



ANNUAL PLAN  

---

2019/20



GEORGE TOWN COUNCIL

# WHAT IS THE ANNUAL PLAN?

This Annual Plan (The Plan) provides a detailed description of how we will invest in services and facilities that will benefit the municipality long-term, as agreed by the elected members of the Council.

The Plan establishes our key goals for Year 3 of Council's four-year Plan and supports our progression towards achieving the goals of the George Town Council 2016-2026 Strategic Plan.

The Local Government Act 1993 (Section 66) directs a council to prepare a strategic plan for its municipal area. This Plan guides the decision making of Council, resource allocations, work plans of Council employees and outlines how Council will contribute to community needs and desires, meet its governance obligations, provide leadership and set priorities.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The George Town Council pays its respect to the traditional and original owners of the land in which we meet their elders past, present and emerging and we pay respect to those that have passed before us and to acknowledge today's Tasmanian Aboriginal people who are the custodians of this land.



# MAYOR'S MESSAGE

*“A clear message from the recent by-election points to our need to develop a diversified economy focused on tourism. I look forward to working with all of you on defining what goals as a community we want to aim for and how we can all contribute in achieving those goals.”*

On behalf of George Town Council I am pleased to present the 2019/2020 Annual Plan and Budget. Council's Strategic Plan 2016-2020 forms the basis in which the Annual Plan and budget is developed with goals to:

1. Foster the growth of a diverse business and industry mix and to foster population growth.
2. Support an active, vibrant, and culturally diverse community that enjoys liveable and amenity rich neighbourhoods.
3. Conserve our natural environment and heritage and ensure it is enjoyed by our community, visitors and future generations.
4. Strengthen the vibrancy of our towns and enhance the benefits of living in a rural setting and living close to the river and coast.
5. Ensure Council listens to and understands community needs and continues to make responsible decisions on behalf of the community.

This is the third Annual Plan and Budget aimed at delivering these goals and includes a number of exciting initiatives for growth, enhanced community engagement, infrastructure management and development delivered by a budget in excess of \$12 Million resulting in a surplus in excess of \$100,000.

We have allocated funds to develop a Community Consultation Framework to ensure we are engaging with the right people in the right way to make better informed decisions that represent the views of the community. We will review our disability access policy to ensure it meets contemporary needs and review Council's rates and charges policy likewise.

We have a number of key strategic pieces of work to be accomplished over the coming twelve months including the development of a Sports & Recreation Strategy, George Town Sports Complex Master Plan, identification of heritage, natural and cultural assets and review of the ten year strategic plan. Council has also made provision in the budget to support initiatives that arise from the recently established Place Making Group.

We will continue to strengthen our partnerships and involvement with key groups such as the George Town Future Impact Group, Chamber of Commerce, Bell Bay Advanced Manufacturing Zone sub-committee, Northern Tasmanian Development Corporation and Tourism Northern Tasmania among others, to ensure we are represented, heard and able to influence positive social and economic outcomes for our community.

Provision has also been made to act on key deliverables of the Youth Strategy such as identifying opportunities for enhanced participation in pre and post school activities and providing opportunities for our young people to participate in the design and implementation of community events and projects.

I believe the time is apt to ask ourselves who we are and who we want to be, and I look forward to having conversations with our community on how we identify with ourselves now and how we would like to in the future, and create a branding strategy around the ensuing vision.

I am genuinely excited for the twelve months ahead. In addition to the multiple of services Council delivers on a daily basis there a number of exciting projects that will reach out to all areas of the community!

# MESSAGE FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER

My family and I have truly settled in since I commenced in the role in January, and we've been enjoying spending time in the coastal and agricultural towns in the region. We've been bushwalking, fishing, spent time visiting farm-gates and cellar doors, enjoyed watching the kids play in local sporting teams and taking full advantage of the lifestyle our municipality has in spades.

I am privileged to serve the community of the George Town municipality and have the responsibility of leading our organisation in the delivery of Council's 2019/2020 Annual Plan and budget.

This budget was developed with the principles of:

- Achieving long-term financial sustainability
- Aligning with Council's ten-year strategic plan
- Maintaining quality of services & responsible asset management practices
- Implementing initiatives aimed to position Council, the organisation and the municipality towards greater prosperity

Over the next year community engagement will be stronger through the implementation of a community consultation framework and we will be more active with positive media and marketing activities.

Environmental and scenic enhancements will also be noticed. Residents will observe improvements to the town through the appointment of a horticultural trainee and street tree-planting program. Free waste transfer station services will be extended – with two days provided annually for hard waste disposal and a further two days for green waste disposal.

Council will continue to financially support NRM North and East Tamar Landcare in the great work they do in natural resource management and protection, weed eradication and we will also partner with Parks and Wildlife and the newly formed Low Head branch of Wildcare to better protect our penguin colony.



We are investing heavily in infrastructure to ensure roads, bridges, footpaths, buildings and open space assets meet the needs of the community now and into the future. For example the 2019/2020 capital program includes the replacement of two bridge structures on Dalrymple Road and Weymouth Farm Road, the continued upgrade of Hillwood Road to a sealed surface to Berry Farm, and scoping and design for the proposed extension of Trevor Street in Weymouth.

Bellingham Hall will benefit from a fresh coat of paint and drainage system, and a new public toilet block will be installed at Beechford. The fence at Hillwood football oval will be upgraded to improve player safety and the George Town football and cricket ovals will have irrigation installed.

Animal management, environmental health and building safety policies and practices will be further developed. We'll also be working closely with building surveyors, builders and owners to minimise any impacts and disruptions to building work as a result of the loss of some private building surveying services affecting our area.

The development of a municipal-wide recreation and sports strategy will also ensure Council advocates for, and invests in, appropriate infrastructure to provide for an active community.

Council will continue its strong partnerships; through the provision of officer support and participation in the Bell Bay Advanced Manufacturing Zone, and with the George Town Chamber of Commerce, Future Impact Group, East Tamar Tourism Network, local emergency services, various service and community groups, and state and federal agencies.

To ensure the business operates efficiently and in compliance with relevant legislation the Council will review workplace health and safety, human resources and enterprise agreement policies over the coming year. Council officers will continue to implement the recommendations of audit committees and develop a risk management strategy enabling Council to be well-placed to mitigate both identified and unidentified risks into the future.

Council is appreciative for funding provided by the Commonwealth through the Federal Assistance Grants Program and the federal Bridge Renewal Program. Further funding for the much coveted mountain bike trail project and also the Regent Square re-development is welcomed.

Council also acknowledges the assistance provided by the state government through programs such as; Leveling the Playing Field which will allow the build of all-inclusive change facilities at the George Town sports complex, funding through MAST to assess and repair the breakwater at Weymouth, and Healthy Tasmania funding to provide a program to improve the health and wellbeing of the community.

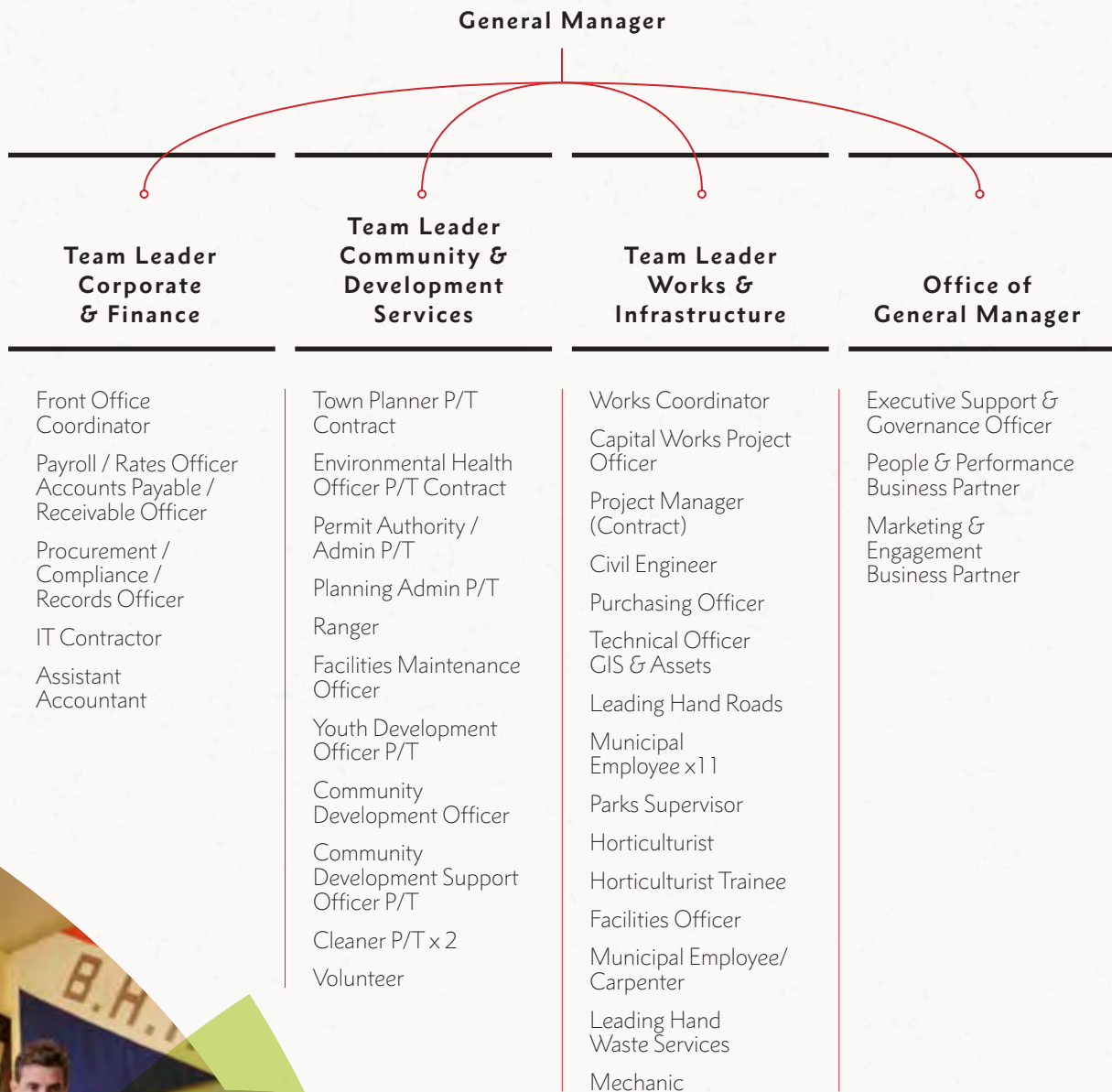
I take this opportunity to welcome Cr Peter Parkes back to the fold and congratulate Cr Greg Kieser on being elected mayor. With a community minded, future-focused Council supported by a highly capable team I am sincerely excited about the year ahead and the long-term future of our municipality.

In closing, I believe this budget and Annual Plan will not only deliver a surplus for the second consecutive year, thereby ensuring Council remains financially sustainable, but will continue to provide high levels of service to the community, as well as invest in new initiatives, community programs and infrastructure projects for the benefit of current and future communities.



# ORGANISATION

George Town Council's organisational structure consists of four departments, Corporate & Finance, Community & Development Services, Works & Infrastructure & Office of the General Manager.



# OUR FRAMEWORK

## Vision, Goals & Values

In 2026, the George Town municipal area will be a proud community where people from all ages participate in our active recreational and community life and where we treasure the immense beauty of our natural environment and rich heritage. We will embrace our industries to drive our prosperity and growth.

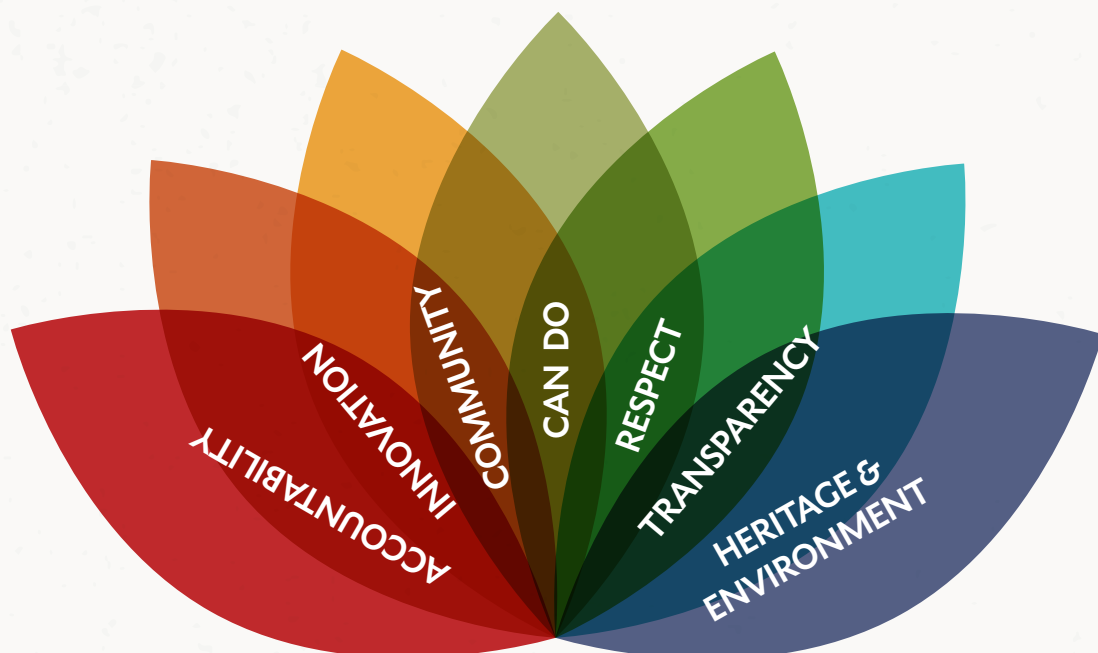
### As a community we:

- Are welcoming of a diverse industry & business mix*
- Are an active & vibrant community that enjoys liveable & amenity rich neighbourhoods*
- Are celebrating our natural environment & rich heritage*
- Have vibrant towns with coastal connections & rural lifestyles*
- Have a council responding to our community's needs*

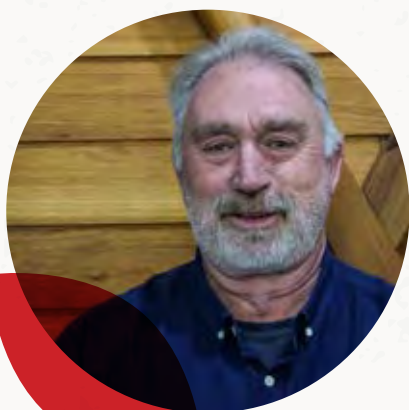
## George Town Council Values

The Council's Mission is supported by its commitment to pursue fundamental values.

These values drive the way the Council operates and how Council carries out all its activities and services for the benefit of the community.



# ELECTED MEMBERS



## Deputy Mayor Tim Harris

**First elected in 2014.**

Thank you to the electors of the municipality for re-electing me as your Deputy Mayor; the trying times seem to be behind us with a surplus achieved of approximately \$400,000 for 2018/19 and another modest surplus predicted for 2019/20. This is a result of responsible decision making from both councillors and our management team. I would like to thank Bridget Archer for her leadership over the past four-and-a-half years and wish her every success as a federal member for Bass. I would also like to task our new council to maintaining responsible, independent and inclusive processes for the benefit of our entire municipal area.

## Councillor Heather Barwick JP

**First elected in 1989.**

I have been a councillor since 1989. I stood for Council to represent the people in the municipality who felt they did not have a voice and were not heard. I believe in good governance through honesty, integrity and transparency.



## Councillor Andrew Michieletto

**First elected in October 2018.**

I have lived in the municipality for the majority of my life, working for local industry and business as well as running my own businesses and being heavily involved in the community as a volunteer. My passion is to see the community flourish and develop into a bustling municipality providing a great lifestyle, work opportunities and a sought after destination for others to visit. By working together with government, local organisations and the community, and by supporting industry, business and tourism growth, I can see this goal now steadily, but surely, being achieved.



## Councillor Chris Barraclough

**First elected in October 2018.**

As a local business owner and volunteer firefighter I am keen to see our businesses prosper and am passionate about community safety and wellbeing. My years in the military have instilled in me a strong belief in team unity and I believe our municipality will achieve great success through the partnership between Council and community.







## Councillor Winston Mason

**First elected in October 2018.**

I have lived in the George Town municipality all of my life and am passionate about community wellbeing and where we live. I became a Councillor to play my part in ensuring the future generations (including my own grandchildren) have a high quality of life. I particularly enjoy working with the sporting community and am proud of my involvement with the work for the dole programs.

## Councillor Greg Dawson

**First elected in 2014.**

I stood for council as I saw too much inefficiency, not one new play space or initiative in many years, and not enough being done for the residents. I supported the review into council operations recently and am proud to see the positive change in recent times. I am passionate about improving sports and recreation facilities in George Town and Hillwood and finding ways to see our coastal communities prosper with support from council.



## Councillor Justine Brooks

**First elected in October 2018.**

I was elected to Council in 2018 after serving as Council's Municipal Planner, Manager Development Services and General Manager. During that time, I developed a deep attachment to the community and was proud to see some exciting projects come to fruition. The George Town municipal area is one of the most desirable places to live in northern Tasmania and my aim, as Chair of the George Town Placemaking Committee, is to bring that to the nations' attention. I represent Council on the management committee for Anglicare's Communities for Children and I am the CEO for the Sexual Assault Support Service in northern Tasmania.

## Councillor Peter Parkes

**First elected in 2014.**

I have lived in George Town for more than forty years and my wife and I have raised our family here. I work at the George Town Community Hub for the Department of Education. I have qualifications in business administration, training, assessing and education. I also perform with local band The River Leads. I'm a firm believer in putting ratepayers' first, timely and frequent communication, and transparency and accountability.



# HOW WE DEVELOPED OUR PLAN

## How was it developed?

Council commenced the development of the Annual Plan and budget in March 2019 with a number of workshops held across the year. The Annual Plan has been developed to meet the objectives of Council's Strategic Plan 2016-2026 which was shaped through extensive community consultation from across the municipality. This year Council also invited community input into the budget process with a number of submissions received and presented in the 2019/2020 budget.

## How will we be measured?

Council will ensure accountability through receiving quarterly reports from officers on meeting Annual Plan and budget performance indicators. These reports will also be published for public view.

Council's internal Audit Committee will also receive periodic reports (or as requested) on meeting performance criteria.

End of year financial statements and reporting will be completed in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and reviewed by the Tasmanian Auditor General's Office.

## How is the plan actioned?

Fundamentally, there are five areas through which Council can actively implement the Strategic and Annual Plans:

1. Deliver Services (directly fund activity)
2. Establish by-laws, policies and guide the local planning scheme
3. Undertake advocacy/lobbying
4. Partner with organisations/community
5. Value-add or deliver something different, such as through new services/investment

The Annual Plan outlines resources required for the delivery of services. The agreed services, projects and programs to be delivered in any given year are reported by staff to Council and the community on a quarterly basis. These reports form the basis of performance for the delivery of the Annual Plan and also form the basis of performance reporting for staff against agreed performance indicators.

## Thanks for your input

Community views collected during the consultation process, along with our current strategic plans, have informed the development of our goals.

We are grateful for community input into the development of the strategic and ensuing Annual Plan. Your engagement, ideas and views allow us to form a strategy to benefit our municipality.



# OUR GOALS – SNAPSHOT



## GOAL 01

### Business & Economic Development

Foster the growth of a diverse business and industry mix and to foster population growth.



## GOAL 02

### Community & Well-being

Support an active, vibrant and culturally diverse community life that enjoys liveable and amenity rich neighbourhoods.



## GOAL 03

### Natural Environment & Heritage

Conserve our natural environment and heritage and ensure it is enjoyed by our community, visitors and future generations.



## GOAL 04

### Built Environment

Strengthen the vibrancy of our towns and enhance the benefits of living in a rural setting and living close to the river and coast.



## GOAL 05

### Organisational Accountability

Ensure Council listens to and understands community needs and continues to make responsible decisions on behalf of the community.

## GOAL 01

# Business & Economic Development

## Our priorities

- Develop promotion, marketing and communication tools for George Town and the Bell Bay Industrial Precinct, including celebrating the success stories.
- Promote the George Town municipality as affordable and accessible for home buyers.
- Promote the George Town municipality as a sea-change destination with quality health facilities.
- Market the rural land in the region as abundant and affordable with climate and soil type and topography similar to successful European wine regions.
- Attract investment to create a diverse mix of industry and business to promote innovation and job creation.
- Assist industry to match the supply and demand of labour and skilled workers.
- Advocate for continued activity and investment in Bell Bay, working with industry on targeted initiatives.
- Advocate for integrated tourist routes for George Town.
- Advocate for the delivery of specialist education tied to local existing and emerging industries.
- Advocate for transport, utilities and tourism infrastructure projects where applicable.
- Identify and plan for highly desirable, sustainable settlements throughout the municipality.
- Enable an industry development group to provide guidance on establishing and maintaining business, and a focus on ideas generation and mentoring.

## Why are we doing this?

- To foster the growth of a diverse business and industry mix and to foster population growth.

## How will we achieve this?

- Promote growth, both in population and business (particularly tourism) through advocacy, promotion, marketing and engagement.
- Promote an increase in George Town's workforce by engaging with employers and schools.
- Support tourism stakeholders in the municipality to develop destination experiences, particularly targeting integration into state-wide and regional initiatives.
- Engage in the promotion of regional and state economic development, thereby acknowledging George Town's connections with the wider community.

## KPI's

- People "believing" in George Town.
- An increase in the number of businesses from a mix of industries.
- An increase in agricultural produce and providore from the region.
- A higher number of residents living in the George Town municipality.
- An increased range of employment opportunities, locally and in the region.

## Foster the growth of a diverse business and industry mix and to foster population growth.

Develop and implement a **marketing strategy** that considers municipal identity, branding, population, tourism and investment attraction.

Continue to participate in the **Bell Bay Advanced Manufacturing Zone** sub-committee.

Develop and implement a **marketing and promotion** approach for events and festivals that showcase the municipality and value adds to the Destination Action Plan.

Commence a marketing strategy for the **mountain bike trail**.

In partnership with NTDC implement **Population Strategy** initiatives including the development of a Welcome/Settlement Strategy.

Participate in the review of the **Greater Launceston Transformation Project**.

Maintain participation in George Town **Chamber of Commerce**.

Partner with **KEEN** to explore local employment initiatives.



## GOAL 02

# Community & Well-being

## Our priorities

- Deliver recurrent community events.
- Develop a marketing and promotion approach for events and festivals that showcase George Town's community.
- Develop and implement a volunteering strategy.
- Collect and distribute information on existing events and activities.
- Liaise with young people, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and people from varying socio-economic backgrounds on issues and opportunities that concern the community.
- Liaise with stakeholders to facilitate the integration and coordination of health and community services.
- Advocate for a wide range of education opportunities in the municipality.
- Identify gaps in the delivery of health and fitness service providers for the elderly (aged 65 and over).
- Advocate for aged care accommodation in the municipality.
- Advocate for additional child care centres in the municipality.
- Promote the health and community services within the municipality.
- Partner with other stakeholders to implement crime prevention and community safety initiatives in consultation with the community.

## Why are we doing this?

- To support an active, vibrant and culturally diverse community life that enjoys liveable and amenity rich neighbourhoods.

## How will we achieve this?

- Support and advocate for organisations and community groups to grow community capacity.
- Promote events and festivals that showcase George Town's community.
- Support integrated community, health and education services.
- Actively engage and consult with the community, notably young people and those from different cultural and economic backgrounds.
- Support the sport and recreation, work opportunities, health and education services for young people.
- Where possible, support the elderly by providing health and fitness services within the Healthy George Town program.
- Continue to support programs which address social disadvantage.
- Participate in community safety initiatives.
- Advocate for adequate, appropriate and affordable transport options between George Town and regional centres.

## KPI's

- A continued high level of volunteering.
- Increased participation levels in sports and community programs.
- Improved delivery of community, health and education services.
- Child, family and aged care services needs are met locally.
- An increased number of events and festivals which are well frequented by the community.
- Increased level of school retention rates.

Support an active, vibrant and culturally diverse community life that enjoys liveable and amenity rich neighbourhoods.

Following appropriate consultation; adopt the draft **George Town Sports Complex Master Plan.**

Develop and implement **Sports & Recreation Strategy.**

Consolidate relevant youth focused documents of Council into a single action plan/policy that drives a consistent and continual approach to **developing youth within our region.**

Provide opportunities for **young people** to assist with the design and implementation of community events.

Review and **implement full user agreements** with all community groups and sporting clubs that use Council's facilities that improve the user experience, meet contemporary expectations of the groups, protect Council's assets and empower the user/community groups.

Continue to support the **George Town Community Safety Committee.**

Revise the **Disabled Access Policy.**



## GOAL 03

# Natural Environment & Heritage

## Our priorities

- Strengthen partnerships with natural resource organisations and leverage from their work.
- Facilitate the better management of Crown and Council owned land in foreshore areas.
- Develop and implement plans for the improved protection and management of Council owned natural assets.
- Facilitate discussions with the community to assist in the protection of private properties from natural risks such as fire and flooding.
- Develop and implement plans for the protection and promotion of Council owned heritage assets.
- Develop interpretation for natural assets and heritage.
- Achieve a better understanding and communicate the implications of climate change including sea level rise, extreme flood, rain, drought and/or fire events.
- Connect walking and cycling paths and trails along the coastline, and develop other trails to key attractions.
- Ensure George Town's natural values are retained.

## How will we achieve this?

- Commit to enhance the conservation and protection of our natural environment.
- Support the conservation efforts of our Aboriginal and European heritage.
- Improve the interpretation of our natural and heritage assets.
- Improve opportunities for passive recreation around our natural and heritage assets.
- Closely monitor the built environment around existing heritage places.

## KPI's

- Improved outcomes for natural resource management.
- Continued high volunteerism for natural resource management and heritage conservation.
- Increased community awareness of our natural and heritage assets.
- Increased number of visitors seeking out our natural and heritage assets.

## Why are we doing this?

- To conserve our natural environment and heritage and ensure it is enjoyed by our community, visitors and future generations.



Conserve our natural environment and heritage and ensure it is enjoyed by our community, visitors and future generations.

Develop a **Heritage Site Strategy** for all known heritage sites within the municipality.

Partner with Parks & Wildlife Services, Low Head Progress & Heritage Association and the community in general to develop and implement sustainable **management practices** and infrastructure to provide maximum **protection of local wildlife** from domestic and introduced feral animals.

Record, respect and celebrate (where appropriate) **cultural assets and stories** within the municipality.

Further explore options for **recycling services** and FOGO service including a rigorous education program relating to recycling.

Partner with Tamar NRM on **tree planting programs**.



## GOAL 04

# Built Environment

## Our priorities

- Review and manage the assets and infrastructure Council currently owns in line with community needs.
- Continue regular maintenance of Council infrastructure facilities.
- Deliver vibrancy programs, such as street art and shop front activation projects.
- Initiate projects to increase the vibrancy of and links to main streets and key places (in particular Macquarie Street, Regent Square and York Cove).
- Prepare strategic plans for vibrant towns across the municipality.
- Improve signage, interpretation and way finding, both within the municipality and on the transport corridors into George Town.
- Ensure that Council's facilities meet the (access) needs of the community.
- Ensure that planning for new areas takes into account the accessibility to water, sewage and other infrastructure.
- Upgrade parks to include outdoor recreational facilities.
- Identify key development sites around the George Town municipality to facilitate investment.
- Continue to provide an efficient animal control service promoting the amenity and safety of the community and animal welfare.
- Promote, implement and monitor public health standards.

## How will we achieve this?

- Identify and respond to changing needs for infrastructure and facilities.
- Enhance the vibrancy of places.
- Advocate for a more streamlined planning system.

## KPI's

- Increased community satisfaction with the George Town municipality as a place to live.
- Sports and recreation facilities that meet the needs of the community.
- Increased levels of activity and use along the foreshores.
- Population growth.
- Increased satisfaction levels with Council works and services.
- Sustainable waste management.
- The development of settlement strategies and regional structure plans.
- Evidence of greater synergies between recreational groups and associations.

## Why are we doing this?

- To strengthen the vibrancy of our towns and enhance the benefits of living in a rural setting and living close to the river and coast.



## Strengthen the vibrancy of our towns and enhance the benefits of living in a rural setting and living close to the river and coast.

Develop and implement a modern and engaging policy that **encourages existing businesses to expand their services**, encourages the outdoor eating culture and market type feel of a vibrant town.

Develop a **Municipal Land Use Strategy** that includes Precinct Structure Plans.

Prepare an integrated **Asset Management Plan** that includes all of Council's asset classes.

Continue to **upgrade access infrastructure** at Council facilities.

Review **asset management framework** to ensure responsible and sustainable asset management.

Implement Council's **capital works program** including renewals of existing assets in line with contemporary asset management principles and Council's long-term financial plan with the aim of achieving 85% completion.

Review operating mode of Council's **Waste Transfer Station**.

Develop a **Storm Water Management Plan** that aims to improve water quality by renewing assets in line with water sensitive urban design principles where possible.

Commence construction of the **mountain bike project**.

## GOAL 05

# Organisational Accountability

## Our priorities

- Manage and seek to minimise risk throughout Council.
- Build the strategic capacity of Council to effectively communicate with the community.
- Monitor Council's performance against all objectives, including community objectives.
- Initiate at least one regional project involving neighbouring councils.
- Be actively involved and seek to influence decisions made at regional and State Government levels.

## How will we achieve this?

- Continue to improve Council communication with the community, including celebrating the successes and achievements.
- Consistently communicate the role of Council to the community (ie. what Council does and does not do).
- Strengthen working relationships and cooperation with neighbouring councils.
- Consistently achieve a high standard of internal financial and governance arrangements.
- Initiate a conversation with the community about any aspects of Local Government reform.
- Attract, retain and value a highly skilled and committed workforce.

## Why are we doing this?

- To ensure Council listens to and understands community needs and continues to make responsible decisions on behalf of the community.

## KPI's

- Increased community satisfaction with Council's accountability and transparency.
- Increased community satisfaction in regards to interaction with Council.
- Regular regional cooperation between councils in regards to advocacy, economic development, strategic planning and/or resource sharing.
- Council's performance in influencing others at regional and state government levels.
- Council actively engaging with the community through social media.
- Reduced staff turnover.
- Increased community satisfaction with George Town Council services.

## Ensure Council listens to and understands community needs and continues to make responsible decisions on behalf of the community.

Support the George Town **Placemaking Advisory Group** as a key consultative body.

Develop a **Consultation Framework**.

Ensure compliance with all **governance standards** and legislative requirements.

Conduct the review of **Council's Strategic Plan 2016-2026** (incorporating a community survey).

Preparation of **financial reports** which meet Australian Accounting Standards and are verified by the Auditor General.

Introduce an across organisational **quarterly performance** reporting process.

Achieve best **practice contract management** in line with industry standards and AS4000.

Establish and implement a **Risk Management Strategy**.

Conduct a review of **Council's Rating Policy** that includes extensive public consultation.



## Public health goals and objectives

George Town Council's commitment to maintaining a high level of public health protection is identified under Goal 4 of the George Town Council's Annual Plan 2016-2026.

As part of Council's public health goals and objectives for 2019/2020 the Community and Developmental Services will seek to;

1. Continue to provide an efficient animal control service promoting the amenity and safety of the community and animal welfare through:
  - Maintaining current service levels
  - Continuing to work with other levels of government to develop better cat management outcomes
  - Develop user friendly advice and guidance material that is readily available and understandable
  - Build on our relationships with other levels of government in managing the risks to wildlife, such as penguins
  - Encourage healthy activity in the promotion of our region as a destination for taking a dog for a walk
2. Continue to promote, implement and monitor public health standards through:
  - Maintaining current service levels
  - Continual improvement of our services through policy and procedural review
  - Acting in a timely manner on reports of environmental health concerns
3. Actively manage building standards in accordance with the Building Act through:
  - Continuing to provide a high level of public awareness, education and guidance on building health and safety matters
  - Acting in a timely manner on reports of buildings, or building uses, that involve possible health concerns

## Adopted Operating Budget 2019/2020

	2018/2019 Budget	2019/2020 Budget
<b>Operating Income</b>		
Grants Operational	913,846	941,261
Investment Income	304,490	321,000
Other Revenues	41,902	40,560
Rates	8,231,142	8,539,554
Reimbursements	85,807	84,199
Statutory Charges	265,851	274,794
User Charges	382,711	262,992
<b>Total Operating Income</b>	<b>10,225,750</b>	<b>10,464,359</b>
<b>Operating Expenditure</b>		
Contracts	2,363,577	2,511,747
Depreciation Amortisation	2,803,000	2,777,000
Employee Costs	3,365,655	3,611,430
Finance Costs	108,967	124,967
Impairment	5,000	5,000
Internal Hire	0	0
Materials	684,488	720,651
Other Expenses	1,543,685	1,548,744
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>10,874,372</b>	<b>11,299,539</b>
<b>Surplus/Deficit</b>	<b>-648,622</b>	<b>-835,181</b>
<b>Federal Assistance Grant Prepaid</b>	<b>913,846</b>	<b>941,261</b>
<b>Underlying Surplus</b>	<b>265,224</b>	<b>106,081</b>
<b>Capital Items</b>		
Grants Capital	3,637,000	7,290,000
<b>Total Capital</b>	<b>3,637,000</b>	<b>7,290,000</b>
<b>Net Surplus</b>	<b>3,902,224</b>	<b>7,396,081</b>
Less Loan Principal Repayments	111,978	141,000
Plus Depreciation	2,803,000	2,777,000
Less Prepaid Financial Assistance Grant	913,846	941,261
<b>Cash Surplus/Deficit</b>	<b>5,679,400</b>	<b>9,090,819</b>
Less Purchase/Construction of Assets and Carry Forward Capital Program	5,887,690	10,011,500
<b>Cash Deficit</b>	<b>-208,290</b>	<b>-920,681</b>
<b>Estimated Cash at Start of Year</b>	<b>4,969,789</b>	<b>4,761,499</b>
<b>Estimated Cash at End of Year</b>	<b>4,761,499</b>	<b>3,840,818</b>

## Basis of budget

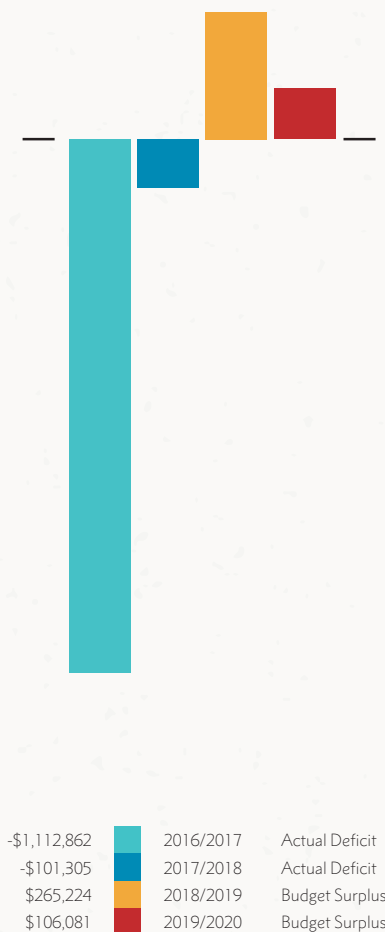
The requirements of Council Policy 77 'Rates and Charges' (Rates Policy) and Council's Financial Management Strategy have been taken into consideration. The objective of the Rates Policy is to maintain a sustainable rates system that provides revenue stability and supports a balanced budget to avoid placing the burden of current expenditure on future generations. The purpose of the Financial Management Strategy is to manage the Long Term Financial Plan to retain an underlying surplus after excluding capital income and expenditure. In preparing the operating budget, Council considers the demand for services and the cost of maintaining facilities for community benefit.

## Underlying surplus

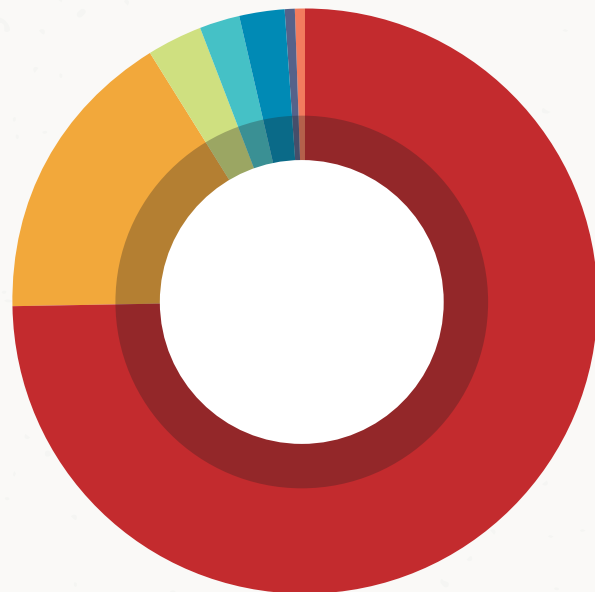
The 2020 operating budget provides for an underlying surplus of \$106,081. Continuing to provide for a surplus into the future remains a challenge for Council.

An underlying operating surplus occurs where the operating revenue exceeds operating expenditure. The benchmark is a surplus greater than zero (break even operating result). A positive result designates a surplus where the larger the surplus, the stronger the result and therefore stronger assessment of sustainability. An excessive surplus could disadvantage ratepayers.

Table 1: Actual and budget underlying surplus 2017 to 2020



Revenue Sources: Total Contributions \$11,405,620



\$8,539,554	Rates
\$1,882,523	Financial Assistance Grant
\$321,000	Investment Income
\$274,794	Statutory Charges
\$262,992	User Charges
\$84,199	Reimbursements
\$40,556	Other Revenues



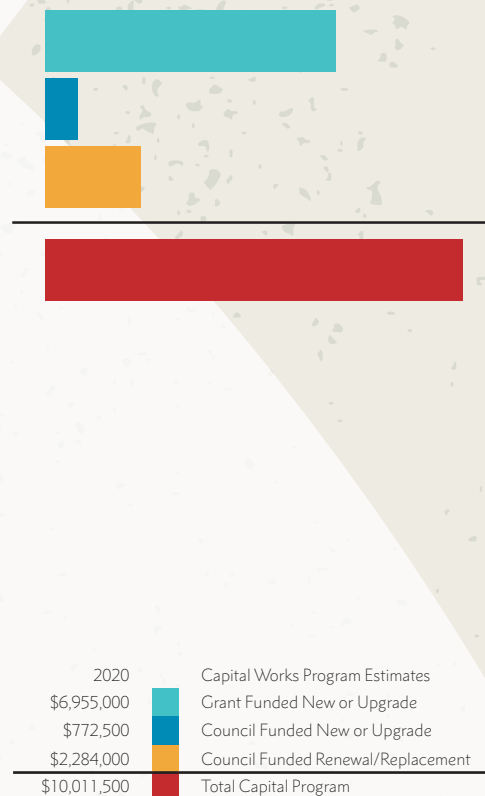
## Capital works expenditure

The Infrastructure and Works departments continue to manage increased capital works expenditure programs. The amounts in table 3 include the program approved by Council in June each year. Accelerated and new capital expenditure increases the depreciation and maintenance expenses in the operating budget. Council approved the 2020 capital works program at the June 2019 meeting, including funding for the mountain bike trail and Regent Square Redevelopment (which are both subject to grant funding) of \$10,011,500.

## Initiatives to be delivered

- Scoping works for East Beach old shower site redevelopment
- Continuation of the walking trail Low Head
- Place Making Group initiatives
- Council Annual Plan review
- Development of land use, branding and marketing strategies
- Additional free hard/green waste days
- Horticultural trainee

Table 2: Capital works program 2020



Where your rates go?



## BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

- Free green waste days
- Continuation of free hard waste days
- Painting of Bellingham Hall
- Replacement of boundary fence at Hillwood Football Ground
- Improved street and park furniture at various locations
- \$50k to support Placemaking Initiatives

## INFRASTRUCTURE & WORKS

- Contribution to Neighbourhood House New Year's Eve Extravaganza
- Dalrymple bridge replacements
- Gerzalia Drive renewal
- Road Renewal Program
- Installation of irrigation system at George Town's sporting complex

## GRANT FUNDED INITIATIVES

- Regent Square Re-development (Commonwealth)
- Mountain Bike Trail (Commonwealth)
- GTFC AFL lighting (Commonwealth)
- GTFC change rooms (Tasmanian State Government)

## Your rates and charges

In order to deliver a responsible budget, Council has applied CCI of 3.38% to the overall 2018/2019 rates revenue. This is in line with the CCI recommended by the Local Government Association of Tasmania (LGAT).

Council determined \$11,299,539 is required for 2019/2020 to deliver municipal services, invest in renewal of assets and provide for a community driven initiatives aimed at positioning the municipality for growth across a number of areas, such as tourism.

Council applies a rate to properties to generate revenue required once Federal Assistant Grant allocation has been applied (\$941,261 in 2019/2020) along with forecast revenue from user charges etc.

Council's Financial Strategy recommends achieving over one per cent of budget for surplus.

The 2019/2020 budget will deliver a modest surplus of \$106,000.



## Understanding how rates are calculated and why they vary

### Why does Council apply an Average Area Rate (AAR) to residential properties?

Council's current Rates and Charges Policy considers that the AAR provides the fairest and most equitable means of ensuring all residential ratepayers within a location contribute equally to the delivery, maintenance, renewal, upgrade and administration of Council's existing and additional infrastructure, and services.

### What does this mean for residents in 2019/2020?

There is an increase to ratepayers in George Town and Low Head of 3.38% to \$1,125.00 or \$37 per annum.

Rates in coastal communities Beechford, Bellingham, Lefroy, Lulworth & Weymouth will increase 6.2% to \$1,062 or \$62 per annum.\*

In the rural communities of Hillwood, Mount Direction, Pipers Brook & Pipers River rates will increase 5.14% to \$1,083 or \$53 per annum.\*

### What impact has land re-evaluation had on my property?

The Valuer General (an independent state body) re-values properties every six years. A re-valuation occurred in the George Town municipality in 2018/2019 and these valuations are applicable to rates at 1 July 2019.

### Why are Council rates higher for industrial/commercial/port and marine/utilities?

Council's existing policy on rates and charges states:

This sector will contribute a higher rate than properties on the general rate, as:

- Commercial and industrial properties pay rates from pre-tax revenue;
- Commercial and industrial properties have a greater impact on core Council infrastructure.

Council has committed to reviewing its Rates and Charges Policy in 2019/2020 and seeks the views of the rate paying community through a consultation process.



*\* In 2017/2018 budget deliberations, Council adopted rates that commenced a 5 year 'catch up' program for coastal and rural residential rate-payers to reflect that of George Town and Low Head. This was undertaken to achieve parity in the residential AAR category. 2019/20 is year 3 of the 5 year program. It was acknowledged by Council at its meeting 25 June 2019 that the rating policy should be reviewed in 2019/2020.*



## GEORGE TOWN COUNCIL

---

16-18 Anne Street, George Town Tasmania 7253, Po Box 161 George Town Tasmania 7253  
Telephone: (03) 6382 8800, Email: [Council@Georgetown.tas.gov.au](mailto:Council@Georgetown.tas.gov.au)