



Balanced budget demonstrates financial responsibility

Sunshine Coast Council has today delivered a balanced budget for 2010/11, with a lower than anticipated increase in general rates, thanks to strong financial management.

Financial Management portfolio holder Chris Thompson said the \$582 million budget has delivered a \$400,000 operating surplus which is an outstanding achievement considering council started with a \$25 million deficit.

“In being responsible financial managers, on the operational side in 2009/10, council delivered on its target of \$13.5 million of efficiency dividends, Again, the 2010/11 budget includes a further target of \$5 million to ensure that the council operating costs are kept to a minimum,” Cr Thompson said.

“This ongoing efficiency dividend is about working with staff to find more efficient ways of delivering services to the community without reducing service levels or cutting back on infrastructure.

“A wide range of strategies and projects will be implemented in line with council’s corporate plan to identify these efficiencies.

“For example, in the 2010/2011 financial year, the organisation’s Information Technology Transition and Consolidation program will deliver efficiencies for the organisation through improved telecommunications across all offices.

“Some of this deficit reduction has come from ratepayers, through decisions such as the reduction in the early general rates payment discount and the reviewed commercial fees and charges from council owned property and businesses.

“We acknowledge that these initiatives maybe unpopular but council has explored all avenues to provide a balanced budget to avoid resorting to the use of debt to fund operational expenditure.



“Council continues to invest in much needed capital works infrastructure that has immediate benefits for current and future Sunshine Coast residents and this has been done without significant borrowings that will place an undue burden on future residents.

“In the capital budget, we have adopted a large capital works program in an attempt to support the local economy while ensuring little impact on rate increases in the current year. These works are funded from grants and subsidies, developer contributions, loans and council reserves.

“In meeting increased costs such as electricity, water and fuel, council has tried to balance the need to increase rates with targeted efficiencies.

“This will no doubt be a great challenge, but it is essential that we achieve these targets to maintain financial sustainability.

“Finally, council has excelled in meeting the state government’s targets, identified within its financial sustainability indicators, and expects significant improvement on the asset sustainability indicator this financial year.”

A full breakdown of the 2010/2011 Budget is posted on council’s website

www.sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au

-ENDS-

Media enquiries:

Cr Chris Thompson, Financial Management and Business Unit Performance Portfolio, 5420 8975

Greg Laverty, Executive Director of Finance and Business, 5441 8200.

Jo McNaught-Anderson, Corporate Communication, 0429 057241