



Media release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Clarence Valley Council reaches financial sustainability goal

CLARENCE Valley Council has been advised it has met the NSW Government's Fit for the Future requirements and has been deemed financially sustainable in the long term.

Mayor, Jim Simmons, said he had received advice from the Minister for Local Government, Gabrielle Upton, this afternoon that council's reassessment proposal had been processed and council broadly satisfied the government's financial criteria.

The Clarence Valley Council initially met only two of the government's seven assessment criteria but Cr Simmons said the organisation had been working hard over the following three years to improve its financial position.

"This has involved some difficult decisions, like reducing services, finding operational efficiencies and introducing a special rates variation (SRV)," he said.

"But those decisions have put us in a position where the government believes we are financially sustainable in the long term."

In her letter to council, Ms Upton said council had satisfied the financial criteria overall as, on balance, it met the financial sustainability criteria.

She said council had implemented a number of strategies to address its sustainability following the initial Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) review; that a SRV supported council's ability to address its long-term financial sustainability goals; met the criteria for efficiency in the original IPART assessment and was not required to be reassessed against the benchmark, and; continued to focus on a range of strategies to improve its financial outlook.

"The strategies proposed appear to be realistic and sustainable," she advised council.

General manager, Ashley Lindsay, said all staff needed to be congratulated on the result.

"As part of our efficiency measures we have lost the equivalent of 27 full-time staff," he said. "This has been very difficult, but I have been enormously impressed with the way everyone handled it and their commitment to the organisation and the community they serve."

Release ends.

For media inquiries contact Clarence Valley Council communications coordinator, David Bancroft, on 6643 0230 or 0429 104 118.