

Draft 2024/25 Fees and Charges – Explanatory Notes

Cemeteries

Detailed below is a summary explaining the proposed cemetery and burial fee changes for 2024/25.

Why are the changes necessary?

Cemeteries costs are not being fully recovered via user fees and charges. Over the past three years, on average, direct expenses exceed income by approximately 29%. This is unsustainable and is a baseline deficiency which needs correction through an increase in fees and charges.

Year	Income (\$)	Expense (\$)	Deficiency (\$)	Deficiency (%)
2020/21	312,153	369,278	57,125	18.30%
2021/22	322,567	428,870	106,303	32.96%
2022/23	291,294	396,626	105,332	36.16%
Average	308,671	398,261	89,590	29.14%

It is also notable that related Customer Service administration costs are not included in these expenses and are estimated at over \$70,000 per annum. This aspect is not addressed as part of the current proposed fee changes and will be reviewed in future years.

Is the new Cemeteries and Crematoria NSW levy included in the new fees?

No. Given that the new levy was unexpectedly announced by the NSW Government only this week, the additional levy of \$41 per cremation, \$63 per ash interment and \$156 per bodily interment has not been included in the proposed fees.

How are the proposed fees to be consulted on?

The new fees are proposed to be effective from 1 July 2024, in line with other City Fees and Charges. During the public exhibition period City officers will consult directly with Funeral Directors and all submissions will be considered by Council before the fees are adopted.

Do cemetery and burial fees produce income to upgrade/renew cemetery assets such as internal roads, water main extensions, irrigation, etc.?

No. The income from cemetery and burial fees is currently only utilised to fund operational expenses. For instance, a required 50 metre internal road extension at the Karangī Lawn Cemetery is intended to be funded from Special Rate Variation Pavement Renewal funds as there is currently no other suitable funding source. It would therefore be beneficial for the user fees and charges to be sufficient over time to provide a level of reserve funding from an operational surplus. This approach will be reviewed in future years.

C.ex Coffs International Stadium – School Athletics Carnivals

The hiring fee is proposed to be increased to \$650 (from \$480 in 23/24) to better reflect the cost of this hire.

Why are the changes necessary?

Stadium hire costs for School Athletics Carnivals are not being fully recovered via user fees and charges. The table below details that on average, direct expenses exceed income by approximately 35%. This is unsustainable and is a baseline deficiency which needs correction through an increase in fees and charges.

Year	Income (\$)	Expense (\$)	Deficiency (\$)	Deficiency (%)
2017/18	53,526	74,202	20,676	38.6%
2018/19	64,680	78,992	14,312	22.1%
2019/20	41,553	69,285	27,732	66.7%
2020/21*	17,829	19,240	1,411	7.9%
2021/22*	28,997	59,198	30,201	104.2%
2022/23	80,097	93,623	13,256	16.9%
Average	59,964	79,025	19,061	36.1%

*Note 2020/21 and 2021/22 years not included in the average due to Covid distortion

It should be noted that the proposed increase for 2024/25 is forecast to maintain a deficiency of approximately 32%. Further investigation and review of all hire charges for C.ex Coffs International Stadium is required and will be undertaken prior to the next review of fees and charges.