



Legislative Council Standing Committee on Environment and Planning

Consolidated request for information relevant to the Inquiry into Rate Capping Policy

As part of the Inquiry into Rate Capping Policy, the Committee has resolved to request the following information. This request is made pursuant to section 19 of the *Constitution Act 1975*, and Legislative Council Standing Order 23.19. Further all responses will be treated as evidence, which is protected by parliamentary privilege.

Please return responses to epc@parliament.vic.gov.au by Friday 1 July 2016. If you have any questions please contact the Secretariat on 03 8682 2869.

Council Name:	Buloke Shire Council
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1. Enterprise Bargaining Agreement

	What is the percentage pay increase provided for in your EBA for the following periods? If the EBA has not been concluded for these periods please advise.	What is the additional estimated cost of bracket creep annually at your council? Note Bracket creep means movements in payments unrelated to the general EBA indexation but related to reclassifications and annual and other increments relating to changes of bands.
2013/14 financial year	No increase	Council allows 1% per annum as part of budget process
2014/15 financial year	2.75% effective January 2015	Council allows 1% per annum as part of budget process
2015/16 financial year	2.5% effective January 2016	Council allows 1% per annum as part of budget process
2016/17 financial year	2.5% effective January 2017	Council allows 1% per annum as part of budget process
2017/18 financial year	Not agreed as yet	Council allows 1% per annum as part of budget process

2. Local government general election costs 2012 and 2016

General council election	Cost	How delivered (i.e., 'postal' or 'attendance elections')
2012	\$70,325	Postal
2016	\$87,000 (budgeted)	Postal

Were there any differences between these two elections which would impact on costs (e.g. number of centres increased or decreased)?

No difference



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3. Senior officer salaries

As at 30 June 2015 (for the 2014/15 financial year) and 30 June 2016 (for the 2015/16 financial year), please provide the **number** of senior officers for each pay scale. Please note senior officers should be defined as per the *Local Government Act*, and should include remuneration for each position as reported under the Local Government (Planning & Reporting) Regulations 2014.

Salary Band	Number of staff at 30 June 2015 (2014/15 financial year)		Number of staff at 30 June 2016 (2015/16 financial year)		Salary Band	Number of staff at 30 June 2015 (2014/15 financial year)		Number of staff at 30 June 2016 (2015/16 financial year)		Salary Band	Number of staff at 30 June 2015 (2014/15 financial year)		Number of staff at 30 June 2016 (2015/16 financial year)	
	EBA staff	Managers	EBA staff	Managers		EBA staff	Managers	EBA staff	Managers		EBA staff	Managers	EBA staff	Managers
\$120,000 - \$129,999					\$250,000 - \$259,999					\$380,000 - \$389,999				
\$130,000 - \$139,999		1			\$260,000 - \$269,999					\$390,000 - \$399,999				
\$140,000 - \$149,999		2		1	\$270,000 - \$279,999					\$400,000 - \$409,999				
\$150,000 - \$159,999				2	\$280,000 - \$289,999					\$410,000 - \$419,999				
\$160,000 - \$169,999					\$290,000 - \$299,999					\$420,000 - \$429,999				
\$170,000 - \$179,999					\$300,000 - \$309,999					\$430,000 - \$439,999				
\$180,000 - \$189,999					\$310,000 - \$319,999					\$440,000 - \$449,999				
\$190,000 - \$199,999					\$320,000 - \$329,999					\$450,000 - \$459,999				
\$200,000 - \$209,999					\$330,000 - \$339,999					\$460,000 - \$469,999				
\$210,000 - \$219,999					\$340,000 - \$349,999					\$470,000 - \$479,999				
\$220,000 - \$229,999		1		1	\$350,000 - \$359,999					\$480,000 - \$489,999				
\$230,000 - \$239,999					\$360,000 - \$369,999					\$490,000 - \$499,999				
\$240,000 - \$249,999					\$370,000 - \$379,999					\$500,000 +				



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4. Planning fees

	What was the cost to your council to issue planning permits?	What revenue was received by your council from planning permits?
2012/13 financial year	\$140,947	\$26,116
2013/14 financial year	\$113,737	\$33,768
2014/15 financial year	\$170,589	\$25,562
2015/16 financial year	\$285,349 (accounts for 2015/16 are still being finalised)	\$17,914
2016/17 financial year (if not known please state this)	Actual costs and revenue for 2016/17 are unknown as at 12 July 2016	

Note: - Please note that 2015/16 planning costs are higher maternity leave and maternity leave replacements.

5. If your council applied to the Essential Services Commission (ESC) for a rate cap variation:

What was the total cost to council of preparing the application?	\$3,325
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6. Roads and bridges

What is the size of the road network (in kms) that you are responsible for?	5,313 Kms
If there is a backlog in road and/or bridge maintenance and renewal, has your council costed this and if so what is the estimated cost?	The total present renewal shortfall or backlog in over intervention assets for the whole roads group is estimated at \$11,517,928 representing 4.08% of the total road asset valuation.

	How much road and/or bridge maintenance and renewal funding did your council receive from the state government?	How much road and/or bridge maintenance and renewal funding did your council receive from the federal government?	How much did your council spend in total on road and/or bridge maintenance and renewal?
2012/13 financial year	\$5,500,000 (includes \$4,500,000 of flood restoration grants)	\$2,876,596	\$2,916,315 (Council) \$5,500,000 (State) \$2,876,596 (Federal) \$11,292,911 (Total)
2013/14 financial year	\$38,900,000/- (includes \$37,900,000 of flood restoration grants)	\$2,167,993	\$1,669,881 (Council) \$38,900,000 (State) \$2,167,993 (Federal) \$42,737,874 (Total)
2014/15 financial year	\$1,471,836	\$3,364,690	\$1,736,555 (Council) \$1,471,836 (State) \$3,364,690 (Federal) \$6,573,081 (Total)
2015/16 financial year	0	\$5,448,143 (R2R additional allocation of \$2.04m)	\$1,500,000* (Council) \$5,448,143 (Federal) \$6,948,143 (Total) Note that Council's 2016/16 are yet to be finalised



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2016/17 financial year (if not known please state this)	0	\$5,939,945	\$1,500,000 (Council approx.) \$5,939,945 (Federal) (7,439,945 (Total))
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Do you have any other comments about funding for infrastructure (such as roads and bridges)?

7. State Emergency Service

	How many State Emergency Service units are based in your municipality?	How many State Emergency Service units do you provide funding to?	How much funding did you provide to the State Emergency Service?	Did you provide any other support/assistance to the State Emergency Service? (such as land, buildings or maintenance)	If you provided other support/assistance to the State Emergency Service, what is the estimated value?
2012/13 financial year	2	2	12,944	Nil	Nil
2013/14 financial year	2	2	13,268	Nil	Nil
2014/15 financial year	2	2	13,668	Nil	Nil
2015/16 financial year	2	0	3,000	Nil	
2016/17 financial year (if not known please state this)	2	0	0	Nil	

8. Containing costs

Are you able to give some examples of how council has reduced spending and/or contained costs in 2015/16 in preparation for the introduction of rate capping? Was any infrastructure deferred or cancelled, if so please specify.

Prior to the introduction of rate capping, Council had identified that for it to get to a financially sustainable position it needed to address levels of expenditure. With this in mind, Council put in place a plan over the 2014/15 and 2015/16 years to reduce operating expenditure by \$4m p.a. At the same time, however, Council needed to raise additional income so rates were raised by 6%. The primary reason for these actions was to allow Council to have funds available for the repayment of a \$7M loan due in November 2019. These borrowings were taken out not to complete a capital project but instead to take Council out of an overdraft situation.

While this situation has meant reduced services to the community and a widening of the renewal gap, it means that following the repayment of the loan Council will be in a position to invest in its assets to reduce the renewal gap.

Are you able to give some examples of planned measures to reduce spending and/or contain costs in 2016/17 in following the introduction of rate capping? Was any infrastructure deferred or cancelled, if so please specify.

In 2015/16 Council put together a 3 year plan to review all of its services. At every opportunity we question what we do and how we do it. A Council like Buloke cannot afford not to do this. As mentioned above, the asset renewal gap continues to grow but following the repayment of the loan in 2019, funds will become available. At Buloke our capital spend is more focussed on maintaining and renewing the access we have rather than creating new assets.