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17<sup>th</sup> August 2024

Att: Flinders Shire Council CEO

CC: Flinders Shire Council Mayor & Councillors

**Subject: Upcoming changes to dump charges**

Good morning Bruce,

The Hughenden Chamber of Commerce would like to congratulate the Council on the success of their first Business & Economic Development Advisory Committee meeting. We look forward to our continued participation in & support of this program.

The Chamber would like to reiterate our view on a point of discussion at this meeting specifically around the pending dump charge increases. We understand that there are concerns around the longevity & financial sustainability of the dump & completely understand why a proactive approach here is necessary. This being said, we do believe the biggest threat you are facing here are the out-of-town businesses and Copperstring project specific waste. There is no doubt that these users will represent a large portion of the incremental growth in dump usage & therefore should be the initial target in remuneration increases.

During the recent community meeting the Council acknowledged increases to the cost of living relative to other points of discussion. We have no doubt that applying a “blanket” increase to all commercial dump users will only result in even more increases in the cost of living. Local businesses are already actively notifying customers of pending increases to the cost of their goods & services. As you can appreciate, it’s difficult enough for local businesses to be competitive in our location without other costs being added by the Council.

Whilst we do agree that something needs to happen, we would like to see a more “thoughtful” approach which targets the largest users and project work first before charging locals. If the Council genuinely cannot see a way forward without charging local commercial users, we would like to see a system in place to give locals an opportunity to dispose of this waste at no charge such as the “dump tickets” or “show your license” structures we suggested at the previous meeting. In our opinion the failure to adopt an alternative system here will increase the cost of living in many industries at a time where it’s not appropriate to do so. The cost of everything from home maintenance to freight costs & retail shop prices will all need to increase to compensate for this change.

The Chamber of Commerce respectfully requests either a delay of this increase to allow for more community consultation or a suspension of the increase altogether pending an alternative approach. We also offer our resources if required to provide feedback and suggestions on any additional changes the Council may consider regarding this issue.

We appreciate your time and look forward to hearing from you soon.

Kind regards,

Les Carter  
President- Hughenden Chamber of Commerce