

# Chairmans Budget Summary 2006/2007

2006/2007 year will be a challenging financial year for the W.T.A. While we are reluctant to increase the rates and charges, we have a responsibility to maintain the town and its assets in an acceptable condition, but with the increased charges from our contractors which is being partially driven by the large fuel cost increases the W.T.A. had no choice but to implement a rate increase. The general rates have been calculated at a 10% increase and utility charges (Water, Sewerage and Garbage) at 5% increase.

This equates to an overall average increase of 8.3% which also includes this years CPI increase of 3.3%.

Utility charges have not increased for 3 years. The W.T.A. has a commitment to the upgrading of the utilities and has committed each year an amount of money to a reserve fund to cover capital costs in future years for replacement of our town assets.

Major points in this budget:-

- Revenue will decrease in Planning and Building due to less dwelling construction.
- Emergency Services public order and safety and pre cyclone cleanup is being reviewed because over the last couple of years more and more non cyclone rubbish is being picked up.
- Part of the annual review of leases and electricity charges for community sporting groups and community property users will be carried out .
- Swimming Pool has had a major increase in wages because of the extending of the contract of the pool attendant. This has come about because pool keys are no longer used.
- Cemetery budget, this year Land Services will survey burial plots and produce a plan of the cemetery layout.
- We are reviewing the Welfare Assistance policy as a matter of urgency.
- This year the W.T.A. has allocated \$15,000 for SES operations. We feel it is important that the community supports the work of the SES in a more tangible way as this is the group that we all rely so much upon in the event of a major emergency.
- Animal Control. Dog registrations to be increased from 1 September 2007. The WTA has an amnesty on registrations at the old rate until 31st August 2007 before new fees are incurred.
- Significant reductions on tree removal. \$95,000 spent in this area last financial year. This amount cannot be sustained and we will investigate other avenues of funding this work.

This year's budget now includes Comalco's Capital and Operating figures which total \$6,675,000 for 2007. Our reason for showing this amount is so that ratepayers can see a more complete picture of the overall cost of running our town. Some of the Comalco funding in the budget is part of an ongoing upgrade programme of some of the town's major infrastructure. (\$25,000,000 over 5 years).

We feel that this is a responsible budget and that hopefully the ratepayers will appreciate the ongoing improvements around the town.

For those ratepayers who wish to see the finer details of the budget, please go to the Weipa Town website ([www.weipatownoffice.com](http://www.weipatownoffice.com))

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Weipa Town Authority