**Media release**

**XX Month 2020**

**XXXX council calls for funding to ensure survival of essential local services**

XXXXX council is calling for Federal and State government support to ensure it can operate essential services as it faces even more financial losses from unpaid rates during the COVID-19 pandemic.

XXXXX  has joined Local Government NSW and councils across NSW in calling for the Federal and State Governments to direct economic stimulus packages to local governments.

“We are working incredibly hard to ensure we maintain services – especially those that are essential, including cleansing and waste, in our local communities while protecting people’s health and safety,”  xxxx said.

“However, our community needs stimulus funding for projects to help sustain council operations, which are already depleted by drought and fires, and to keep jobs and lift local economies.”

XXXX Council has already lost $XXXX in revenue and $XXXX million in costs, with countless services no longer running, and further heavy financial losses are expected because ratepayers are in financial distress.

"The well-being, safety and livelihoods of our communities, customers, and staff is our top priority,” he/she said.

"It is critical that we receive adequate funding and resources to coordinate and deliver the goods and services needed as we navigate through, and recover from, natural disasters , whether they be drought, bushfires, floods or the impacts of COVID-19.

“We need stimulus funding for projects that will help council to boost the local economy.

“A strong XXXX council, supported by substantial funding and resources, is key to continued local employment and support for local businesses, as well as ongoing investment in public infrastructure and community services for the public good.”

XXXX said better access to TAFE, VET and other apprenticeship opportunities would also greatly assist to address skill shortages, especially for staff in non-essential services, at this critical time.

“Only then can we be confident that we can keep people in work and businesses in business, as we navigate through this pandemic.”

**Media contact**

XXXXXXX on XXXXXXX