

A message from the Mayor and Deputy Mayor

Making the Rating Dollar go further

The 2022/2023 Financial Year will bring an important milestone in Council's long term budget strategy with the imminent sale of the Bunyip Water Scheme. The Scheme delivers 1.6 gigalitres of storm and recycled water annually to Council's wine growing region and in doing so allows 800 megalitres of River Murray water to be retained for environmental flows. Over the last six years it has delivered around \$6m in revenue and will deliver a further \$10.7m to Council once the sale is finalised.

On the sale, ratepayers will have received the benefits from the equivalent of another year of rating income during this period.

Over the last decade, Council has grown from being financially unsustainable due to infrastructure debt from the past, under-resourced management of assets and an unsustainable balance sheet, to the strong financial position it is in today thanks to the philosophy of Growth, Reform, Innovation and Discipline (GRID) introduced by Council's Chief Executive Officer Mr Brian Carr.

The Bunyip Water Scheme is an important plank in the *GRID* strategy. It pioneered a unique public private partnership arrangement, the revenue from which underwrote significant infrastructure investment, delivered through such State and Federal funding programs as the Accelerated Infrastructure Program (\$15m of town street, footpath and stormwater upgrades), Stimulus Funding, rural road sealing, tourism and freight routes and other Commonwealth and State grant funding – all of which have provided lifelong benefits to both Light Regional Council's urban and rural communities.

An exciting inclusion in the 2022/2023 budget is the initiation of the 'Bunyip 2' scheme which will leverage \$4.9 million of Commonwealth and State Government grant funds in a similar, but smaller scheme that will harvest stormwater from the Roseworthy development area and Kingsford Industrial Estate and inject it into the Bunyip 1 infrastructure, while retaining water for Council's parks and gardens in the new development – another win-win scheme that will deliver efficient use of a precious resource at no cost to ratepayers over the life of the project. Council has also recently acquired a water licence resource enhancing the water scheme's self-reliance.

Coming Financial Challenges

The coming financial year is likely to be a challenging one for Council in administering the budget, with higher inflation forecast, and rising interest rates. Council has kept the rise in its general revenue on existing assessments to about 2.5%, which is well under the forecast inflation rate.

The last two years have revealed rapid changes in valuation for two land use categories (LUC's) – last year it was primary production and this year residential. In both budgets, changes were made to ensure no LUC suffered a disproportionate part of the rating burden. For the 2022/2023 budget this has been achieved by a combination of a rate in the dollar decrease, and a rate rebate for valuation increases greater than 11% available to all ratepayers by application.

The general rate is a tax, and like all general taxes is not a fee for service but pays for a full range of services (in Council's case, defined by the Local Government and other Acts, and various regulations) that people access variably. Pages 6 and 7 of the Annual Business Plan and Budget provides a snapshot of about 50 of these services.

We thank Council staff for their extensive work in preparing the budget and for assisting Council to debate and understand all aspects of the draft budget and business plan, via special meetings and workshops. Thanks to Councillors, too for their efforts and for working with staff to deliver a fair Budget and Annual Business Plan, which will enable Council's services and programs to be delivered in the coming financial year.



Bill O'Brien
Mayor



Deane Rohrlach
Deputy Mayor

2021/2022 Achievements and Awards

Council reflects on progress and achievements from 2021/2022 over the new financial year as part of the forward planning for the new year ahead. Some of Council's accomplishments across the Light Region are reflected in the highlights below:

- Local Government Information Technology South Australia (LGITSA) award winner in Excellence in Information Management, Excellence in Employee Experience and South Australian Achievement of the Year award categories.
- Local Government Professionals Australia, SA Leadership award for 'Excellence in Infrastructure Delivery for the Gerald Roberts Road bridge construction.



Award winning Gerald Roberts Road bridge constructed in 2021

- Council's Grants Program awarded funding to 20 recipients across four different categories, encouraging local groups and individuals to take a more active role in the community as well as creating opportunities for participation.
- Recipient of an Office for Ageing Well grant for improving digital literacy skills for the region's senior residents.
- Completion of the East Terrace Freight Route, enabling heavy vehicles to bypass the Kapunda township and improving community safety.
- Light Regional Council Young Citizen of the Year, Elijah Hobby received the South Australian Young Citizen of the Year Award.



Elijah Hobby, recipient of the South Australian Young Citizen of the Year Award. Photo credit: asbCreative

2022/2023 Priorities

Light Regional Council's Strategic Plan 2021-2025 details the strategic priorities that sustain Council's vision over the next four years. To achieve these three goal areas have been identified: Community, Environment, and Investment. Each goal is underpinned by key objectives. A full list of the Strategic Goals and Objectives can be found in the Annual Business Plan and Budget 2022/2023 on Council's website www.light.sa.gov.au. Priorities for the year ahead include:



20% Increase in Hard Waste Collection Program



Rate Relief for Valuation Increases >11% (details pg 4)



\$3.08m Upgrade and Renewal of Community Waste Management Scheme



\$1.86m Complete Light Stimulus Program



Bunyip 2 Water Re-use Scheme Roseworthy Development



Environmental Sustainability Strategy



Light Country Wayfinding Signage



\$0.100m Upgrade Kapunda Swimming Pool



Implement 'Reflect' Reconciliation Action Plan



\$0.200m Hewett Centre Rainwater Diversion Project



Freeling Goods Shed Reserve Seating



Complete Upgrade of the Business Enterprise System

2022/2023 Capital Program Highlights

Roads

Funds spent on the road network will include \$1.945m on rural road re-sheeting and \$0.480m on rural sealed roads. A further \$0.733m will be spent on the re-sealing of township roads.

\$1.860m of Light Stimulus Program works contributes to future economic growth of the region through infrastructure upgrades.

Recreation and Open Space

Funds will be allocated to the expansion, upgrade and renewal of recreation and open space assets. This includes:

- \$0.080m Greenock Park Cricket Nets
- \$0.100m Upgrades to the Kapunda Swimming Pool to ensure compliance
- \$0.015m Shelters for recreational parks and gardens

Community Wastewater Management Scheme

\$3.082m will be spent on the upgrade and renewal of Community Wastewater Management Schemes.

Land and Buildings

Funds will be allocated to the expansion, upgrade and renewal of land and building assets. This includes:

- \$0.015m Provision of new bus stop shelters
- \$0.130m Kapunda Institute refurbishment
- \$0.020m Greenock Institute landscaping
- \$0.200m Hewett Centre rainwater diversion
- \$0.020m Improved community safety measures with security cameras installed at key sites across the region

Signage

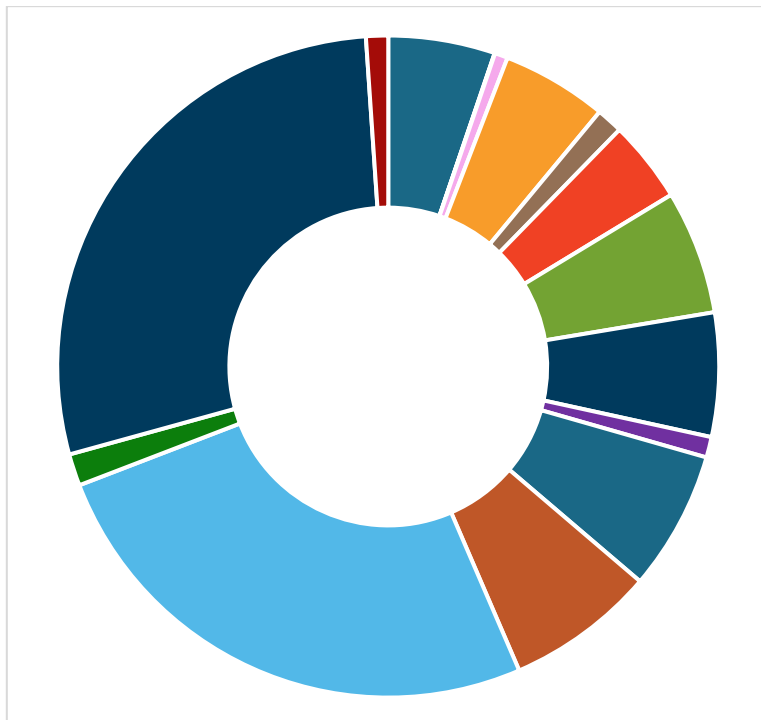
\$0.143m will be allocated to the provision and upgrade of gateway, town and tourism signage with Light Regional Council and Light Country brands.

Vehicle/Plant

\$0.790m will be allocated for the renewal and expansion of Council plant and equipment. These assets are used in the delivery of services and the construction of other assets.

An electric vehicle will be purchased and trialled to ascertain whether it meets operational needs.

How your rates are spent (%/\$'000)*



- Business Undertakings – 5% - \$1,363
- Community Amenities – 1% - \$337
- Community Support – 5% - \$1,349
- Council Administration - 28% - \$7,380
- Economic Development – 6% - \$1,584
- Governance - 1% - \$283
- Health Services – 1% - \$166
- Library Services – 4% - \$1,049
- Other Environment – 1% - \$263
- Plant Hire & Depot - 2% - \$408
- Public Order and Safety – 0% - \$6
- Recreation – 7% - \$1,782
- Regulatory Services - 7% - \$1,906
- Transport (maintenance of roads, footpaths, culverts) – 26% - \$6,708
- Waste Management – 6% - \$1,583

* Figures shown are excluding \$8,600m for Bunyip Water II

Your Rates Explained

General Rates make up part of Council's revenue which funds the services, programs and initiatives provided to the community.

General Rates benefit the whole community. It is calculated by multiplying the rate in the dollar (set by Council) by the value of your property, as determined by the Valuer-General of South Australia (over which Council has no influence). Thus, the general rate you pay may alter if the value of your property changes. If you believe your property valuation is too high, you can apply to the Valuer-General to have it reviewed. The minimum general rate payable is \$900.00 and hadn't been increased for four years.

The general rate in the dollar is based on:

Property Valuation \times Rate in the Dollar = General Rates Payable

*Excludes properties on minimum rate.

Rate Rebate Application

To support ratepayers who experience property valuation increases greater than 11% on the previous year's valuation, Council determined a rebate may be available upon application.

Approval of ratepayer applications are in accordance with the following conditions:

- the maximum property valuation threshold is 11%.
- the rebate applies to 'all' land use categories.
- Rebate approval is based on an application process (to be received within 60 days of the first rates notice).
- the rebate is unavailable for any improved (>\$40,000) property since the last valuation, any property purchased since the last valuation, any property where the land use has changed, and any property where the minimum rate applies.

For more information, go to:

<https://www.light.sa.gov.au/live/rates-and-valuations>

The Annual Refuse Collection and Recycling Charge* –

This charge is set to cover the actual cost of the service. In 2022/2023 the annual refuse charges for the Township service is \$323 (3 bin), and for the Rural service is \$218 (2 bin). Since many properties located outside the townships cannot access Council's rubbish pick-up service, this is a separate charge, to ensure that only those using the service pay for it and are not subsidised by those for whom it is not available.

The Community Wastewater Management System Annual Service Charge* –

The annual service charges for the Community Wastewater Management Schemes at Kapunda, Freeling, Greenock, Roseworthy, and Nuriootpa is \$580 per unit. A few years ago, the Government instructed Councils that this charge should cover the full cost of delivering the service, calculated by using a formula they supplied. When Council applied this formula, it discovered that the amount being charged annually was well under what it should be, and rather than a large increase in one year, it has been gradually increased each year by a defined amount, until the required level is reached. Since many properties outside the townships do not have access to Council's wastewater removal systems, this is also applied as a separate charge.

**These charges are based on services provided for individual properties.*

Rates Payment Due Dates

- 2 September 2022
- 2 December 2022
- 3 March 2023
- 2 June 2023

You can request to receive your notices electronically by registering for



Please refer to your rates notice or council website for further details including payment options.

Contact Details

Principal Office: 93 Main Street, Kapunda

Postal Address: PO Box 72, Kapunda SA 5373

Telephone: 08 8525 3200

Email: light@light.sa.gov.au

Website: www.light.sa.gov.au

Rate/\$ Proposals by Land Use Category (LUC)	2021/2022	2022/2023
Residential	0.004480	0.004342
Commercial Shop	0.007840	0.007599
Commercial Office	0.007840	0.007599
Commercial Other	0.008959	0.008684
Industrial Light	0.012318	0.011941
Industrial Other	0.012318	0.011941
Primary Production	0.003628	0.003343
Vacant Land	0.007839	0.007599
Other	0.004479	0.004342

