

<p><b>ORDINARY MEETING</b></p> <p><b>23 AUGUST 2023</b></p>	<p><b>3</b></p>
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## **2023/24 RATES BENCHMARKING**

63/8/12-06 | #7233551

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

**That Council note the 2023/24 Rates Benchmarking report.**

### **INTERESTED PARTIES:**

Not applicable

*Note: The identification of interested parties is provided on a best endeavours basis by Council Officers and may not be exhaustive.*

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

This report provides a comparison of rates and utility charges for a selection of property types in the Cairns Regional Council area against the charges which would be applicable in other local government areas. Two benchmarking comparisons are included in this report:

- 1) Queensland Local Government Areas with a population greater than 100,000; and
- 2) Neighbouring local councils

The results of the comparison indicate rates and utility charges within the Cairns Regional Council area are at the lower end of the comparison to other local government areas. Since the Local Government Areas over 100,000 population benchmarking began in 2016/17, Cairns has been the lowest in Residential by Median Valuation.

The neighbouring local councils benchmarking which began in 2021/22 shows Cairns Regional Council has the lowest Residential Minimum, Strata Minimum and Residential by Median Valuation.

### **COMMENT:**

The graphs and tables included in the attachments provide a comparison of rates and utility charges for a selection of property types in the Cairns Regional Council area against the charges which would be applicable in other local government areas.

The other local governments used for comparison are:

- 1) Queensland Local Government Areas with a population greater than 100,000; and
- 2) Neighbouring local councils.

Bundaberg Regional Council has been included in the benchmarking for the first time due to the Queensland Government Statistician's Office preliminary 2022 population forecast exceeding 100,000.

The sample property types chosen were:

- A residential property (excluding strata and flats) paying the minimum rate – this represents 25% of residential properties in the Cairns Regional Council area;
- A residential property (excluding strata and flats) with the median valuation within its own local government area; and
- A strata title property paying the minimum rate – this represents 89% of strata title properties in the Cairns Regional Council area.

Care has been taken to ensure a “like-with-like” comparison due to the differing rates and charges structures applicable in other councils. The comparison included in the attachments represents a “like-with-like” comparison and takes into account all property related charges paid to the local government / water utility on an annual basis and includes a level of water usage consistent with the average for a Cairns ratepayer.

Where applicable, the following key assumptions have been made:

- General rates are based on Principal Place of Residence.
- Where strata rates differ based on high or low rise, the low-rise option has been shown.
- All rates are shown net of early payment discounts.

#### **ATTACHMENTS:**

Attachment 1: 2023/24 Rates Benchmarking – QLD Councils with Population > 100,000

Attachment 2: 2023/24 Rate Benchmarking – Neighbouring Councils



Jason Ritchie  
Executive Manager Finance



Lisa Whitton  
Director Finance & Business Services

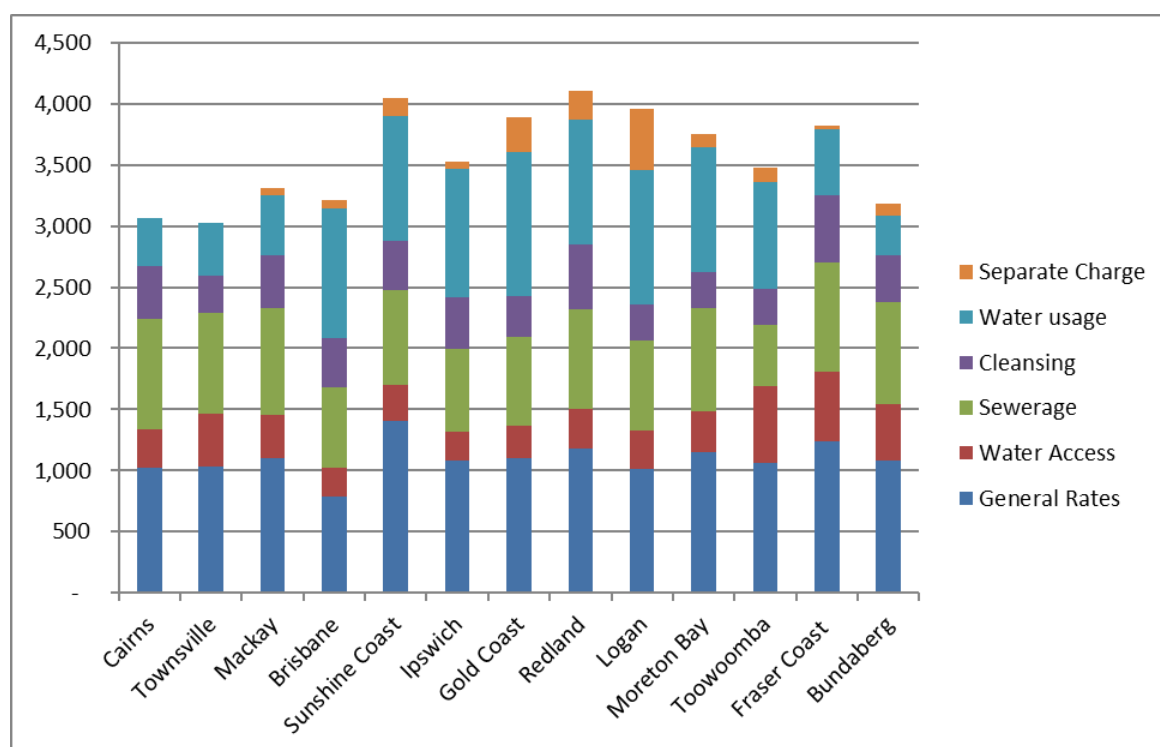
## Attachment 1: 2023/24 Rates Benchmarking – QLD Councils with Population > 100,000

### ASSUMPTIONS

Where applicable, the following key assumptions have been made:

- General rates are based on Principal Place of Residence.
- Where strata rates differ based on high or low rise, the low-rise option has been shown.
- All rates are shown net of early payment discounts.

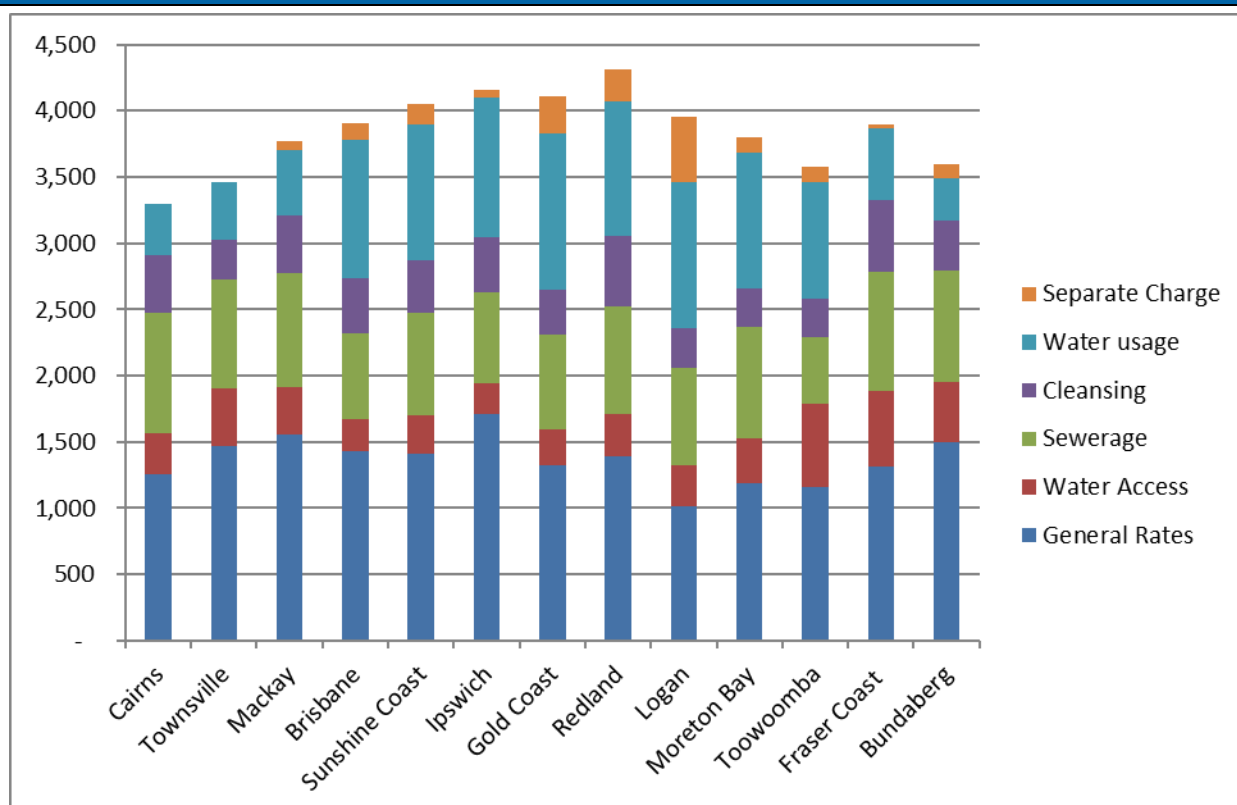
### RATES BENCHMARKING – RESIDENTIAL – MINIMUM



The below table shows the total rates charges (including water usage) for the Minimum Residential ratepayer in each local government area.

Council	Annual Charge	Variance to Cairns (\$)	Variance to Cairns (%)
Townsville	\$3,022	-\$46	-1%
Cairns	\$3,068	\$0	0%
Bundaberg	\$3,183	\$115	4%
Brisbane	\$3,212	\$144	5%
Mackay	\$3,314	\$247	8%
Toowoomba	\$3,475	\$407	13%
Ipswich	\$3,526	\$459	15%
Moreton Bay	\$3,755	\$688	22%
Fraser Coast	\$3,816	\$748	24%
Gold Coast	\$3,887	\$820	27%
Logan	\$3,954	\$887	29%
Sunshine Coast	\$4,047	\$980	32%
Redland	\$4,105	\$1,038	34%

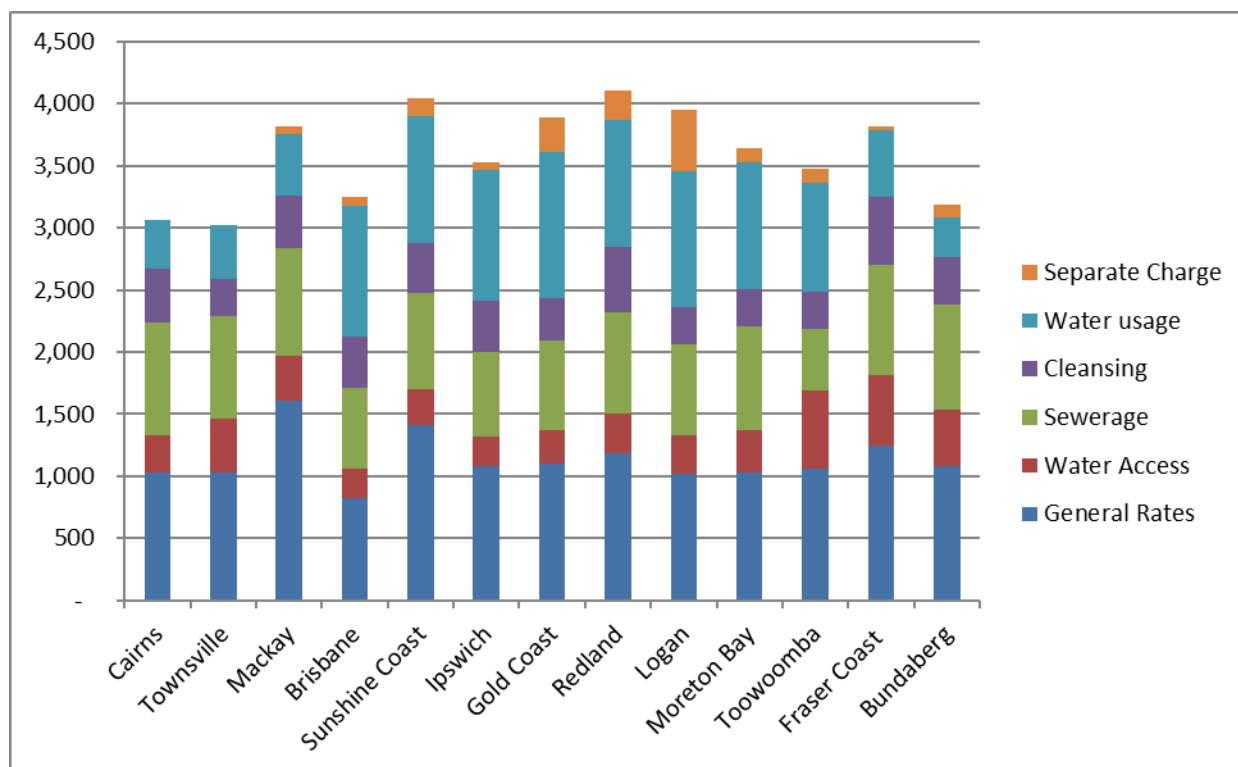
## RATES BENCHMARKING – RESIDENTIAL – MEDIAN VALUATION #



The below table shows the median valuation and total rates charges (including water usage) for the Median Residential ratepayer in each Local Government Area.

Council	Median Valuation	Annual Charge	Variance to Cairns (\$)	Variance to Cairns (%)
Cairns	\$217,500	\$3,298	\$0	0%
Townsville	\$155,000	\$3,457	\$159	5%
Toowoomba	\$205,000	\$3,573	\$275	8%
Bundaberg	\$130,000	\$3,592	\$293	9%
Mackay	\$167,500	\$3,768	\$470	14%
Moreton Bay	\$320,000	\$3,798	\$499	15%
Fraser Coast	\$157,500	\$3,892	\$593	18%
Brisbane	\$620,000	\$3,911	\$612	19%
Logan	\$320,000	\$3,954	\$656	20%
Sunshine Coast	\$345,000	\$4,047	\$749	23%
Gold Coast	\$480,000	\$4,106	\$808	24%
Ipswich	\$280,000	\$4,154	\$856	26%
Redland	\$375,000	\$4,312	\$1,014	31%

## RATES BENCHMARKING – STRATA – MINIMUM



The below table shows the total rates charges (including water usage) for the Minimum Strata ratepayer in each Local Government Area.

Council	Annual Charge	Variance to Cairns (\$)	Variance to Cairns (%)
Townsville	\$3,022	-\$46	-1%
Cairns	\$3,068	\$0	0%
Bundaberg	\$3,183	\$115	4%
Brisbane	\$3,244	\$177	6%
Toowoomba	\$3,475	\$407	13%
Ipswich	\$3,526	\$459	15%
Moreton Bay	\$3,640	\$573	19%
Fraser Coast	\$3,816	\$748	24%
Mackay	\$3,822	\$754	25%
Gold Coast	\$3,887	\$820	27%
Logan	\$3,954	\$887	29%
Sunshine Coast	\$4,047	\$980	32%
Redland	\$4,105	\$1,038	34%

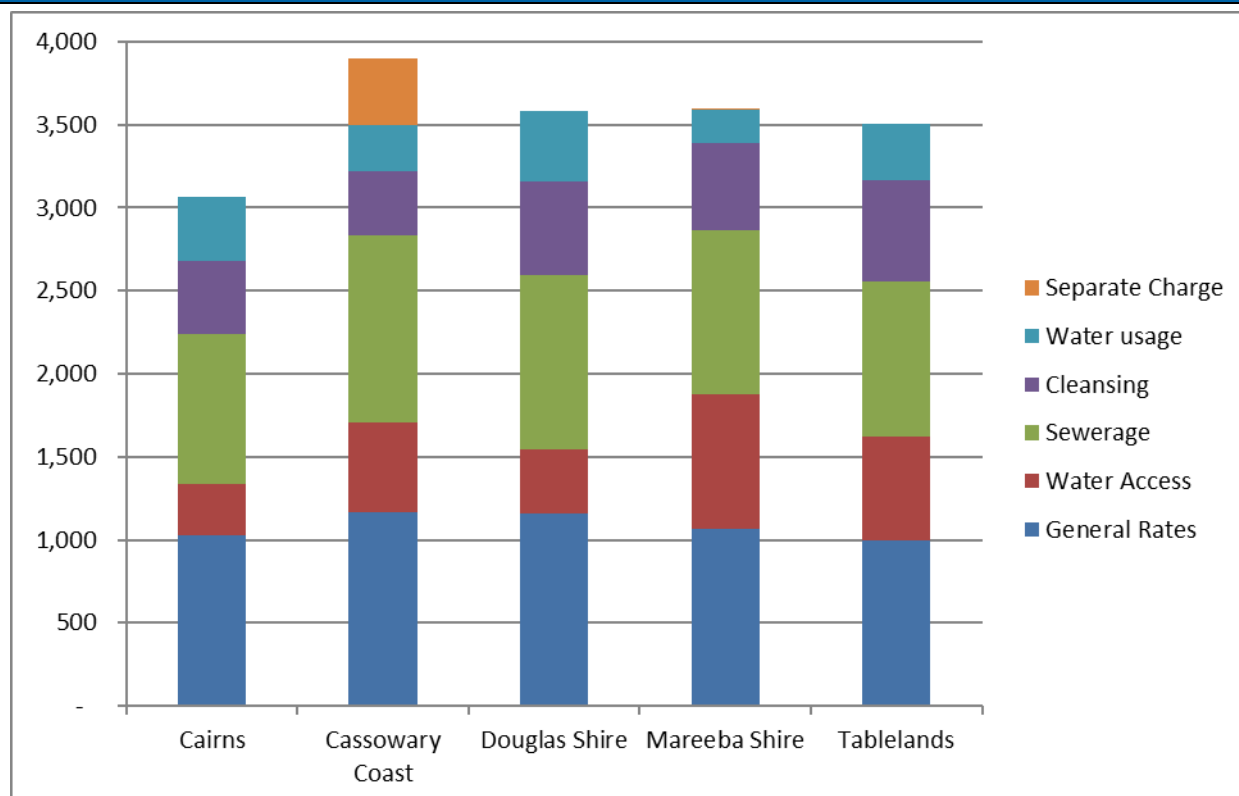
## Attachment 2: 2023/24 Rate Benchmarking – Neighbouring Councils

### ASSUMPTIONS

Where applicable, the following key assumptions have been made:

- General rates are based on Principal Place of Residence.
- Where strata rates differ based on high or low rise, the low-rise option has been shown.
- All rates are shown net of early payment discounts.

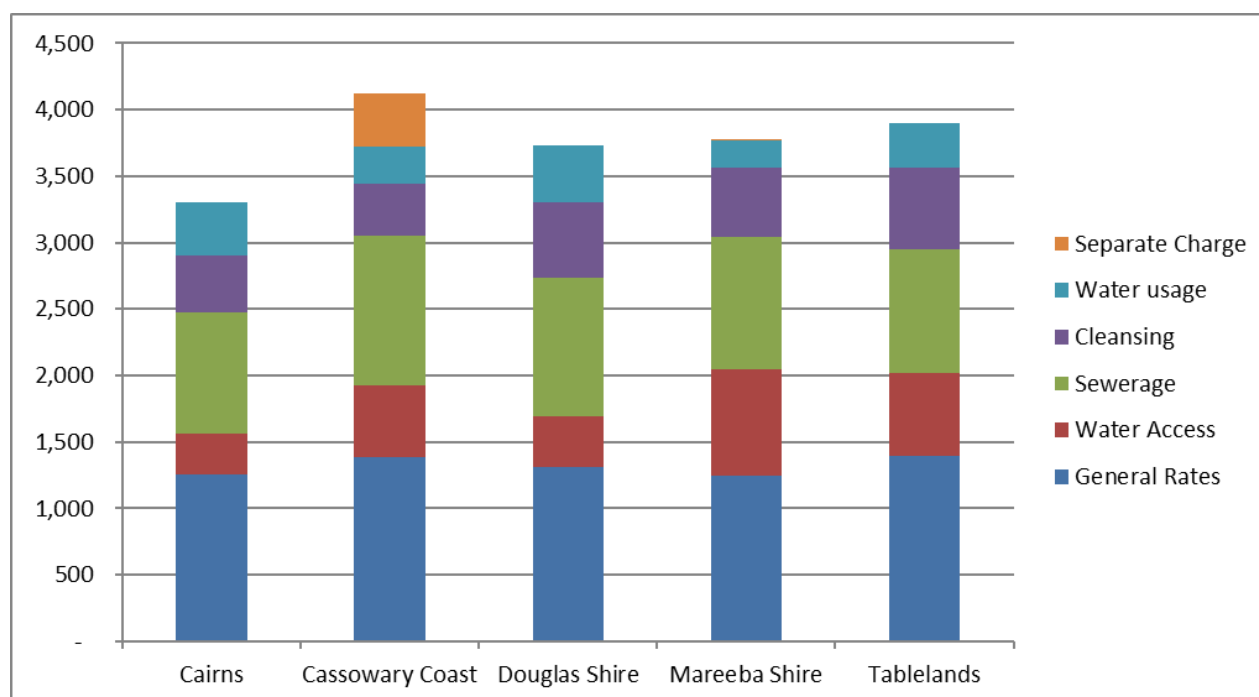
### RATES BENCHMARKING – RESIDENTIAL – MINIMUM



The below table shows the total rates charges (including water usage) for the Minimum Residential ratepayer in each neighbouring local council.

Council	Annual Charge	Variance to Cairns (\$)	Variance to Cairns (%)
Cairns	\$3,068	\$0	0%
Tablelands	\$3,505	\$437	14%
Douglas Shire	\$3,581	\$514	17%
Mareeba Shire	\$3,591	\$523	17%
Cassowary Coast	\$3,895	\$827	27%

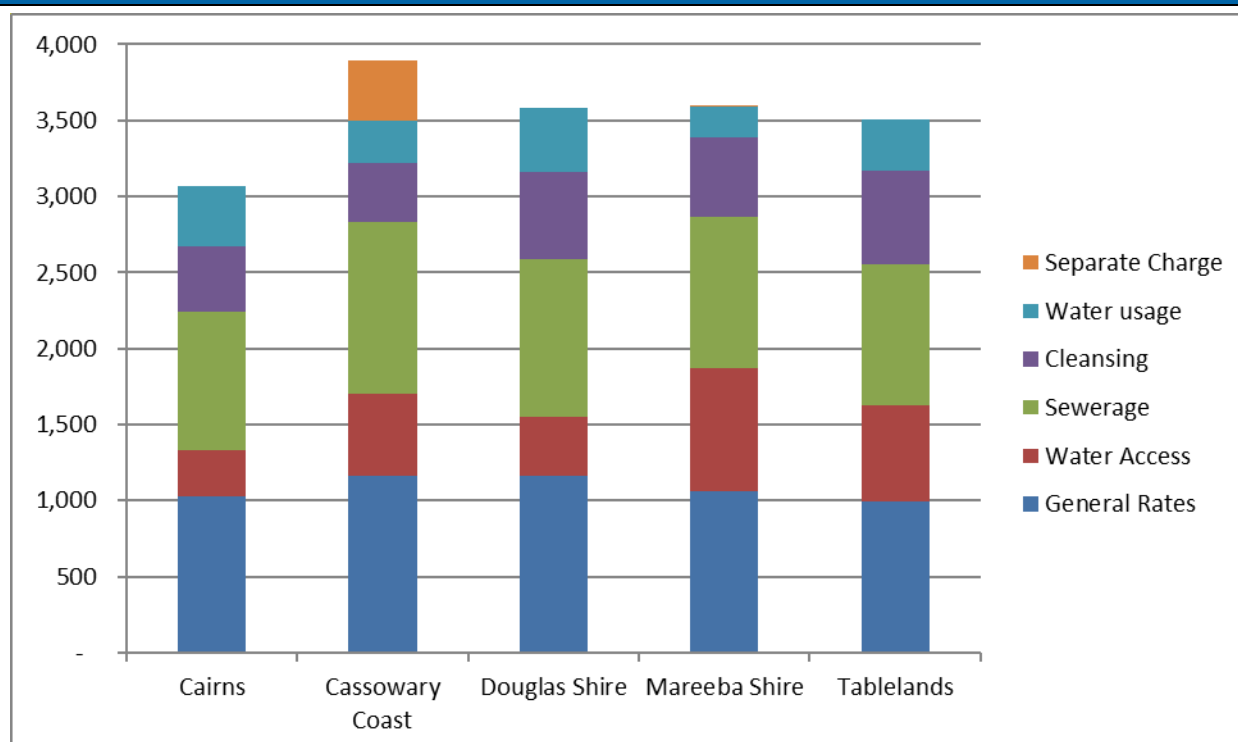
## RATES BENCHMARKING – RESIDENTIAL – MEDIAN VALUATION #



The below table shows the total rates charges (including water usage) for the Median Residential ratepayer in each neighbouring local council.

Council	Median Valuation	Annual Charge	Variance to Cairns (\$)	Variance to Cairns (%)
Cairns	\$217,500	\$3,298	\$0	0%
Douglas Shire	\$180,000	\$3,731	\$432	13%
Mareeba Shire	\$100,000	\$3,769	\$471	14%
Tablelands	\$122,000	\$3,902	\$604	18%
Cassowary Coast	\$73,000	\$4,119	\$821	25%

## RATES BENCHMARKING – STRATA – MINIMUM



The below table shows the total rates charges (including water usage) for the Minimum Strata ratepayer in each neighbouring local council.

Council	Annual Charge	Variance to Cairns (\$)	Variance to Cairns (%)
Cairns	\$3,068	\$0	0%
Tablelands	\$3,505	\$437	14%
Douglas Shire	\$3,581	\$514	17%
Mareeba Shire	\$3,591	\$523	17%
Cassowary Coast	\$3,895	\$827	27%