

P 07 4658 6900  
F 07 4658 6955  
E [shire@barcoo.qld.gov.au](mailto:shire@barcoo.qld.gov.au)  
PO Box 14 Jundah Qld 4736  
Corner Perkins and Dickson Street Jundah Qld 4736  
ABN 34 668 298 330 | W [www.shire@barcoo.qld.gov.au](http://www.shire@barcoo.qld.gov.au)



## From the Mayor of the Barcoo Shire 2023/2024 Budget Summary

I am proud to deliver Barcoo Shire Council's Annual Budget for 2023/24.

Over the past three years, your council has worked hard to improve the financial position of the Barcoo Shire Council, both now and into the future. It has been a central theme for your Councillors and I that this council delivers high standards of service to the community, whilst improving council's overall financial position. Over the past year, council has continued to achieve those high standards, particularly in the maintenance and upgrade of local and state roads, flood damage repair, the continued maintenance and beautification of our towns, and services delivered to reduce the incidents of pests and vermin.

As your Mayor I am proud to inform you that through the hard work of your Councillors and the organisations executive team, we now find ourselves in a strong financial position. During the 2022/23 financial year, Council made the final payment on its remaining borrowings and is debt free. There are no plans to undertake borrowings in the foreseeable future.

This 2023/24 Budget is responsible and prepared with full awareness of the Council's financial position. Your Councillors and I have been involved in workshops with the CEO and councils' executive team since early 2023 in preparing this budget. We have been guided by the **Business Improvement Program (BIP)**, undertaken in partnership with the Queensland Treasury Corporation. The BIP is now "business as usual" for the Barcoo Shire Council, and we operate all aspects of council under a value for money principle.

In the coming year, major projects to be undertaken in the Barcoo Shire include improvements to the Bimerah-Isisford Road and the Windorah Aerodrome runway upgrade. We have been successful in attracting significant funding from the State and Commonwealth Governments for both of these, and an array of other projects across the shire. We continue to seek external funding for the replacement of the Jundah Water Treatment Plant. A comprehensive list of all projects is set out within the budget papers.

The 2023/24 Budget year will again require this council to have tight control over its spending, and I have instructed councils' CEO, Mike Lollback, to ensure that the value for money principle is applied in every instance of council business. The council will continue to carefully monitor its general cash reserves in order to meet other capital obligations, including roadworks, plant replacement and asset renewal programs.

This year the general increase in rates has been set at 4% for continuing categories, including townships and rural categories. This increase is below the current national inflation figure, and delivered to ensure council can meet its obligations, whilst limiting burden on the residents of the Barcoo Shire.

Following conversations throughout the year the scope of the **Pest Animal Special Charge** has been expanded to include **Pest Plants**. The new **Pest Plant and Pest Animal Special Charge** will see an increase by 25% from the 2022/23 financial year. This increase is to cover costs associated with the inclusion of Pest Plants into the program, and to address the increased costs council is met with in the delivery of the baiting program.

The council has also increased the minimum charges for continuing rating categories by \$22.

An operational deficit of \$1.4M is expected during the 2023/24 financial year, including depreciation costs of \$5.9M. The 2023/24 budgeted operational deficit is an improvement of \$1.9M from the budget adopted in 2022/23.

At the end of June 2023, Council's cash position is expected to be around \$20M. This is a significant improvement on the previous year, however, this balance is impacted by changes to Government Policy, that has advanced a number of payments, including the Federal Assistance Grant.

Barcoo Shire Council takes the position that providing for our community is the shared responsibility of every tier of government. The council will continue to seek external funding for projects and, as a general principle, if supporting grant funding is not received, projects will not progress, thus reducing the impact on our funds and ensuring responsible financial management.

As your mayor, I am committed to ensuring your Councillors, the CEO and the senior management of the Barcoo Shire Council continue to work together in delivering valued and cost-effective service to the residents and visitors to the Barcoo Shire.

#### SOME OF THE MAJOR PROJECTS FOR 2023/24

Description	Project cost	Government Funding
Road and Drainage Structure Program		
Maintenance	\$900,000	-
Capital	\$4,961,805	\$2,912,084
Windorah Aerodrome Terminal Disability Access upgrades	\$25,000	-
Windorah Aerodrome Runway Renewal	\$2,824,270	\$2,824,270
Water System Renewals	\$96,667	\$96,667
Stonehenge Hall Upgrades and Renewal	\$55,000	-
Housing Upgrades and Construction	\$1,575,000	\$1,350,000
Windorah Caravan Park Amenities upgrade	\$40,000	-
Bimerah Isisford Road, Gravel Resheet and Stabilisation	\$2,500,000	\$2,000,000
Drainage (Culvert /Floodway) Projects		
Yaraka Retreat Road (6 culverts/floodways)	\$1,095,465	-
Glenloch Road	\$150,000	-
Warbreccan Road	\$388,500	-

**Budget Snapshot**

**4% General Rates increase on average across continuing categories.**

**10% Rates Discount continues.**

**\$22 Garbage Charge Increase to \$266 per service.**

**Additional Bin services charge moving to \$180 per service.**

**4% Water Charge increase.**

**25% Increase for the Pest Plant and Pest Animal Control Charge**

**11.64% Interest on Outstanding Rates commencing 30 days after close of discount.**

**Total Operational Budget of \$21.9M**

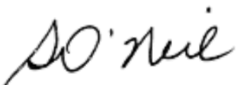
**Total Capital Program of \$9.4M**

**Roads and Drainage Capital Program \$4.9M**

**Water Capital Program \$100K**

**Plant Replacement Program \$2.5M**

**Buildings/ Structures Capital Program \$1.7M**



**Mayor Sally O'Neil  
Barcoo Shire Council**

Date: 29/06/2023

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