

An aerial photograph of a road construction site. A white paver truck is positioned on a newly laid asphalt road. Two workers in high-visibility vests and hard hats are visible: one standing near the truck's rear and another further down the road. The road is flanked by grassy areas and a dense line of tall reeds on the right. The text "Community Engagement Summary Report" is overlaid in white, followed by "RAC RECOMMENDATIONS CONSULTATION" in large, bold, white capital letters.

Community Engagement Summary Report **RAC RECOMMENDATIONS CONSULTATION**

Prepared April 2024



**Cassowary Coast
REGIONAL COUNCIL**



Engagement Snapshot

748

YOUR SAY VIEWS

151

YOUR SAY
CONTRIBUTIONS

4

COMMUNITY
MEETINGS

18,302

TOTAL SOCIAL MEDIA
REACH

4

VMS BOARDS

RATES CONSULTATION

Have Your Say!



HAVE YOUR SAY ON THE PROPOSED RATING CATEGORY RECOMMENDATIONS

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SESSIONS

Monday 25 March, 6pm to 7:30pm at Innisfail Library
Tuesday 26 March, 6pm to 7:30pm at Mission Beach Resort
Wednesday 27 March, 6pm to 7:30pm at Tully CWA Hall
Thursday 28 March, 6pm to 7:30pm at Cardwell Community Hall

RSVP TO ATTEND

yoursay.cassowarycoast.qld.gov.au
Phone 1300 763 903



RATING ADVISORY COMMITTEE PROPOSED RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RATING CATEGORY AMENDMENTS

Who is the Rating Advisory Committee?

In February 2023, Cassowary Coast Regional Council endorsed its third Rating Advisory Committee (RAC) as a platform for ratepayers and community members to provide feedback and recommendations on Council's current General Rates and levies structure.

The community was invited to be part of the RAC through an expressions of interest submission in March 2023. In June 2023, Council endorsed the committee of 12 members, which included the following representation:

- Residential
- Non primary place of residence
- Pensioner
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Residential island & mainland
- Primary production - Cane and Cattle Industry

The Rating Advisory Committee met four times in August, September, October, and November 2023.

Rating category amendments

The RAC has provided feedback and recommendations on Council's current General Rates and Special Levies structure.

Council invites all ratepayers to join the conversation about recommendations from the RAC meetings.

LEARN MORE

yoursay.cassowarycoast.qld.gov.au



Project Background

The Rating Advisory Committee (RAC) has met four times throughout Q1/Q2 in 2023/24 with each session including around 5 hours of discussion time.

The committee conducted a review of the current rating structure and provided a conceptual position and recommendations for general rates going forward at Cassowary Coast Regional Council, with an external independent facilitator from the Mead Perry Group.

The Draft RAC Recommendations provide Council with a proposed general rating strategy to be implemented over the next term of Council.

Engagement Purpose

The purpose of this community consultation is to raise general awareness of the opportunity to engage with Council about rates, ask questions and have concerns heard, as well as offer input to the RAC's recommendations.

According to the IAP2 Community Engagement Matrix, the level of engagement was to CONSULT. This means, *"our promise to the community is to keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision."*

Council's approach to consult with community was to directly engage the community firstly through in-person consultation events and to follow through our online engagement platform.

Online Registrations were open for community members to register for these sessions and provide any questions prior to the sessions.

To ensure an informed response, feedback was not opened until after the events have been held. Immediately following the last event the online survey form was issued to registrants and live on the Your Say page for a two week period.

An expression of interest form was also be on Your Say for those who are unable to attend one of the consultation events.

For community members who don't have access to digital media a range of alternative communication methods were used.

How we Engaged

Council undertook extensive consultation with community members to capture as much feedback as possible to inform support for the RAC Recommendations.

Respondent's submissions were captured through Council's Your Say online platform, via face-to-face sessions, and through paper surveys.

To ensure the Community was aware of the project, Council undertook an extensive awareness campaign throughout registration and consultation which included :

- DL Flyer distributed with Rates Notice (24 January 2024)
- Your Say Project Page (Live from January 2024)
- Media Release Issued (29 January 2024) broadcast on local radio news bulletins
- Council Community Connect - Wet Tropics Newspaper (7 March 2024)
 - Marketing for consultation sessions (W/C 18 March 2024)
 - Facebook and Instagram campaign
 - Radio – 4KZ and Kool FM (1-week Slot From 18 March to 25 March 2024)
 - Newspaper – Wet Tropic Times (edition 21 March 2024), Cairns Local News (editions 15 March and 22 March 2024)
 - Posters at key community locations (All Customer Service & Libraries, Community noticeboards)
 - Mobile Electronic Notice Boards (Innisfail Goondi Hill, Innisfail River Avenue, Mission Beach Marcs Park, Tully Showgrounds)
- Community Consultation Events throughout the region during the last week of March (Innisfail Library, Mission Beach Resort, Tully CWA Hall, Cardwell Community Hall)
 - The consultation period opens for two weeks (2 April - 14 April 2024)
 - Radio – 4KZ and Kool FM (1-week Slot 3 to 12 April 2024)
 - Facebook and Instagram campaign
 - Posters at key community locations (All Customer Service & Libraries, Community noticeboards)



COMMUNITY INFORMATION SESSIONS

Council held four community information sessions across Innisfail, Mission Beach, Tully, and Cardwell during the last week of March 2024. The purpose of the community sessions was to raise general awareness, inform community members of the Rating Advisory Committee and recommendations as well as offering input to the RAC's recommendations.

Community members were encouraged to register to attend the sessions through Council's Your Say Project Page <https://yoursay.cassowarycoast.qld.gov.au/rates-consultation> or via paper submission at Council's Customer Service and Library Centres.

Session Dates

- Innisfail Library, Monday 25 March at 6pm
- Mission Beach Resort, Tuesday 26 March at 6pm
- Tully CWA Hall, Wednesday 27 March at 6pm
- Cardwell Community Hall, Thursday 28 March at 6pm

ATTENDEES

A total of 117 community members were in attendance at the below community engagement sessions.

- Innisfail – 32 booked in and 48 attended.
- Tully – 15 booked in and 25 attended.
- Mission Beach – 50 booked in and 37 attended
- Cardwell - 5 booked in and 7 attended

A total of 6 community members who were unable to attend the sessions registered their expression of interest to participate within the consultation and were contacted by a Council representative.



Your Say Platform

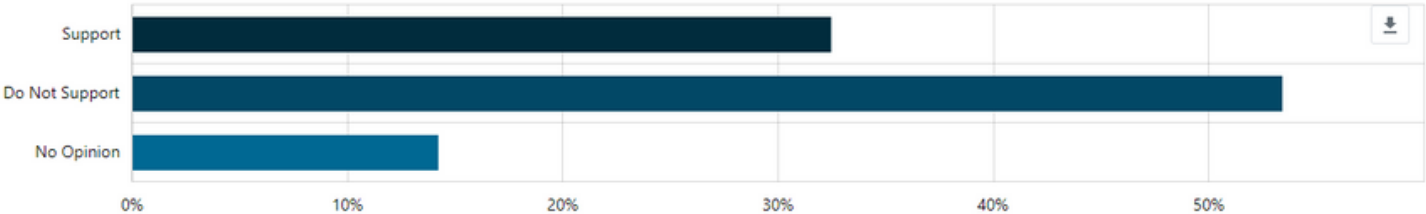
Through Council's online Your Say platform, yoursay.cassowarycoast.qld.gov.au/rates-consultation, an online survey was used to encourage public participation. The "Have Your Say on the Proposed Rating Category Recommendations" Survey was open from **28 March to 14 April 2024**. Participants were asked through the survey if they Support, Do Not Support, or No Opinion of each of the RAC Recommendations.

A total of 151 Contributions from 126 Contributors were received during the consultation period showing 97% being Cassowary Coast Regional Ratepayers and more than 50% of contributions were received from the General Residential Ratepayer/Homeowner.

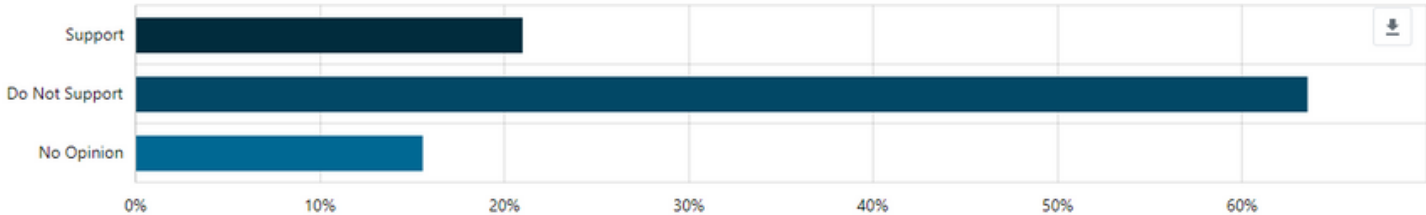
Results Summary

Outlined below is an overview of the recommendations and how they were supported by the patriciates.

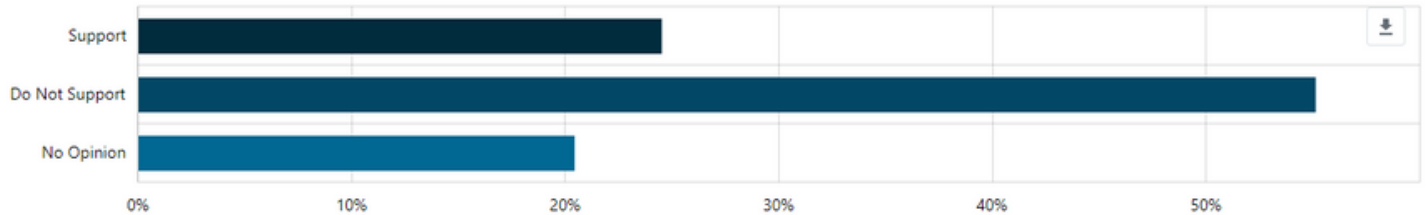
3 Recommendation 1 – Over the term of Council there will be smaller increases for the Environmental and Infrastructure Levies to reduce impacts the lower valued residential properties on the minimum rate.
Multi Choice | Skipped: 3 | Answered: 148 (98.01%)



4 Recommendation 2 – That over the term of Council there be minimal increases in the Minimum Rate for Residential <\$85,000 category and that the RID's for other Residential Categories increased to be 5% higher than their current comparison with Residential <\$85,000.
Multi Choice | Skipped: 3 | Answered: 148 (98.01%)



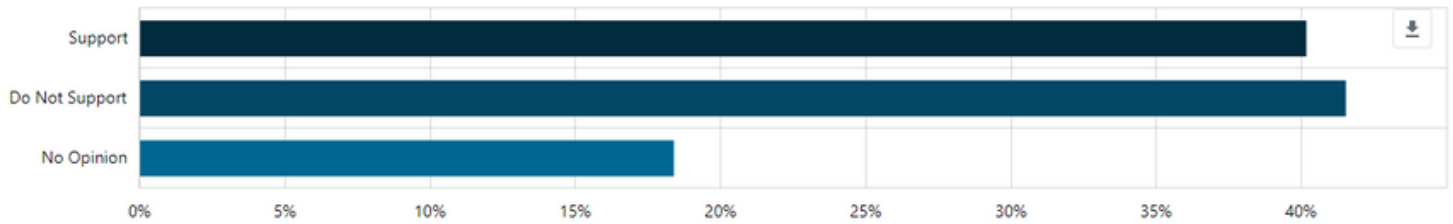
5 Recommendation 3 – That over the term of Council the RID's for the NPPR Categories to be increased from 5 % to 10% higher than their equivalent Residential Category, however, the inclusion of vacant land in this category was a concern due to the current timeframes to build a house.
Multi Choice | Skipped: 4 | Answered: 147 (97.35%)



6

Recommendation 4 – That over the term of Council the RID's for Multi-Units increase from the current 75% of the residential base rate to 80% of the residential base rate.

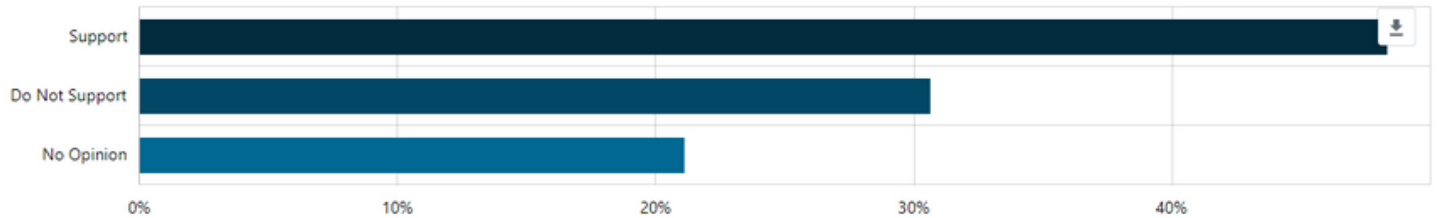
Multi Choice | Skipped: 4 | Answered: 147 (97.35%)



7

Recommendation 5 – That over the term of Council the Vacant Commercial and Industrial categories be amalgamated into their respective Commercial and Industrial Categories.

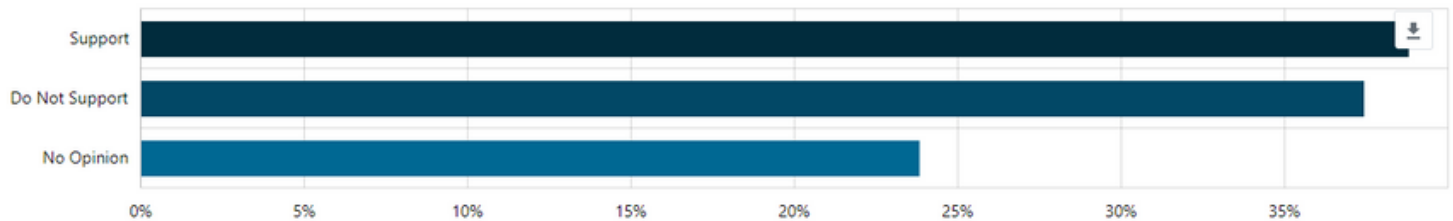
Multi Choice | Skipped: 4 | Answered: 147 (97.35%)



8

Recommendation 6 – That Council consider separating Accommodation assessments from Commercial Assessments, maintain the minimum rate at 150% of the residential <85K and over the term of Council increase for the major shops RID to be 230%, the same as Island Resort A.

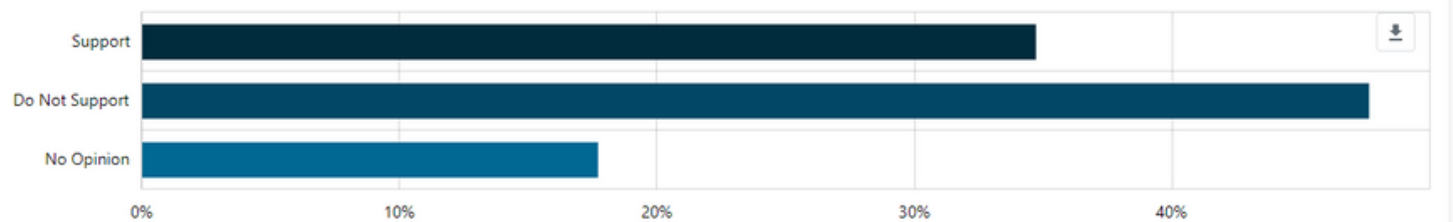
Multi Choice | Skipped: 4 | Answered: 147 (97.35%)



9

Recommendation 7 – That Council consider creating a new category for Transformer assessments and increases for Harbour Industries A to 300% and sugar mills 850% of the base rate.

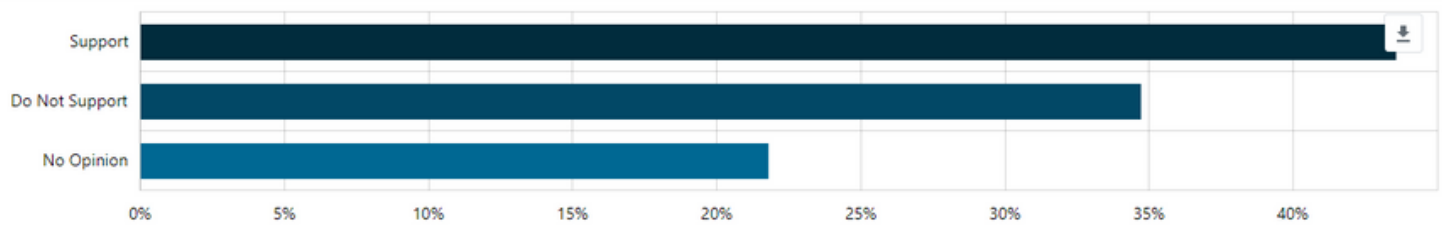
Multi Choice | Skipped: 4 | Answered: 147 (97.35%)



10

Recommendation 8 – That over the term of Council increase the Industrial RID category towards the Commercial RID and that the minimum rate for the two categories remains at 150% of Residential <\$85k.

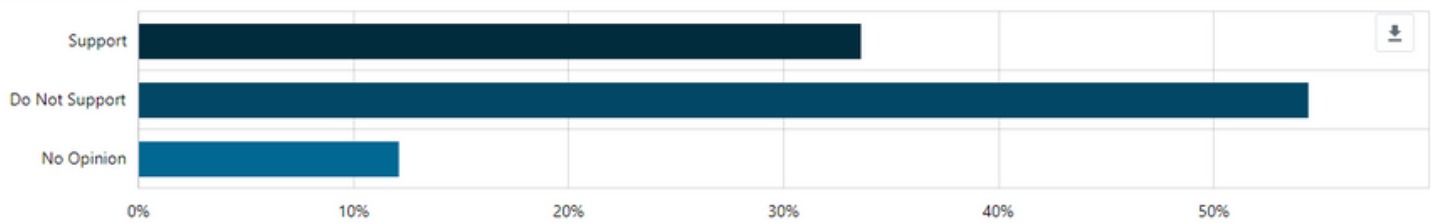
Multi Choice | Skipped: 4 | Answered: 147 (97.35%)



11

Recommendation 9 – That the target for Primary Producer Categories General Rates and Separate Charges be 25% of the Total Levy (Currently 25.4%)

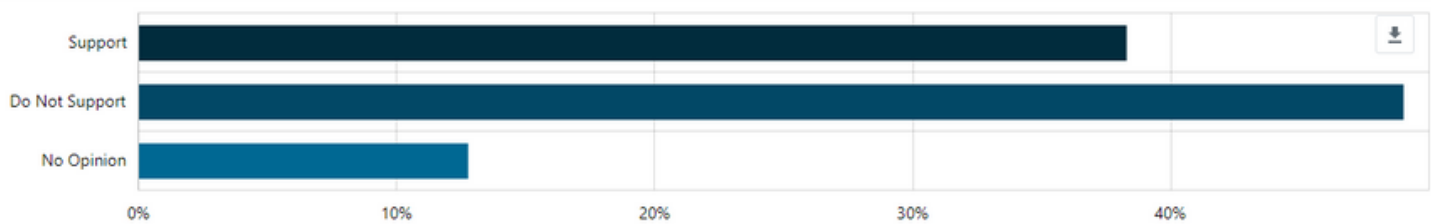
Multi Choice | Skipped: 2 | Answered: 149 (98.68%)



12

Recommendation 10 – The Primary Producer Categories are split into five categories. • Sugar Cane (100% use); • Livestock (100% use); • Forestry and Logging; • Aquaculture; • All other primary production. The Sugar Cane Category Median Levy be the base, The Livestock Category Median Levy reduce from current 122% to 85% of the base over the term of Council (four-year period).

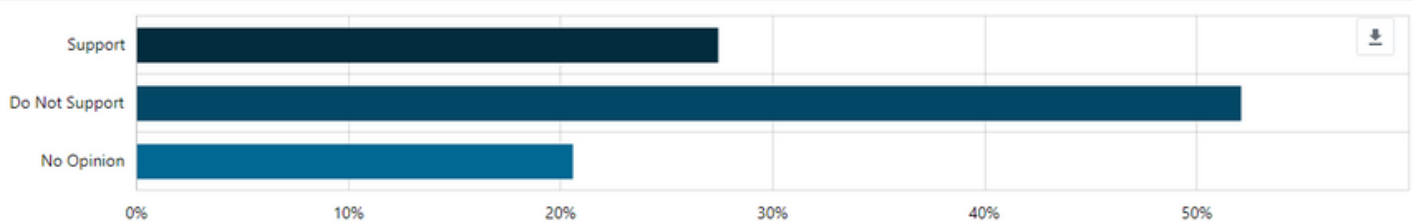
Multi Choice | Skipped: 2 | Answered: 149 (98.68%)



13

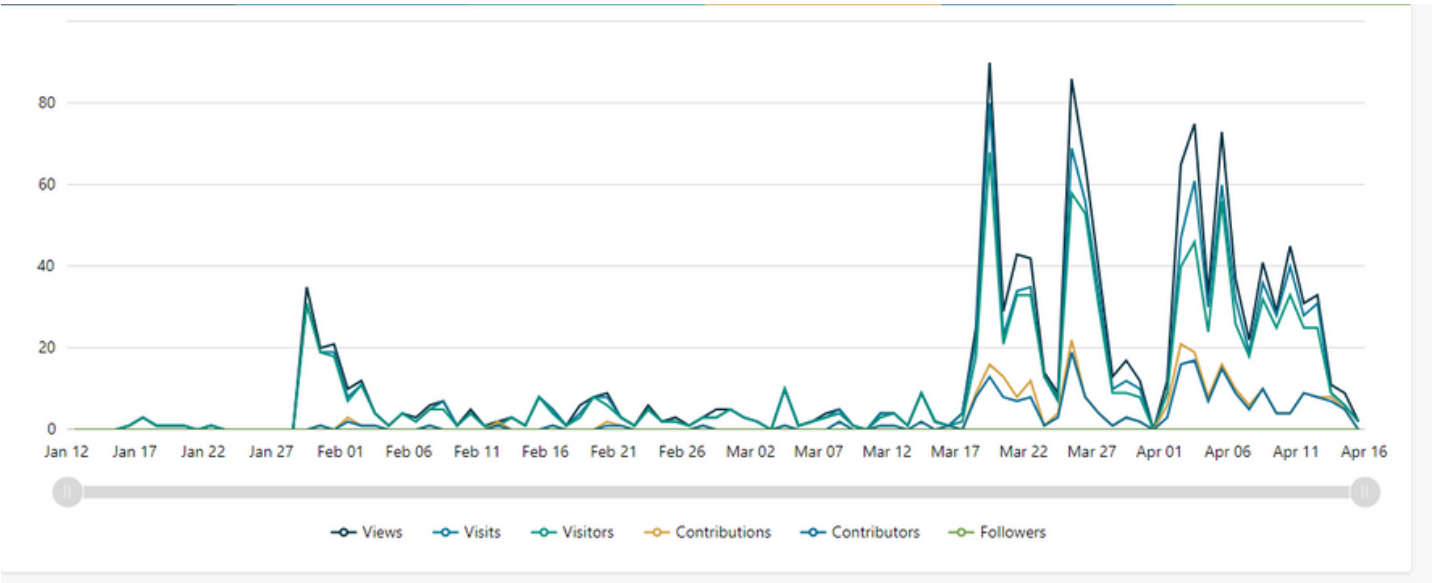
Recommendation 11 – That Council split the “Other” Categories based on the definition of a Principal Place of Residence AND Not Principal Place of Residence.

Multi Choice | Skipped: 5 | Answered: 146 (96.69%)



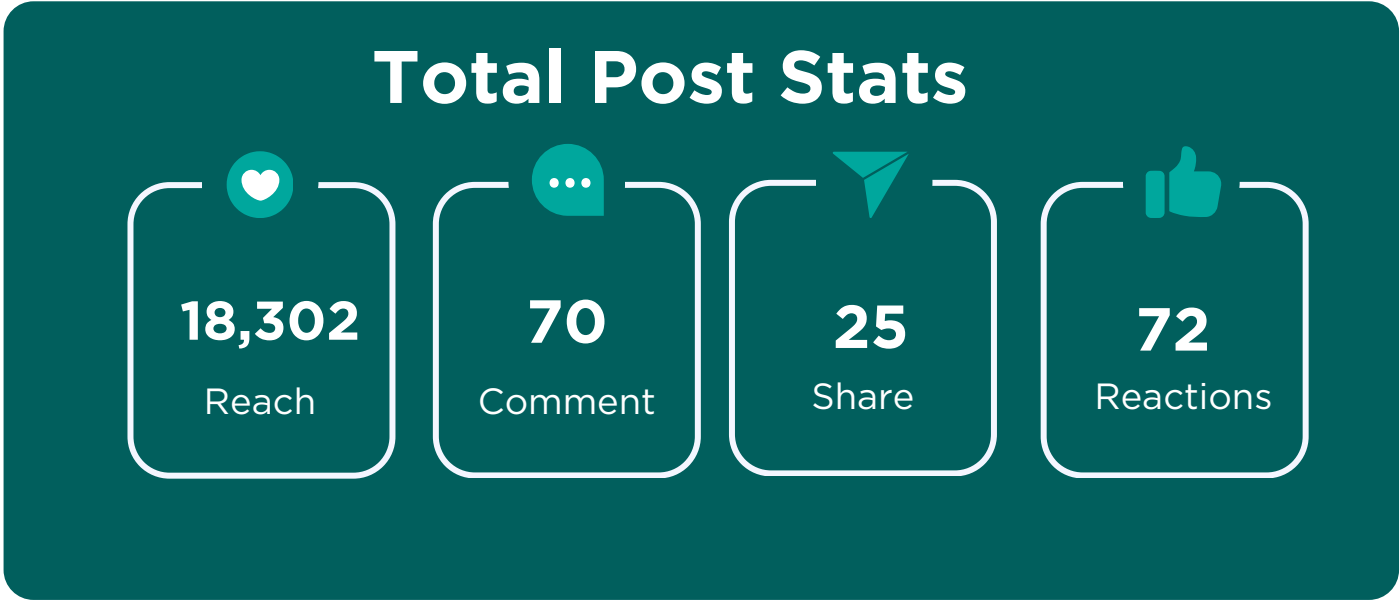
Overall Website Performance

The graph below shows the overall performance of the Your Say Page being active through registrations and consultation receiving a total of 1,269 Views from 793 Visitors.



Social Media

A social media campaign was run on Facebook with a total of seven posts throughout the open consultation period.



Next Steps

The Stakeholder Engagement report will reach key internal and external stakeholders and will be available on Council's Your Say website.

Key insights were identified and summarised in this report. From these insights, Cassowary Coast Regional Council could consider and implement the RAC Recommendations.

A Frequently Asked Questions document will be published to answer questions submitted to Council through the registration process.

Acknowledgement

This document has been prepared by Cassowary Coast Regional Council – Communications Team. All information presented in this report has been presented in an accurate and unbiased manner and makes no recommendation on any project actions going forward. This report has been approved by the Chief Executive Officer. For further information, please contact Council at 1300 763 903 or email enquiries@cassowarycoast.qld.gov.au.



**Cassowary
Coast**
REGIONAL
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