#### 1. PRESENT

Cr Julia Leu, Cr Abigail Noli, Cr David Carey, Cr Bruce Clarke, Cr Terry Melchert, Linda Cardew (Chief Executive Officer), Darryl Crees (General Manager Corporate Services), Paul Hoye (General Manager Operations), Rebecca Assman (Manager Governance), John Rehn (Manager Finance & IT), Joanne Nicholson (Team Leader Accounting), Nicole Barton (Mayor & Councillor Support Officer) and Nevinia Davenport (Executive Assistant).

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Cr Leu acknowledged the Kuku Yalanji people who are the Traditional Custodians of the Land and paid respect to their Elders both past and present and extended that respect to other Indigenous Australians present.

### **APOLOGIES**

There were no apologies.

#### 2. CONFLICT OF INTEREST/MATERIAL PERSONAL INTEREST

Nil.

#### **MAYORAL BUDGET ADDRESS**

"Today is an extremely important event in the relatively short history of the new Douglas Council.

Last year I announced Council's plan to achieve financial and community sustainability and a strategy to return Council's operating result to a balanced budget within the shortest possible time.

The 2015-16 Budget builds on a highly successful year of achievements and consolidation that ensures Council delivers on financial, environmental and community sustainability.

Council's operating revenue continues to exceed budget expectations and all categories of actual revenue now exceed the year to date budget for the end of May 2015. Due to prudent financial management, Council's operating expenditure continues to remain under budget and should current trends continue there is the possibility that a better than anticipated final end of year operating position will be achieved.

Considering this is the first full financial year of the new Council, the results obtained are quite remarkable and support Council's financial sustainability strategy to realise a balanced budget in the 2019-20 financial year. I want to stress that this has been achieved with Council absorbing all de-amalgamation expenditure without the need to raise any form of levy or loan borrowings to recoup these costs.

The 2015-16 budget remains conservative and fiscally responsible, while still delivering the biggest capital works program ever in Douglas, and combined with NDRRA works is just under \$20 million. There is special emphasis on new and continuing economic initiatives and community projects across the Shire that will stimulate the Douglas economy and provide employment opportunities.

#### Where the money will be spent

- \$10.5 million Capital Works Program
- \$ 9 million NDRRA Capital Works Program
- > \$12.6 million employee costs
- > \$16.8 million materials and services
- > \$10.3million depreciation
- > \$238,000 finance costs

#### **BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS**

I would like to highlight the following:

## 1. Council's budget ensures that all sectors of the local economy and our communities are supported

We are driving economic development by providing more than \$9 million in disaster recovery road restoration at virtually no cost to ratepayers. These works are expected to directly employ up to 100 people and create an extra 130+ jobs in the next 12 months.

We are establishing a Douglas Business Forum and introducing a new economic development funding stream to encourage innovation.

This budget boosts funding to Tourism Port Douglas Daintree (TPDD) with an increase of 5% to a total of \$451,500 and provides increased funding of more than \$150,000 to sponsor Major Events and stimulate economic prosperity generating millions of dollars for the overall economy.

In addition this budget introduces a new dedicated events funding stream to grow commercial major events.

The budget is also funding the preparation of an economic development strategy for the Shire.

#### 2. This budget directly supports our communities

We will be providing \$80,000 to progress the Mossman District Nursing Home site and more than \$100,000 will be provided to assist not-for-profit community organisations to develop projects.

Our major community events such as the Carnivale Street Parade and Beach Day, the Mossman Show the Mossman Community Christmas Party and the New Year's Eve Fireworks will continue to receive significant funding and in-kind support.

We are supporting free fitness classes for women in the Douglas Shire, free after-school recreational activities for children in Mossman and Port Douglas and installing new exercise equipment for everyone to enjoy.

## 3. As a responsible council we are also taking a long term view and building a sound and productive future

A new planning scheme will be implemented in this next financial year and I am proud that this planning scheme will reflect the community's desired economic, social and environmental objectives.

We will start on the development of the Douglas Community Plan and we are investing substantial funding, in fact over \$5 million, in cleaner greener water infrastructure.

#### 4. Our environment is arguably Douglas' most valuable asset

This budget demonstrates Councils practical commitment to caring for our environment.

We are funding illegal dumping strategy, all part of our "Love Where You Live – Keep Douglas Clean & Green" campaign.

The significant investment in wastewater upgrades will reduce the environmental impact of water and wastewater and encourage recycling.

This budget is funding the resourcing of the Daintree Joint Management Group and the creation of a sustainable officer position to promote positive environmental outcomes.

The budget also funds an additional local laws officer to manage illegal camping hotspots throughout the Shire.

I am also delighted to announce that a recycle shop will be established at the Killaloe Waste Transfer Station.

## 5. The 2015-2016 budget sets out the path for financial security for the Shire over the next 10 years

It is enormously pleasing to announce that this Council is continuing to outperform the budget expectations of all. Council's financial performance since de-amalgamation has consistently shown operating revenue to exceed budget expectations while operating expenditure remains under budget through prudent financial management.

Our focus on value for money has been delivering savings across all areas of Council. This has allowed us to put forward a budgeted increase of less than 1% for materials and services in the 2015-16 financial year.

We have very low debt levels and the costs of de-amalgamation have been entirely paid off. Council has less than \$3 million in borrowings and has completely accounted, as I have already said, for all costs associated with the de-amalgamation. This budget is in line with Council's strategy to realise a budget surplus by the 2019-20 financial year without having to significantly raise rates to achieve this outcome.

Many of our key fees and charges have been reduced to benefit small business and the environment with limited overall increase.

#### CAPITAL WORKS PROGRAM

This year's capital works program, which includes the NDRRA road restoration works managed by Council, is the largest on record in the Douglas Shire at a total of \$19.47million. Works are planned across the Shire delivering Road reseals and repairs, priority cycling and walking improvements, improved amenity within our parks including waterfront parks, upgraded sporting facilities and play equipment, further improvements at the Daintree gateway, and as I mentioned we are undertaking a very significant, priority program to upgrade Council's water infrastructure.

#### RATES AND CHARGES

Due to an excellent result this current financial year, the rate increase is limited to a modest 3.9%. This is of course significantly less than the increase predicted by QTC which was 28.45% in the first year and 18.08% for the following years.

The financial impact on the average residential property in Category 1, with all utility charges and services, is an additional \$2.29 per week or \$119.24 per year.

Whilst this budget has achieved significant and measurable reductions in expenditure, Council does have to cover increases in costs such as electricity, insurances, street lighting, staff, internal and external audit, a freeze in federal financial assistance grants and declining federal and state opportunities and revenues.

Council has adopted the fees and charges on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2015 with a modest increase of 3.6%, although there were a number of reductions and specific business, and environmental initiatives.

I am also pleased to announce Council's retention of the 40% general rates rebate for eligible pensioners, remission on general rates and sewerage charges for not-for-profit recreation, sporting and community groups and the continued removal of the cap on rates incentive for properties covered by a Nature Refuge Agreement. As we all know, Council scrapped the credit card surcharge in January 2014, at its very first budget and will continue with this.

### **CONCLUSION**

I will now make some closing remarks.

When I ran for Mayor in November 2013, I said that I would lead a modern and inclusive Council, strong on economic management and fiscal responsibility. A Council focussed on financial, community and environmental sustainability with a committed and enthusiastic workforce.

The forces against de-amalgamation said we would go broke, never get any grants and would not survive on our own.

At the inaugural Council meeting, just under 18 months ago the atmosphere was electric and the community welcomed and celebrated the beginning of the new Council.

I believe that we have exceeded expectations on all indicators. Sure, not everyone is going to agree with every decision, but we have achieved a remarkable financial position in 18 months, powered through a substantial capital works program and introduced a raft of new projects and activities. This budget further delivers and we are embarking on bold new economic and community initiatives that are precisely designed to stimulate our economy and the lifestyle that we all treasure.

It is of course due to our extraordinary staff, led by our CEO, Linda Cardew. I am constantly impressed with all the staff's dedication, loyalty and commitment. They have worked tirelessly with myself and Councillors to deliver for our communities.

I believe today is a celebration of an extraordinary combined effort of Councillors and staff over the last 18 months. We have come a long way from an infant to a mature Council, that is well on the path of financial and community sustainability, whose focus is on our economy, environment and lifestyle.

In closing, I would like to thank and express my sincerest appreciation to our CEO, Linda Cardew, General Managers, Darryl Crees, Paul Hoye, John Rehn, the finance team, all Managers, Greg McLean for the fabulous budget Snapshot presentation, and all staff who have contributed to the budget development process. I know for a fact that there have been many early starts and late evenings by so many staff.

Finally, I want to thank my fellow Councillors for their time and input in participating in the budget process, providing strategic direction and for your attendance at a number of budget workshops since late March.

Councillors, it is my pleasure to present the 2015-2016 Douglas Shire Council Budget to you for adoption."

#### 3. AGENDA ITEMS

#### 3.1 OPERATIONAL PLAN 2015 - 2016

Darryl Crees - General Manager Corporate Services

Moved Cr Carey

Seconded Cr Noli

"That Council adopt the Operational Plan 2015 - 2016."

Carried unanimously

## 3.2 2015/16 REVENUE GENERAL POLICY AND 2015/16 DEBT GENERAL POLICY

Darryl Crees - General Manager Corporate Services

**Moved** Cr Melchert

Seconded Cr Clarke

"That Council adopt:

- 2015/16 Revenue General Policy; And
- 2015/16 Debt General Policy."

**Carried** unanimously

#### 3.3 RATES BASED FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GENERAL POLICY

Darryl Crees - General Manager Corporate Services

Moved Cr Noli

Seconded Cr Carey

"That Council adopt the Rates Based Financial Assistance General Policy."

### 3.4 STRUCTURE OF GENERAL RATING CATEGORIES FOR 2015/16

Darryl Crees - General Manager Corporate Services

### Moved Cr Noli

### **Seconded** Cr Carey

"That Council adopt the following categories and descriptions for the purpose of levying differential general rates for 2015/16:

<u>Category</u>	<u>Description</u>
Residential A -	Residential properties with a valuation from \$1 to \$490,000.
Residential B -	Residential properties with a valuation from \$490,001 to \$735,000.
Residential C -	Residential properties with a valuation from \$735,001 to \$975,000.
Residential D -	Residential properties with a valuation from \$975,001 to \$1,220,000.
Residential E -	Residential properties with a valuation from \$1,220,001 to \$1,465,000.
Residential F -	Residential properties with a valuation from \$1,465,001 to \$1,710,000.
Residential G -	Residential properties with a valuation from \$1,710,001 to \$1,955,000.
Residential H -	Residential properties with a valuation from \$1,955,001 to \$2,200,000.
Residential I -	Residential properties with a valuation greater than \$2,200,000.
Residential J -	Residential properties not subject to banding.
<ul> <li>Residential K -</li> </ul>	Residential properties that are building units.
Residential L -	Multi Unit Dwellings (Flats).
Residential M -	Residential land which is subject to section 50 of the Land Valuation Act 2010.
Residential Q -	Land situated at the South Arm and the Heads of the Daintree River that has a land use code of 0600 and is held as a Permit to Occupy.
Commercial E -	Commercial properties not included in Commercial Categories F & H.
Commercial F -	Properties used by Not for Profit Recreation, Sporting and Community Groups that are eligible for Rates Based Financial Assistance.
Commercial H -	Shopping Centres with a secondary land use of Marina with a total area over 5ha.
Rural Productive -	All properties which are used predominantly for Primary Production.
<ul> <li>All Other Land -</li> </ul>	All land which is not otherwise categorised."

## 3.5.1 MOWBRAY VALLEY RURAL FIRE BRIGADE – SPECIAL CHARGE Darryl Crees – General Manager Corporate Services

Moved Cr Carey

Seconded Cr Clarke

"That Council levy a special charge in accordance with sections 92 and 94 of the Local Government Act 2009 and section 94 of the Local Government Regulation 2012 to be known as the Mowbray Valley Rural Fire Brigade Special Charge.

- 1. The overall plan for this special charge is as follows:
  - (a) The service, facility or activity the subject of the special charge is the annual funding of the Mowbray Valley Rural Fire Brigade.
  - (b) The rateable land to which the special charge applies is delineated in orange on the map named Mowbray Valley Rural Fire Brigade.
  - (c) The estimated cost of carrying out the overall plan is \$151,900.
  - (d) The estimated time for carrying out the overall plan is one (1) year ending on 30 June 2016.
- 2. All rateable land within the area delineated in orange on the map named Mowbray Valley Rural Fire Brigade will specially benefit to the same extent from the purchase and maintenance of equipment by the Brigade in the current or future financial years because each such parcel is within the area for which the brigade is in charge of fire fighting and fire prevention under the Fire and Rescue Service Act 1990.
- 3. Council makes a special charge of \$40.00 per rateable assessment for the 2015/16 financial year to be levied by two half year levies.
- The entire budgeted revenue shall be remitted to the Mowbray Valley Rural Fire Brigade to be expended in accordance with their budget."

Carried unanimously

#### 3.5.2 DAINTREE RURAL FIRE BRIGADE - SPECIAL CHARGE

Darryl Crees - General Manager Corporate Services

Moved Cr Carey

Seconded Cr Meichert

"That Council levy a special charge in accordance with sections 92 and 94 of the Local Government Act 2009 and section 94 of the Local Government Regulation 2012 to be known as the Daintree Rural Fire Brigade Special Charge.

- The overall plan for this special charge is as follows:
  - (a) The service, facility or activity the subject of the special charge is the annual funding of the Daintree Rural Fire Brigade.
  - (b) The rateable land to which the special charge applies is delineated in orange on the map named Daintree Rural Fire Brigade.
  - (c) The estimated cost of carrying out the overall plan is \$1,970.

- (d) The estimated time for carrying out the overall plan is one (1) year ending on 30 June 2016.
- 2. All rateable land within the area delineated in orange on the map named Daintree Rural Fire Brigade will specially benefit to the same extent from the purchase and maintenance of equipment by the Brigade in the current or future financial years because each such parcel is within the area for which the brigade is in charge of fire fighting and fire prevention under the Fire and Rescue Service Act 1990.
- Council makes a special charge of \$15.00 per rateable assessment for the 2015/16 financial year to be levied by two half year levies.
- The entire budgeted revenue shall be remitted to the Daintree Rural Fire Brigade to be expended in accordance with their budget."

Carried unanimously

#### 3.5.3 THORNTON PEAK RURAL FIRE BRIGADE - SPECIAL CHARGE

Darryl Crees - General Manager Corporate Services

#### Moved Cr Clarke

Seconded Cr Carey

"That Council levy a special charge in accordance with sections 92 and 94 of the Local Government Act 2009 and section 94 of the Local Government Regulation 2012 to be known as the Thornton Peak Rural Fire Brigade Special Charge.

- The overall plan for this special charge is as follows:
  - (a) The service, facility or activity the subject of the special charge is the annual funding of the Thornton Peak Rural Fire Brigade.
  - (b) The rateable land to which the special charge applies is delineated in orange on the map named Thornton Peak Rural Fire Brigade.
  - (c) The estimated cost of carrying out the overall plan is \$1,727.
  - (d) The estimated time for carrying out the overall plan is one (1) year ending on 30 June 2016.
- 2. All rateable land within the area delineated in orange on the map named Thornton Peak Rural Fire Brigade will specially benefit to the same extent from the purchase and maintenance of equipment by the Brigade in the current or future financial years because each such parcel is within the area for which the brigade is in charge of fire fighting and fire prevention under the Fire and Rescue Service Act 1990.
- 3. Council makes a special charge of \$8.00 per rateable assessment for the 2015/16 financial year to be levied by two half year levies.
- 4. The entire budgeted revenue shall be remitted to the Thornton Peak Rural Fire Brigade to be expended in accordance with their budget.

#### 3.5.4 WONGA RURAL FIRE BRIGADE – SPECIAL CHARGE

Darryl Crees - General Manager Corporate Services

#### Moved Cr Noli

#### Seconded Cr Carey

"That Council levy a special charge in accordance with sections 92 and 94 of the Local Government Act 2009 and section 94 of the Local Government Regulation 2012 to be known as the Wonga Rural Fire Brigade Special Charge.

- The overall plan for this special charge is as follows:
  - (a) The service, facility or activity the subject of the special charge is the annual funding of the Wonga Rural Fire Brigade.
  - (b) The rateable land to which the special charge applies is delineated in orange on the map named Wonga Rural Fire Brigade.
  - (c) The estimated cost of carrying out the overall plan is \$151,902.
  - (d) The estimated time for carrying out the overall plan is one (1) year ending on 30 June 2016.
- 2. All rateable land within the area delineated in orange on the map named Wonga Rural Fire Brigade will specially benefit to the same extent from the purchase and maintenance of equipment by the Brigade in the current or future financial years because each such parcel is within the area for which the brigade is in charge of fire fighting and fire prevention under the Fire and Rescue Service Act 1990.
- 3. Council makes a special charge of \$35.00 per rateable assessment for the 2015/16 financial year to be levied by two half year levies.
- 4. The entire budgeted revenue shall be remitted to the Wonga Rural Fire Brigade to be expended in accordance with their budget."

#### **Carried** unanimously

### 3.5.5 BLOOMFIELD RIVER RURAL FIRE BRIGADE - SPECIAL CHARGE

Darryl Crees - General Manager Corporate Services

#### Moved Cr Carey

#### Seconded Cr Clarke

"That Council levy a special charge in accordance with sections 92 and 94 of the Local Government Act 2009 and section 94 of the Local Government Regulation 2012 to be known as the Bloomfield River Rural Fire Brigade Special Charge.

- The overall plan for this special charge is as follows:
  - (a) The service, facility or activity the subject of the special charge is the annual funding of the Bloomfield River Rural Fire Brigade.
  - (b) The rateable land to which the special charge applies is delineated in orange on the map named Bloomfield River Rural Fire Brigade.
  - (c) The estimated cost of carrying out the overall plan is \$13,000.

- (d) The estimated time for carrying out the overall plan is one (1) year ending on 30 June 2016.
- 2. All rateable land within the area delineated in orange on the map named Bloomfield River Rural Fire Brigade will specially benefit to the same extent from the purchase and maintenance of equipment by the brigade in the current or future financial years because each such parcel is within the area for which the brigade is in charge of fire fighting and fire prevention under the Fire and Rescue Service Act 1990.
- Council makes a special charge of \$25.00 per rateable assessment for the 2015/16 financial year to be levied by two half year levies.
- 4. The entire budgeted revenue shall be remitted to the Bloomfield River Rural Fire Brigade to be expended in accordance with their budget."

#### Carried unanimously

#### 3.6 REFUSE - SPECIAL CHARGE

Darryl Crees - General Manager Corporate Services

### Moved Cr Carey

#### Seconded Cr Noli

"That Council levy a special charge in accordance with sections 92 and 94 of the Local Government Act 2009 and section 94 of the Local Government Regulation 2012 to be known as the Special Refuse Charge, as follows:-

- That Council makes and levies a special charge on the land identified in this resolution for the purpose of contributing to the costs of operation and maintenance of the Cow Bay, Daintree, Killaloe and Ayton Transfer Stations.
- The overall plan for the provision of the service be identified as follows:

#### Overall Plan for the Supply of the Service, Facility or Activity

- a) Rateable Land to which the Special Charge Applies
  - i) All land with improvements that does not receive the Council kerbside waste and/or recyclables collection service, where the occupier has been provided with an identification card to use the Daintree and Killaloe Transfer Stations free of charge.
  - ii) All land with improvements north of the Daintree River that does not receive the Council kerbside waste and/or recyclables collection service, where the occupier has been provided with an identification card to use the Cow Bay and Avton Transfer Stations free of charge.
- b) Description of the Service, Facility or Activity

The special refuse charge is to be applied to a number of rateable parcels of land, with improvements, which are located outside Council's kerbside waste and recyclables collection service area or are inaccessible for the provision of the collection service.

For the period 01 July 2015 to 31 December 2015, the charge allows levied properties to dispose of 1 x 240L wheelie bin of general waste, or equivalent, per week at Council's Transfer Stations.

For the period 01 January 2016 to 30 June 2016, levied properties will be eligible to dispose of 1 x 240L wheelie bin of general waste, or equivalent, per unit levied per week at Council's Transfer Stations.

Properties holding Permits to Occupy on the South Arm and the Heads of Daintree River are excluded from this special refuse charge.

The occupiers of the subject land will have special access to the following Transfer Stations for free disposal of waste:

- i) Cow Bay Transfer Station
- ii) Daintree Transfer Station
- iii) Killaloe Transfer Station
- iv) Ayton Transfer Station
- c) Estimated Cost for Implementing the Overall Plan

The estimated cost to Council of operating the above mentioned Transfer Stations over the 2015/16 financial year is \$313,452 and the estimated revenue from gate fees for the same period is \$217,560, resulting in an anticipated net operating loss of \$95,892. The special refuse charge is to be levied to contribute to the cost of operation and maintenance of the Transfer Stations and will raise approximately \$58,024, which equates to less than 19% of the yearly operating cost.

d) Estimated Time for Implementing the Overall Plan

The special charge will apply for the 2015/16 financial year.

- 3. The occupiers of the land to which the special charge applies will have special access to the above mentioned Transfer Stations for the purpose of free disposal of waste.
- 4. For the period 1 July 2015 to 31 December 2015 a special charge of \$162.99 is hereby made to apply equally to each rateable assessment defined in clause 2(a).
- For the period 1 January 2016 to 30 June 2016 a special charge of \$162.99 per unit will be levied against each rateable assessment defined in clause 2(a), based on the improvements on the property as defined in the schedule below:

	Type of Improvement	Unit
1.	Hotels	10
2.	Cafes/Restaurants	5
3.	Take Away Food Outlets	2
4.	General store/shop	2
5.	School/kindergarten/childcare facility	1
5.	Residential dwelling, including Caretaker residence	1
6.	Caravan Park/camping Ground	
	i) for every 5 sites or part thereof	1
7.	Motel/Resort Accommodation	
	i) for each unit with facilities to enable the preparation and/or cooking	1

- 1 - 1 - 1 - 1	Type of Improvement	Unit
	of food. (Examples of these facilities, which are not necessarily exhaustive, would be a combination of two or more of a sink, hotplates, microwave oven, oven etc.)	
	ii) without facilities to enable the preparation and/or cooking of food - for every three units or part thereof	1
8.	Holiday Cabins for every three cabins or part thereof	1"

For:-

Cr Leu, Cr Noli, Cr Carey, Cr Clarke

Against:-

Cr Melchert

Carried

# 3.7 REVENUE STATEMENT AND RATES AND CHARGES FOR THE 2015/16 FINANCIAL YEAR

Darryl Crees - General Manager Corporate Services

#### Moved Cr Carey

#### Seconded Cr Noli

- "1. That Council resolve pursuant to chapter 4, part 3 of the Local Government Act 2009 and chapter 5, part 2 division 3 of the Local Government Regulation 2012 to adopt the attached Revenue Statement for the 2015/16 financial year.
- 2. That Council resolve pursuant to chapter 4 of the Local Government Regulation 2012 to adopt the recommendations contained in the attached Rates and Charges for the 2015/16 financial year, and included with the minutes."

For:-

Cr Leu, Cr Noli, Cr Carey, Cr Clarke

Against:-

Cr Melchert

### <u>Carried</u>

#### 3.8 FINANCIAL REPORT FOR PERIOD ENDING 31 MAY 2015

Darryl Crees - General Manager Corporate Services

Moved Cr Carey

Seconded Cr Clarke

"That Council notes the Financial Report for the period ending 31 May 2015."

#### 3.9 **ANNUAL BUDGET 2015 - 2016**

Darryl Crees - General Manager Corporate Services

### Moved Cr Leu

### Seconded Cr Noli

"That Council adopt the Annual Budget 2015 - 2016 as presented, including:

- Statement of Comprehensive Income a.
- b. Statement of Financial Position
- Statement of Cash Flows C.
- d. Statement of Changes in Equity
- Long Term Financial Forecast ₽.
- f. Measures of Financial Sustainability"

For:-

Cr Leu, Cr Noli, Cr Carey, Cr Clarke

Against:-

Cr Melchert

#### Carried

### **CLOSURE OF MEETING**

The meeting closed at 10.38am.

CONFIRMED THIS 7TH DAY OF JULY 2015

