

# The Council Quarterly

Official Newsletter of Longreach Regional Council

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Longreach  
Regional  
Council

Ilfracombe Isisford Longreach Yarakka



## Rally star lends voice against rogue motorbikes on town common

Team Yamaha star Rodney Faggotter is joining forces with Longreach Regional Council to encourage motorbike riders to respect other users on the town common.

The Dakar Rally competitor and Longreach local said having unfettered access to thousands of acres of dirt tracks growing up had helped him reach the pinnacle of his sport; but a small minority of riders are being disruptive and endangering others on the common.

“Some of the younger guys – and it’s only a small element – are crossing the roads without looking, crossing

the bridge at the Thomson River and doing burnouts, giving the tourists a hard time, that sort of thing. That’s pretty dumb, and really, it’s not that hard to go a bit further up the road and use the causeways and crossings.

“People can drive their cars there, so they can definitely ride their motorbikes there – there’s no need to be up in the more public areas.”

He said an accident on the common could jeopardise the freedom that the community currently enjoys.

“It’s only going to take one accident. They might run into a tourist in a van,

they might harm someone or run into a pedestrian. One wrong move and we could lose all this common.”

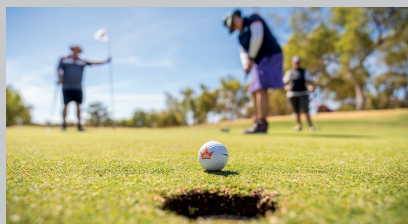
The rally star will appear in a public awareness campaign for the Council to encourage people to treat the town common with respect.

Mayor Ed Warren said Council is struggling to tackle a range of issues on the 20,000 acre common.

“It’s a bit hard to know what to do. We’ve considered blocking off the bridge at Apex Park, but it would be a shame if what are basically only a handful of riders spoil it for everyone

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## Longreach to host \$1 million hole-in-one in 2020



Longreach has been announced as the host of the final leg of the Outback Queensland Masters in 2020 and the hotly contested \$1 million hole-in-one.

Attracting over 800 competitors and social players from all over Australia, the inaugural Outback Queensland Masters generated thousands of additional room nights and is poised to expand into new outback locations for 2020.

“The \$1 million dollar hole-in-one challenge will again be up for grabs in 2020,” explained Luke Bates, of Golf Australia. “We’re so pleased to announce the series locations for next year, including Biloela, Charleville, Quilpie, Blackall, Hughenden, and Longreach.”

The Mayor, Cr Ed Warren, said “We are excited that Longreach will be the location for the \$1 million hole-in-one challenge as the pinnacle to the 2020 Outback Queensland Masters. Longreach is iconic in the history and culture of Outback Queensland and we’re looking forward to hosting this fantastic event in our community.”

## New Longreach library to officially open with local literary launch

The relocated Longreach library will celebrate its official opening with a book launch by first-time local author Louise Seccombe.

The library has been open in its new location since early August, and now that refurbishments have been completed Longreach Regional Council will host an official opening on Saturday 19 October. The new premises feature more technology, with the incorporation of interactive displays and teleconferencing equipment.

Bringing new technology into the space is an interactive floor, acquired thanks to funding supported by the state government. The interactive floor encourages children to stand, jump, and participate with animated displays. The multi-sensory experience can be used to encourage mobility in young and old.

Also making use of new technology is a new community meeting room featuring ‘Zoom Room’ equipment that allows users to hold online meetings and discussions with participants anywhere in the world. There are no costs involved and Council is encouraging the community to try out the new facility and experience it for themselves.

The event, starting at 9am, will feature live music, a community morning tea, and an exhibition featuring works from recent art workshops.

Adding to the occasion will be the launch of ‘Lights, Camera, Action’, a new children’s book by local author Louise Seccombe. ‘Lights, Camera, Action’ is aimed at children ages 1-4 and is all about a young boy who escapes into a world of movies each night in his sleep.

Ms Seccombe says writing for children was something she had always wanted to do.

“I have always had these ideas for stories yet it wasn’t until I started having my own children that I started to scribble down notes and keep a record of them.

“My story collection continues to grow and I’m hoping that ‘Lights, Camera, Action!’ will be my first, but not last, published children’s book.”

Mayor Ed Warren said the library was an important community facility.

“We have over 4000 books in our collection, but libraries aren’t just about books anymore – they’re also about the spaces and the opportunities they create for the community. Things like support for education, access to technology, and help for local businesses and start-ups are all part of a modern library – and that’s what we want to create.

“We’re growing this facility into a modern community hub that our whole region can be proud of.”

### *Rally star lends voice against rogue motorbikes on town common – continued from Page 1*

else who is doing the right thing.

“We’re also having a problem with fences – people are cutting holes in our fences out there. I don’t know whether it’s so they can sneak onto the common unregistered or just to take shortcuts, but it’s becoming a real problem and costing ratepayers a lot of money. Plus it’s making the area insecure for livestock.

“The other big issue on the common is dumping – the amount of illegal dumping that takes place out there is outrageous. Fridges, washing machines, burnt out cars – we’re finding all sorts of stuff. It’s disgusting.”

He said the town common was one of Longreach’s greatest assets.

“It’s a major factor in our liveability.

It deserves to be treated with respect.”

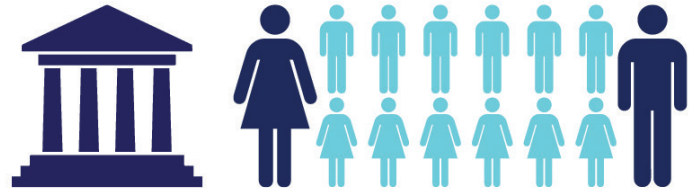
Rodney Faggotter, who has practised on the common for over 20 years, agrees.

“You know, what we have here compared to what you have in Brisbane or Toowoomba – no one has this freedom that we have here.”

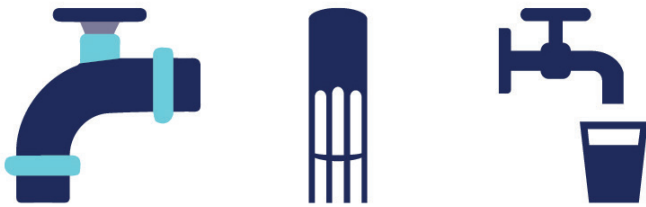
# Council's Budget supports the community despite challenges, says Mayor



**\$14.8 million**  
maintaining our  
streets and roads



**\$3.7 million**  
toward Public Facilities  
& Community Services



**\$3.2 million**  
providing water and  
sewerage services to our  
communities



**\$1.1 million**  
supporting our regional  
Tourism industry

Arresting the deficit and supporting sustainable community outcomes is the focus of Longreach Regional Council's 2019/20 Annual Budget, which was handed down today.

The outback council has described its budget as a prudent one that supports the community through operational outcomes.

The budget will see the net deficit reduced to just over \$4 million, down from \$5.7 million the previous year.

Council says its independent rating review was particularly exhaustive this year and re-examined the structure of rating categories, fees and charges. It considered the variance between rating categories, and the disparity of fees and charges as applied across separate communities. Adjustments have been made with a view to making

things fairer and more equitable following uniform rate increases of up to 5% in recent years.

Through this work, rates for the vast majority of households will increase by only 3.5% this year - with the median increase working out to under \$3.50 a week for residential properties.

The Mayor, Cr Ed Warren, said Council is focused on making sustainable decisions in the current political and economic climate.

"Like many regional and remote councils, we find ourselves in a challenging position with rates and utility charges making up only about 30% of our operating budget. We rely heavily on grant funding, which is often contestable, making it hard to plan ahead.

"Until there is broad scale financial

reform of the local government sector, Council will continue to find it difficult to balance its budget."

He said Council was increasingly being forced to focus on maintaining existing asset and service-levels, instead of taking on new capital projects.

"Council's infrastructure requires ongoing renewal and replacement that's hard to fund. Which in turn makes it hard to take on a lot of the capital works that we'd otherwise like to do."

Despite the challenges, the Mayor says Council still supports the community through its budget.

"Yes, times are tough, but our budget delivers some great outcomes for our region - things like the \$3.7 million we spend maintaining

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## Council's Budget supports the community despite challenges, says Mayor – continued from Page 3

our public facilities such as our showgrounds, parks and gardens, and delivering community services such as our libraries and youth development, not to mention all our sponsorship and community grants.

“We spend \$1.1 million supporting our regional tourism industry, and a further \$1.6 million managing pests and weeds on rural lands, stock routes and reserves. That includes the latest additions to our Longreach Wild Dog Exclusion Fence Scheme which have just been introduced.

“Council pumps \$38 million into the region's economy through our operational budget alone. That money goes around our community 1.8 times to add \$71 million to the region's economic output.”

He said Council was focused on building the regional economy.

“We have a vision for the future of our region and we're committed to our strategic goals – in renewable energy, water sustainability, tourism development, and liveability – that will ultimately diversify and enrich

our economic base. That's the kind of thinking that's going to lead to better outcomes, not only for Council's financial sustainability, but for everyone in the community.

“We do have to address the challenges we face in local government but it's big-picture thinking, like our Longreach Wild Dog Exclusion Fence Scheme, which is going to make the greatest impact on our region's economy.”

In addition to sustaining operational works, the budget contains \$14.4 million in capital expenditure. Some of the noteworthy capital projects include:

- ◇ Cramsie Muttaborra Road pave and seal
- ◇ Thomson River weir design and precinct masterplan
- ◇ Longreach Pool Filter Replacement – Stage 1
- ◇ Beersheba Place – Stage 2
- ◇ Longreach and Isisford Water Treatment Plant upgrades
- ◇ Ilfracombe Machinery Mile footpath

- ◇ Isisford-Yaraka River Road improvements
- ◇ Ilfracombe playground shade structure
- ◇ Isisford Weir design
- ◇ Yaraka North Dam improvements

Council has committed to a range of efficiency reviews to be undertaken over the coming year. It will consider options to streamline operations in areas such as fleet management, energy consumption, and asset utilisation. There will also be a focus on becoming more adept at securing grants; with this budget containing over \$15 million in operational grants and \$5.1 million in capital grants.

Mayor Warren said it is important for Council to focus on budget sustainability for the benefit of the community.

“The work of Council touches the lives of everyone in our community. The future of our region calls on us to make these responsible, well informed, and sustainable decisions on their behalf.”

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visit [longreach.qld.gov.au/rural](http://longreach.qld.gov.au/rural)



**Longreach Regional Council**  
Ilfracombe Isisford Longreach Yaraka

**Weekly Events  
E-Newsletter**

Want to know what's happening in our region? Subscribe to our weekly events e-newsletter - published every Tuesday. Email [assist@longreach.qld.gov.au](mailto:assist@longreach.qld.gov.au) to subscribe, or access it online: [longreach.qld.gov.au/events](http://longreach.qld.gov.au/events)

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Snap Send Solve it!**

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council with  
your phone**



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