



# District Council of Cooper Pedy Newsletter

*Welcome to the Opal Capital of the World*

July 2019

Dear Citizen,

At the outset can I express on behalf of the town our deepest sympathies to the family of the community member who recently died as a result of an altercation. Our thoughts and well wishes are with you during this difficult time.

On a different note can I congratulate all involved with the organisation of the Opal Festival. While it was my first, I thought it was a wonderful few days of activities. Local participation was high and was supplemented by good numbers of tourists.

I was also pleased to learn that two defibrillators will be installed at the Opal Inn and Italo-Australian Miners Club by St Johns Ambulance SA as a result of a grant from the Australian Hotels Association SA and Clubs SA.

Rebuilding trust and confidence in the Council is my biggest task.

Allegations of corruption and maladministration continue to be made. These need to be dealt with. Various anti-corruption and maladministration authorities exist to investigate these matters. Where they involve the Council I encourage people to report them.

At the invitation of the Council, the Ombudsman, Wayne Lines, will visit Cooper Pedy this week to provide an opportunity for local people to learn about the importance of public integrity in South Australia's public administration. He will speak at the Town Meeting on Tuesday night 23rd July at the Tafe SA Campus.

I have previously indicated that there will be a number of citizen polls in October.

One will be on the proposed rate and service levels for the town. It is entirely appropriate that the citizens choose the level of rates they pay along with the level of service these rates buy. To assist voters to decide

on the appropriate levels we will over the next few months provide you with information to enable you to make an informed decision.

To start with we need to decide who we will compare ourselves with. We could compare ourselves to the State average/median however this is considered to be inappropriate due to the fact that two thirds of people live in Adelaide which is vastly different to Cooper Pedy. Due to Cooper Pedy being predominantly urban, but remote, there is really only one similar Council - Roxby Downs. It however has a population twice the size of Cooper Pedy. The Councils that are most similar in terms of population and budget are Cleve, Flinders Ranges and Peterborough.

The poll will ask citizens to decide whether they want their per capita rating levels to be at the low end - Cooper Pedy is the lowest, the middle - Flinders Ranges and Peterborough, or the highest - Cleve. As well as provided rating information we will also provide information about what services these levels of rates would buy.

I have talked often about the need for the town to take greater control of its future. A group of twenty five citizens met recently for half a day to start the process which is known as Cooper Pedy 2030 - CP 30. They have broken themselves up into three groups - economic, environment and social. There was great enthusiasm on the day and they look forward to involving as many citizens as possible in the future.

There will be a separate communication from the CP30 Group shortly.

The Council's Annual Business Plan - commonly known as the budget - has been prepared on a status quo basis.

It has the following features:

- an operating deficit (normalised) similar to 2018/19 of approximately

\$1.4 million;

- a decrease in borrowings of \$1.2 million;
- a significant improvement in our cash held at the end of the year from \$90k to \$1.1 million;
- \$4.7 million of capital works; and
- a rate and water charges increase of 2%.

It is scheduled for adoption at the Council meeting on 6 August.

Since the preparation of our budget, the State Government has decided to substantially increase the land fill levy payable by Councils and to eliminate the motor registration discount for remote areas. Obviously, both of these decisions will impact on the Council's budget. Hopefully, we will be able to absorb much of these increased costs.

It was pleasing to be advised that our TAFE will not close. The Council will be briefed on this issue at its next meeting. It is important that we strongly express our views regarding its future.

The recruitment of a new CEO is nearing its conclusion. The response - number and quality- has been extremely pleasing, Twenty four expressions of interest were received. I interviewed eight candidates shortlisted by the recruiter some weeks ago. Four candidates will be interviewed next Monday. The interview panel will be comprised of Les Hoad, Sam Green, Acting CEO of the City of Playford and myself.

I hope to see you at the Town Meeting on Tuesday night.

Until next time.

Tim Jackson

Administrator

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**Next Town Meeting**  
**Tuesday 23rd July 2019**  
**@ Tafe SA**  
**7:00pm**



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## Road Reconstruction

The proposal is to have 80% of the damaged roads completed in three months. There has been concern expressed relating to signage, the residual windrow of soil and inconvenience. Advanced warning signage has been upgraded, and the windrows will be knocked over. We are taking all of these concerns and others seriously and if you find our response unsatisfactory or you have additional concerns please contact the office.

## Solar Demand Tariff

The Minister of Energy has imposed a two Tier rating system on electricity for solar power customers one for peaking load periods and another for ambient or normal loads which is slightly less than the current non-solar tariffs. Apart from the need for a meter to capture this tariff data in Coober Pedy premises there will generally be a significant cost penalty to the savings that would have applied prior to the imposition of this tariff. Council is seeking for the minister to reverse this decision.

## CU River Magnetite Mine

Council has given preliminary support to the CU River development of the Cairn Hill, Snaefel, and Tommohawk mining projects. The Council consider the economic and employment opportunities that are estimated to result from their establishment to have a positive effect on the economy of Coober Pedy.

## Rates, Water and Power

Many of you would be aware of the firm approach we are taking to recover outstanding rates. Failure to pay power and water rates, if they are outstanding over 120 days, will result in disconnection or restriction on water supply applied respectively.

## Community Grants

The applications for the community grants were received, and a recommendation has been made by the panel to EDL. EDL will review the recommendations, and will make the final decision. Successful applicants will be notified once a response has been received from EDL.

## Youth shed

Negotiations are continuing with Aboriginal Family Support Services (AFSS) to accommodate their youth programs in the youth shed. AFSS have been offered a draft lease agreement for consideration.

## Sewerage system

The Council's common effluent drainage system has been under considerable stress due to the tourism influx. One of the undesirable outcomes is that a smell was coming from the vents along the network due to excessive carbon load converting due to an anaerobic and aerobic digestion to methane. This has now subsided. Thank you for your patience whilst this was occurring.

## Efficiency and Effectiveness review

A review of the efficiency and the effectiveness of Councils services is going to take place before the end of the year with the express purpose of providing to Council and the community a transparent report on the levels of Councils services, their effectiveness and options for decreasing or increasing the service levels.

## Internal Controls

An independent review of the council's internal controls is taking place. These controls are designed to ensure there are proper processes and checks in place to minimise corruption. This review goes through each of the systems used of a financial and non-financial control.

## Dogs and Cats Online Registration

*Registrations Open  
1st July 2019 - Due by the 31st  
August 2019 - late fees will  
apply after due date.*

### *From 1st July 2018*

- mandatory microchipping and desexing
- a new registry and standards/guidelines for breeders and sellers
- a new statewide database (Dogs and Cats Online)

[Go to dogsandcatsonline.com.au.](http://dogsandcatsonline.com.au)





## Cost of Services

The Council advised recently that the schedule of the cost of various municipal services it performs will be published for you as members of the community so you can participate in the debate about the level of services provide to the community. Below is the cost per category. Attached is a cost of service ranked from highest to lowest for the average rate across the Council.

Some services such as Sport and Recreation are internally charged where the majority of costs are water charges for oval irrigation and a reduction in watering of the oval will reduce the operating cost in part for the water business.

## Budget 2019-20

### Rate Per Service

<b>Works</b>	
Sport & Recreation	183.31
Road Maintenance	167.78
Refuse Collection	130.79
Dog Control	76.40
Street Lighting	57.32
Street Cleaning	16.12
Aerodrome	1.38
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	633.10
<b>Community Services</b>	
Child Care Services & Other	91.60
Tourism	29.08
Development Act	14.53
Health Services	8.30
Opal Festival	7.04
Library	5.94
Drive In Centre	2.14
Alcohol Management	1.59
	<hr/>
	160.24
<b>Total Average Rate</b>	<b>793.34</b>



District Council of Cooper Pedy

## Budget 2019-20

### Rate Per Service

