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MEDIA RELEASE

2013/14 BUDGET ADOPTED

Street sealing, completion of the Beachport sewerage scheme, tourism and recreational projects are just some of the highlights of the 2013/14 budget adopted by the Wattle Range Council last night.

Mayor Peter Gandolfi said after considering price increases to Council and development growth, the Council resolved to increase total rate revenue by four per cent.

The four per cent increase comprises a 2.8 per cent increase reflecting the Local Government Price Index (LGPI), and a further 1.20 per cent increase that captures new development growth undertaken across the Council area throughout 2012/13.

Highlights in the budget include:

- \$3.26 million to complete the construction of the Beachport CWMS (sewerage scheme)
- \$1.46 million for capping and sealing of the Canunda Landfill.
- \$656,000 for unsealed road refurbishment.
- \$500,000 for road re-sealing.
- \$622,600 for road re-construction and sealing; including V&A Lane (Coonawarra), Giles Street, Underwood Street, Schinckel Street (all Southend).
- \$139,500 for swimming pool works in Penola, Nangwarry and Millicent.
- \$75,000 for footpath construction in Penola.
- \$45,000 for Glencoe Skate Park.
- \$35,000 for Coonawarra entrance signs.
- \$30,000 for heating at Millicent Civic and Arts Centre.

“In endeavouring to provide a more equitable outcome for ratepayers, Council decided to abolish the Rate Cap,” Mr Gandolfi said. “This means that all ratepayers will be paying the same rate in the dollar according to their location and land use such as township, rural living and rural. The rates payable are determined by the capital valuation of the property. Capital valuations are set independently of Council by the Valuer General. Ratepayers have the opportunity to appeal valuations they believe to be too high directly to the Valuer General’s Office.”

Mr Gandolfi said the rate cap was distorting rates payable by property owners with some properties receiving huge subsidies since the introduction of the Cap nine years ago. This subsidy was paid by other ratepayers. As a result of the removal of the Cap more than half of the rateable properties will receive a decrease in their rates for 2013/14 while about ten per cent of rateable properties will receive an increase of more than 20 per cent to bring them in line with other ratepayers.

In the adopted Business Plan, the minimum rate will increase to \$575 for 2013/14. Eligible pensioners and self-funded retirees will receive a \$50 concession in addition to any State Government pensioner concession they receive.

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The Waste Collection service charge will increase by \$11 for the three bin service to \$283 (\$113 for pensioners) and increase by \$7 for the two bin service to \$217 (\$87 for pensioners).

Residents will continue to be able to dispose of segregated household waste free of charge at waste transfer stations and resource recovery centres.

For further information in relation to this press release, please contact Mayor Peter Gandolfi

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