatment - \$284,237.

Transfers from Reserves

There is a requirement to amend fund transfers from the following reserves:

- Plant & Equipment Reserve – Purchase of Water Tank Upgrade less than anticipated - \$19,765; and

- Employee Entitlement Reserve – Additional funding for payments to staff for leave entitlements (redundancies and long service leave payments) - \$177,908.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

Good Governance

Objectives <i>What we need to achieve</i>	Strategies <i>How we're going to do it</i>	Measures of Success <i>How we will be judged</i>
5.1 Enhance organisational accountability	5.1.1 Enhance the capability of our people	Community / Stakeholder Satisfaction Survey (Governance)
	5.1.2 Ensure financial sustainability	
	5.1.3 Strengthen governance, risk management and compliance	Compliance Audit
	5.1.4 Improve efficiency and effectiveness of planning and services	Risk Management Profile
	5.1.5 Ensure optimal management of assets	Financial Ratio Benchmarked. Asset Ratio Benchmarked

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Amendment of the Annual Budget 2019/20 in accordance with the recommended adjustments, as contained in this report and attachments, results in a balanced budget.

COMMUNICATION

The Chief Executive Officer, Directors, Managers and relevant staff were consulted about current and future projects and cost pressures and changes attributed to their functional area of responsibility.

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

The *Local Government Act 1995* requires that a budget review be undertaken each financial year, in the period between January and March of a financial year.

Regulation 33A of the Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996 states:

- (1) Between 1 January and 31 March in each financial year a local government is to carry out a review of its annual budget for that year.

- (2A) The review of an annual budget for a financial year must -
- (a) Consider the local government's financial performance in the period beginning on 1 July and ending no earlier than 31 December in that financial year;
 - (b) Consider the local government's financial position as at the date of the review; and
 - (c) Review the outcomes for the end of that financial year that is forecast in the budget.
- (2) Within 30 days after a review of the annual budget of a local government is carried out it is to be submitted to the Council.
- (3) A council is to consider a review submitted to it and is to determine* whether or not to adopt the review, any parts of the review or any recommendations made in the review.

*Absolute majority required.

- (4) Within 30 days after a council has made a determination, a copy of the review and determination is to be provided to the Department.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION – ITEM 4.2

That Council adopts the review of the Annual Budget for the 2019/20 financial year, as outlined in this report and detailed in the list of proposed budget amendments, as attached to the Special Council Agenda of 24 March 2020, in accordance with Regulation 33A of the Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996.

Voting requirement: Absolute majority

4.3 Response to COVID 19 Pandemic (Ref: PUBH/REPRTNG/1 - Peta Mabbs, CEO)

BACKGROUND

In light of the global pandemic, the Town of Bassendean has adapted its range of services and support to the community as we face the challenge of the Coronavirus (COVID-19). This comes at an important time, when people look to government for leadership, support and compassion.

The approach is based on minimising the health risks and financial burden, while maximising support for the most vulnerable members of our community.

A number of statutory services such as waste collection will continue as per normal.

STRATEGY

In line with the Business Continuity Plan, the Chief Executive Officer has established a COVID-19 Advisory Group which meets daily to monitor the situation, assess risk and respond accordingly. The group comprises the Executive team plus the Manager Human Resources, Senior Health Environmental Officer, Manager Strategy and Governance and the Corporate Communications Coordinator, drawing in other specialist staff as required.

The Bassendean Local Emergency Management Committee (BLEMC) is due to meet on 1 April and the Town's Business Continuity Plan will be discussed.

Health Measures

To minimise the health risks to staff and the community, the following measures have been implemented:

- In accordance with government advice, all events and programs have been cancelled.
- All bookings for Town venues and halls have been cancelled
- Town workplaces have increased hygiene and cleaning, and administrative staff will be working from home the majority of the time from this week.
- The Customer Service Centre and Bassendean Memorial Library have been closed to the public, while remaining accessible by phone, email and online.
- The drop-in centre run by Youth Services and the RYDE driver education program are now closed.
- Seniors services at Ashfield have been scaled back.

Services from the Town's Library continue to be provided through online e-services and over the phone means - until at least the end of May (subject to further review).

At the two Wind in the Willows childcare centres in Ashfield and Bassendean, the centres are governed by strict national hygiene standards for Early Childhood Education and Care as per <https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/attachments/ch55-staying-healthy.pdf>

Government subsidy for staff wages are dependent on the Town keeping the childcare centres open until the Government advises otherwise. In the event the Town voluntarily closes the child care centres, no government funding will be available for staff wages. A decline in the demand for childcare services with a number of families now staying at home, has seen the centres operating at a reduced capacity of 60%. There has not been any modelling on potential financial impacts on this service area at this point in time.

At Senior Services, the primary concern is the provision of care to the most vulnerable and at risk group in the community without compromising the health and safety of staff or perpetuating the spread of COVID-19. The service will remain open and continue to provide care to seniors as long as it is safe to do so, workforce availability permitting in line with Government direction – as our funder.

Some clients have cancelled services in favour of self-isolation, however there has been a recent increase in new client referrals and at this stage cancelled services are being replaced twice over with new ones. Staff workload has not diminished – conversely, adherence to increased hygiene and social distancing measures has meant a significant increase in efforts. This is further compounded by the age of volunteers who are an older cohort and no longer able to support the service due to risk factors to themselves and clients, with the exception of one.

It's anticipated that this trend will continue due to changes announced from CHSP to make it easier for seniors to access services during this time. Of the new measures in place, the most significant is that "urgent or immediate CHSP services can be put in place for up to six weeks, for clients affected by COVID-19 or in self-isolation, without requiring an assessment".

Separate to the above, more recently, under the authority of the State Emergency Coordinator, the Commissioner of Police has now prepared a Commissioners order under the *Emergency Management Act*. This relates to the closures of State institutions as well as:

- Cultural institutions (libraries);
- Pubs, registered and licensed clubs (excluding bottle shops attached to these venues), hotels (excluding accommodation);
- Gyms and indoor sporting venues;
- Cinemas, entertainment venues, casinos, and night clubs;

- Restaurants and cafes will be restricted to takeaway and/or home delivery; and
- Religious gatherings, places of worship or funerals (in enclosed spaces and other than very small groups and where the 1 person per 4 square metre rule applies).

The Town is ensuring Town owned facilities, in addition to all businesses, are adhering to the above through correspondence to be distributed this week.

Community Outreach

From late March 2020, the Town will establish “Neighbour Assist” designed to provide support to the most vulnerable members in the community. It involves a telephone hotline 9377 8099, with staff and volunteers rostered to deal with calls and respond to matters arising. This dedicated line will differ from current business-as-usual activity.

Responses may include the provision of information, access to counselling and offers of help. Information requests will be monitored over time to ensure the Town is being responsive to community need.

This realignment of community facing services will also incorporate actively approaching people who may be vulnerable, using existing databases and networks, to offer practical and emotional support. The hotline seeks to provide connection and empathy to those disadvantaged, isolated or experiencing practical barriers. Whilst the focus is on personal support and empathy, some people will require referral to existing services or practical interventions from staff and volunteers such as essential items.

The hotline is the first of several initiatives. The Town will contact Ashfield CAN, Success Hill Action Group, Eden Hill CAN, the Old Perth Road Collective and SES for example to discuss opportunities to work together in caring for our community during this crisis.

Funding for the Town’s current sponsorship and grants program and commemorative services is able to be repurposed to have a specific focus on emergency funding over the next 3 months including the potential for grants to community groups seeking to support housebound local residents to reduce people’s sense of social isolation.

Businesses

The Town will contact businesses via email newsletter to ask what they are experiencing, what support they are seeking and then referring them to information or resources, for example, through the Small Business Development Corporation. The Town will also not actively pursue any compliance action associated with activities necessary to support businesses, including delivery curfews.

A focus on health and hygiene measures is particularly important during this period and greater attention will be paid to ensuring businesses are aware of their obligations.

The Town will also seek out local businesses providing online or takeaway services and promote these in an online community directory.

The Town will promote on its website, support tools, for those that may be facing unemployment including how to submit an intent to apply for support via Centrelink.

Activities

The Town will continue to explore opportunities to engage the community at a time when they are more housebound.

To mark milestones such as ANZAC Day, NAIDOC Week, and Danjoo Koorlini, the Town can develop ways to acknowledge these occasions through themed corporate branding, signage and historical/cultural content on the Town's online platforms. Community members will be encouraged to undertake their own solo activities, such as lining the streets at safe distances for ANZAC Day, which the Town can promote through its online channels. Programs such as RElax will revert to online workshops.

The Town may choose to foster gardening as an opportunity for relaxation and therapeutic benefits, particularly given the latest verge transformation guidelines to help residents create more useable space on their verge. The Town could provide free mulch to residents.

Support for Town Employees

All Town employees have been informed of precautionary measures issued by the World Health Organisation together with Federal and State authorities. Administrative staff will be supported to work remotely. Under the *Occupational Safety and Health Act (1984)*, employers must – as far as reasonably possible – ensure the health and safety of workers, contractors and other persons at the workplace are not put at risk in the workplace.

Arrangements are in place for outside workers to have staggered start and finish times, allowing only one person per vehicle, and reducing the number of staff working from the Depot.

It is proposed, the Town grants up to 20 days of COVID-19 leave to employees who have contracted COVID-19, need to care for another person who has COVID-19 or is required to self-isolate, cannot access school or other care arrangements because of COVID-19 or are otherwise prevented from working because of COVID-19.

COVID-19 leave is only intended to be made available after an employee's existing paid personal leave or carers leave have been exhausted. These are similar provisions recently offered by the State Government.

Communication

The Town will continue to update its communication as the situation evolves and it reassesses its response, including via social media, web and its newsletter Thrive (due out in late April 2020). The Town has increased its social media presence to ensure the community is kept abreast of the situation but also recognise that more people are likely to be using social media during this time. Thrive will be used as a mechanism to reach every household and business. Included in Thrive will be an update on the Town's response to the pandemic and measures for community outreach including promotion of the Town's hotline for vulnerable people.

Community groups will also be invited to distribute to every household and business a flyer produced by the Town to help to identify people in need; promote the Town's Community Outreach service; and encourage neighbours to help each other.

Council Meetings

Currently there is no provision under the Local Government Regulations for Council meetings and Committees of Council meetings, to be undertaken in an online environment. It is anticipated the State Government will enact Regulations in the coming days to cater for this. Whilst the Town is constrained by the state of its technology and heavy reliance on manual processes, efforts are underway to ensure future meetings are conducted in an online environment.

Impact on Budget

The Town has an allocation of \$36,000 as part of the mid-year budget review to be considered at the Council meeting later in March 2020 to respond to COVID-19 for personal protective equipment for staff and other emergency requirements. It may be necessary to allocate further funds prior to 30 June 2020, which can be done as part of the regular monthly financial reports to Council.

To reduce the financial burden on ratepayers, minimising any rate increase for 2020-21 and deferring any costs associated with a proposed underground power project until 2021-22 may also be measures considered by Council at the appropriate time.

These measures are consistent with the Premier's recent request to the Mayor of the Western Australian Local Government Association (WALGA) for a unilateral freeze on rates, fees and charges across member Councils. Further forecasting is required to assess the impact of such measures.

Current remaining sponsorship and events funding (\$16K) and commemorative services funding (\$16K) for 2019-20 is proposed to be repurposed for community initiatives using more streamlined delegations in the current environment where timeliness is of the essence.

More broadly further forecasting of the financial impacts of the pandemic on the Town's budget for the 2020-21 Budget is required.

The stimulus packages announced so far by the State and Federal Governments have addressed individuals and businesses. It may be possible to access federal funding for community projects and services in the short to medium term by advocating to bodies such as the East Metropolitan Regional Council (EMRC), WALGA etc.

The Town's response to COVID-19 will continue to evolve as the situation changes. The Town will remain adaptive and agile and will put the health and wellbeing of the community and its workforce as a priority.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION – ITEM 4.3

That Council in recognition of the impact of the Coronavirus (COVID-19):

1. Requests the Chief Executive Officer to prepare a budget scenario for 2020-21 based on:
 - a) 0% rate revenue increases in accordance with section 6.2 of the *Local Government Act* and no increase in fees and charges.
 - b) Any proposal for the undergrounding of power by Western Power in parts of Eden Hill and the Bassendean area, not to financially impact home owners in the 2020-21 financial year.
2. Delegates to the Chief Executive Officer the authority to utilise the remaining sponsorship and events funding and commemorative services funding for the remainder of this financial year in order to facilitate community outreach services including the potential for community grants;

3. Approves 20 days COVID-19 paid leave for employees who have contracted COVID-19, need to care for another person who has COVID-19 or is required to self-isolate, cannot access school or other care arrangements because of COVID-19 or are otherwise prevented from working because of COVID-19.

Voting requirement: Simple majority

5.0 MOTIONS OF WHICH PREVIOUS NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN

5.1 Notice of Motion – Cr Wilson: FOGO

Cr Wilson has advised that he wishes to move the following motion at this meeting:

“That Council:

1. *Acknowledges the Eastern Metropolitan Regional Council (EMRC) has declared on 19 March 2020, a distribution totalling \$13,789,200 from the EMRC’s Secondary Waste Reserve to be distributed to all member Councils of the EMRC on or before 30 June 2020 and notes the EMRC conditions of this distribution; and*
2. *By absolute majority, in accordance with s.5.42 of the Local Government Act 1995 delegate authority to the Chief Executive Officer of the Town of Bassendean its power and the discharge of its duties to negotiate, finalise and enter into a Deed of Release or such legal form of agreement with the EMRC to enable the Town of Bassendean to receive the distribution of funds from the EMRC and to commit the Town of Bassendean to the obligations of the use of funds.”*

OFFICER COMMENT

The Notice of Motion from Cr Wilson is supported by Officers.

6.0 CLOSURE