

# Media Release

## Shire's COVID-19 Community Recovery Package

Friday 3 April 2020



### **\$190k funding package and rate freeze as part of Shire's COVID-19 Community Recovery Package**

One Hundred and Ninety thousand dollars in recovery support, a zero percent rate increase for 2020/21, along with support for Morawa's local commercial operators are among the initiatives announced in the last night's Shire of Morawa's *COVID-19 Community Recovery Package*.

In addition, ratepayers will also be able to access flexible payments options, and the Shire will also waive all non-regulatory Shire fees and charges, and penalty interest charged on outstanding rates, from 2 April 2020 until 30 June 2020.

Shire President Cr Karen Chappel said the Community Recovery Package was voted in unanimous by Council at Thursday's Special Meeting, with the \$190k funding package reflecting 10% of the Shire's levied rates.

"Council has responded to the Federal and State directives and examined its ability to directly assist its community. As a result, Council has reviewed its reserves and established the *COVID-19 Emergency Support Reserve* which is to be funded from current reserves and which will enable the Shire to bring forward expenditure directed to local operating commercial traders."

"Council is very much aware that it needs to provide targeted assistance during this pandemic but also, it must be done in a manner that does not burden our community once we have come out the 'other side' of this pandemic".

The Council has acknowledged the Federal and State funding support measures are extensive with the Community Recovery Package intended to serve our community in withstanding this crisis.

Specifically, the Community Recovery Package includes:

- Nil Increase for Rates for the 2020/2021 financial year; Waives all non-regulatory or externally imposed Shire fees and statutory charges for the period from 2 April 2020 until 30 June 2020; and
- Waives penalty interest charged on outstanding rates for the period from 2 April 2020 until 30 June 2020; and
- Continues flexible payment plans for those in vulnerable situations or experiencing financial hardship; and
- Support for Morawa's operating Commercial Traders as follows:

- Where practical, the Shire will seek to immediately purchase goods and/or services from these operating traders; and
- Where an operating Commercial Trader is still to pay their 2019/20 Rates (either totally or partially) and upon evidence of hardship due to COVID-19, the Shire may reduce the overall Rates cost by the value of their last quarter 2019/20 Rates Notice; or
- Where an operating Commercial Trader has paid their 2019/20 Rates, and upon evidence of hardship due to COVID-19, the Shire may reimburse the value of their last quarter 2019/20 Rates Notice or alternatively, discount the value for the 2020/21 Rates.
- For the Morawa-Perenjori Health Service and Morawa Police service workers, the Shire will make available accommodation units at the Morawa Caravan Park at no cost; and
- Shire staff to support recovery activities within the community where possible.

The *COVID-19 Community Recovery Package* is intended to support the community over the next 3 months, however, there are many unknowns and it may need to be reviewed and restructured as the pandemic continues to ensure it is effectively meeting the needs of the community.

A general COVID-19 email address [covid19recovery@morawa.wa.gov.au](mailto:covid19recovery@morawa.wa.gov.au) has been established all other service and facilities enquiries and suggestions.

A centralised hub of COVID-19 information and resources, including full extract of the *COVID-19 Community Recovery Package* is available via the Shire's homepage at [www.morawa.wa.gov.au](http://www.morawa.wa.gov.au)