



Media Release

25 March 2020

\$1.3 million Council relief package for Rockhampton Region

Rockhampton Regional Council today voted to immediately roll out a relief package worth up to \$1.3 million to help support businesses and community groups in the Rockhampton Region.

The package includes:

- No additional interest on Outstanding Rates until further notice
- Lease fee refunds for eligible sporting and community groups
- Existing business licences extended until 30 June 2021
- Rent relief for commercial tenants
- Cash contribution of \$20,000 each for two local animal welfare agencies – Capricorn Animal Aid and Central Queensland Animal Society
- All Environmentally Relevant Authorities extended for a further 12 months
- In-kind support for the business community from Advance Rockhampton

Mayor Margaret Strelow said that, like the State and Federal Government, Council is putting its shoulder to the wheel during these difficult times to help the community where possible.

“The situation around COVID-19 is changing incredibly quickly, and we know that our community is already feeling the economic impact of this pandemic,” said Mayor Strelow.

“Our capacity to offer support is clearly different to other levels of government.

“I’m also very mindful that our rates are collected based on property value and regardless of income, and that we need to think of the fairness of using ratepayer money – which includes money paid by pensioners and those struggling – to support business.

“However, we know that recovery for our community will be smoothest if we can help to keep our local businesses alive and keep people employed.

“We believe that there are many things that we as a Council can and should do to support local business, as well as provide some relief to residents and our community more generally.

“The package of measures that we’ve introduced today includes extending existing Food Business, Personal Appearance Business and Activities, and Food Van Licences until 30 June 2021.

“It also allows for us to provide rent relief for our commercial tenants.

“And we’ll be providing lease fee refunds on application to community groups and sporting clubs in the Region.

“On top of this, we have resolved today that there will be no additional interest charged on Outstanding Rates until the end of December.

“These measures are a first step and will apply immediately.

“There will also be a further economic stimulus package brought before the new Council, which will include a revised Rates Payment Policy.

“We know our community is hurting and Council as an organisation will stand shoulder to shoulder with our residents during these tough times,” Mayor Strelow said.

ENDS