

# Mayor's Message



It's great when all the planning and budgeting for a project comes to fruition. This week I helped the Leongatha Golf Club celebrate the completion of its Automated Irrigation Project. A lot of dedication and effort went into the project and Council is proud to have contributed to a great community asset that will foster both increased recreation and more tourism in the region.

On the topic of planning and budgeting, Council's next order of business is the Special Council Meeting this Wednesday. We will consider the Proposed Annual Budget 2018/19, Revised Council Plan 2017-2021 and the Proposed Rating Strategy 2018/19. These documents are core to Council's functions and set the tone for the next twelve months and beyond. If endorsed these proposed documents will be presented to the community for everyone to have a say.

The Proposed Annual Budget 2018/19 has been prepared by our Finance department at a nominated rate increase of 2 per cent. This is below the rate cap of 2.25 per cent as announced by the Minister of Local Government late last year. Council nominated for this rate to be achieved and it is fantastic to see a potential budget that is financially stable and meets this requirement.

If you would like to see our decision making in action join us tomorrow in Council Chambers, Michael Place, Leongatha from 12.30pm. If you can't attend I encourage you to watch our livestream or read the agenda on Council's website. If you do come along or watch you'll see that other than chairing the meeting I have, as Mayor, no more or less power than my fellow Councillors. All nine of us have an equal voice on Council matters and decision making. This is democracy at work; it ensures we all can represent the community that elected us effectively.

What Mayors do focus on is good governance and ensuring Council meetings run in accordance with the *Local Government Act*. Our key tasks are to efficiently chair meetings, promote good working relationships between Councillors and to manage and model good conduct. I take pride in my integrity when approaching these tasks and respect the importance of the role.

It is also important to note that Council officers present to us at briefings so they can provide us with project details and seek some guidance on what we require from their reports. This is beneficial to both parties as it also provides us Councillors with more information and opportunities to ask questions.

As we live in the technical age Councillors all have the opportunity to be in contact with one another constantly. This allows us to share our views at any time but votes are only ever taken at official meetings.

**Cr Lorraine Brunt - Mayor**