

Agenda

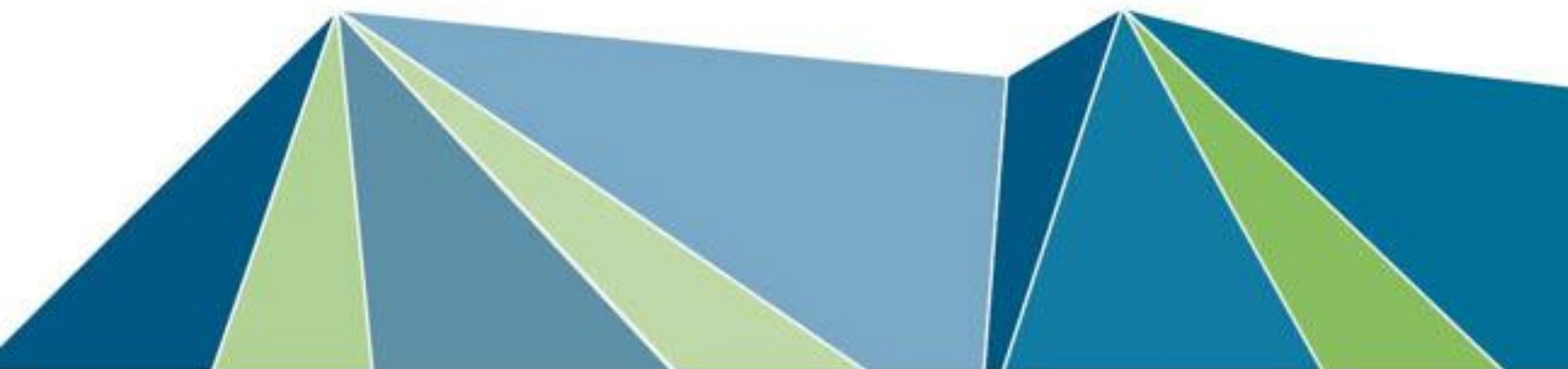
Finance and Facilities Committee Meeting

13 April 2026

An Finance and Facilities Committee Meeting`
will be held in the Ballina Shire Council Chambers, 40 Cherry Street, Ballina
on **13 April 2026 commencing at 4:15 PM.**

1. Acknowledgement of Country
2. Apologies
2. Declarations of Interest
3. Committee Reports

Paul Hickey
General Manager



Ethical Decision Making and Conflicts of Interest

A guide for Councillors, Council employees and community representatives

Ethical decision making

- Is the decision or conduct legal?
- Is it consistent with Government policy, Council's objectives and Code of Conduct?
- What will the outcome be for you, your colleagues, the Council, anyone else?
- Does it raise a conflict of interest?
- Do you stand to gain personally at public expense?
- Can the decision be justified in terms of public interest?
- Would it withstand public scrutiny?

Conflict of Interest

A conflict of interest is a clash between private interest and public duty. There are two types of conflict:

- **Pecuniary** – an interest that you have in a matter because of a reasonable likelihood or expectation of appreciable financial gain or loss to yourself or another person or entity defined in part 4 of the Council's Code of Conduct, with whom you are associated.
- **Non-pecuniary** – a private or personal interest that you have that does not amount to a pecuniary interest as defined in the Council's Code of Conduct.

These commonly arise out of family or personal relationships, or out of involvement in sporting, social, religious or other cultural groups and associations, and may include an interest of a financial nature.

The test for a conflict of interest

- Is it likely I could be influenced by personal interest in carrying out my public duty?
- Would a fair and reasonable person believe I could be so influenced?
- Conflict of interest is closely tied to the layperson's definition of "corruption" – using public office for private gain.
- It is important to consider public perceptions of whether you have a conflict of interest.

Identifying problems

- Do I have private interests affected by a matter I am officially involved in?
- Is my official role one of influence or perceived influence over the matter?
- Do my private interests' conflict with my official role?

Disclosure and participation in meetings

Pecuniary Interests

- A Councillor or a member of a Council Committee who has a pecuniary interest in any matter with which the Council is concerned, and who is present at a meeting of the Council or Committee at which the matter is being considered, must disclose the nature of the interest to the meeting as soon as practicable.
- The Councillor or member must not be present at, or in sight of, the meeting of the Council or Committee:
 - a) at any time during which the matter is being considered or discussed by the Council or Committee, or
 - b) at any time during which the Council or Committee is voting on any question in relation to the matter.

No Knowledge - A person does not breach this clause if the person did not know and could not reasonably be expected to have known that the matter under consideration at the meeting was a matter in which he or she had a pecuniary interest.

Non-pecuniary Interests

Must be disclosed in meetings. There are a broad range of options available for managing non-pecuniary interests and the option chosen will depend on an assessment of the circumstances of the matter, the nature of the interest and the significance of the issue being dealt with. Non-pecuniary interests must be dealt with in one of the following ways:

- It may be appropriate that no action be taken where the potential for conflict is minimal. However, Councillors should consider providing an explanation of why they consider a conflict does not exist.
- Limit involvement if practical (eg. Participate in discussion but not in decision making or vice versa). Care needs to be taken when exercising this option.
- Remove the source of the conflict (eg. Relinquishing or divesting the personal interest that creates the conflict)
- Have no involvement by absenting yourself from and not taking part in any debate or voting on the issue as per the provisions in the Code of Conduct (particularly if you have a significant non pecuniary interest)

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1. Acknowledgement of Country
 2. Apologies
 3. Declarations of Interest
-

1. Acknowledgement of Country

In opening the meeting, the Mayor will provide an Acknowledgement of Country.

We acknowledge the Nyangbul peoples of the Bundjalung nation, the traditional custodians of the land on which we meet today and pay our respects to their Elders, past and present.

2. Apologies

3. Declarations of Interest

4.1 Medium Density Housing Review - Council Land - Lennox Head

4. Committee Reports

4.1 Medium Density Housing Review - Council Land - Lennox Head

Section	Strategic Planning
Objective	To provide an overview of the review of the medium density housing options on Council owned land in Hutley Drive, Lennox Head and outline amendments to the LEP to enable increased housing density.

Background

In June 2024 Council signed a funding agreement with the NSW Reconstruction Authority to undertake several projects that are identified as priorities in Council's *Ballina Shire Housing Strategy 2024*.

One of the funded projects was to '*accelerate the planning for and design of medium density housing on Council owned land - Lot 1 DP1270120, Hutley Drive, Lennox Head*'.

Newton Denny Chappelle (NDC) was subsequently engaged in March 2025, following a competitive tender process, to investigate options and feasibility for medium density housing on Lot 1 DP1270120 in Hutley Drive, Lennox Head, to assist Council to determine the timing and approach to progressing any future housing proposal.

To understand the site's potential to accommodate medium density housing, DFJ Architects prepared several housing layouts and design concepts and presented these options at a briefing to Councillors in July 2025.

The housing concept designs are included as Attachment 1 to this report.

These options informed the next stage of the project, which included reviewing planning pathways for the housing options and providing indicative construction costs.

The final report from NDC was received in December 2025 and is included as Attachment 2 to this report.

This report provides an overview of the project, the medium density housing options and pathways for any future development proposal.

The report focuses on housing typologies and planning pathways and recommends that Council endorse preparation of a planning proposal to amend the LEP to enable increased density and diversity in housing on the land.

Key Issues

- Need for increased housing diversity
- Housing options
- Planning pathways

4.1 Medium Density Housing Review - Council Land - Lennox Head

Discussion

The funding provided by the NSW Reconstruction Authority was based on priorities in Council's Housing Strategy.

The first principle in Council's Housing Strategy is 'Available'. This reflects the idea that every resident deserves a quality home they can afford, and that the type and size of housing that residents seek differs widely depending on life stage, income, lifestyle aspiration and a range of other factors.

Ballina Shire's housing stock is dominated by detached dwellings, and the highest growth has occurred in dwellings with three or more bedrooms.

In Lennox Head, most dwellings are separate four plus bedroom houses on 600m² plus sized lots. The median house price for this type of product is around \$1.5m.

At the same time, 20% of all detached houses are occupied by lone person households and 29% by couple only households, which suggests a lack of housing choice suitable for smaller households.

Action 3 of the Housing Strategy is to investigate opportunities for the utilisation of Council owned land for housing projects, in recognition that Council, as a landowner, can have a role, not only in making land available but in supporting development of diverse housing typologies.

The Council owned site that is the subject of this project is located off Hutley Drive, Lennox Head. Described as Lot 1 DP1270120, it is 14.36 hectares in area and is part of the former 'Henderson Farm' (Figure 1). To the north of the site is the Lennox Rise development.



Figure 1: Locality Map - Lot 1 DP1270120, Hutley Drive, Lennox Head

Section 2 of the NDC report (Attachment 2) details site constraints, including topography, bushfire, location of services and easements and acid sulfate soils, all of which inform the housing design concepts and layouts.

Zoning, Permissible Housing and Development Standards

The land has split zoning in the Ballina Local Environmental Plan 2012 (LEP), with the northern 6.8ha zoned R3 Medium Density Residential (R3 zone) and the remaining 7.56ha a Deferred Matter (7(l) Environmental Protection (Habitat) under Ballina LEP 1987) as shown in Figure 2.

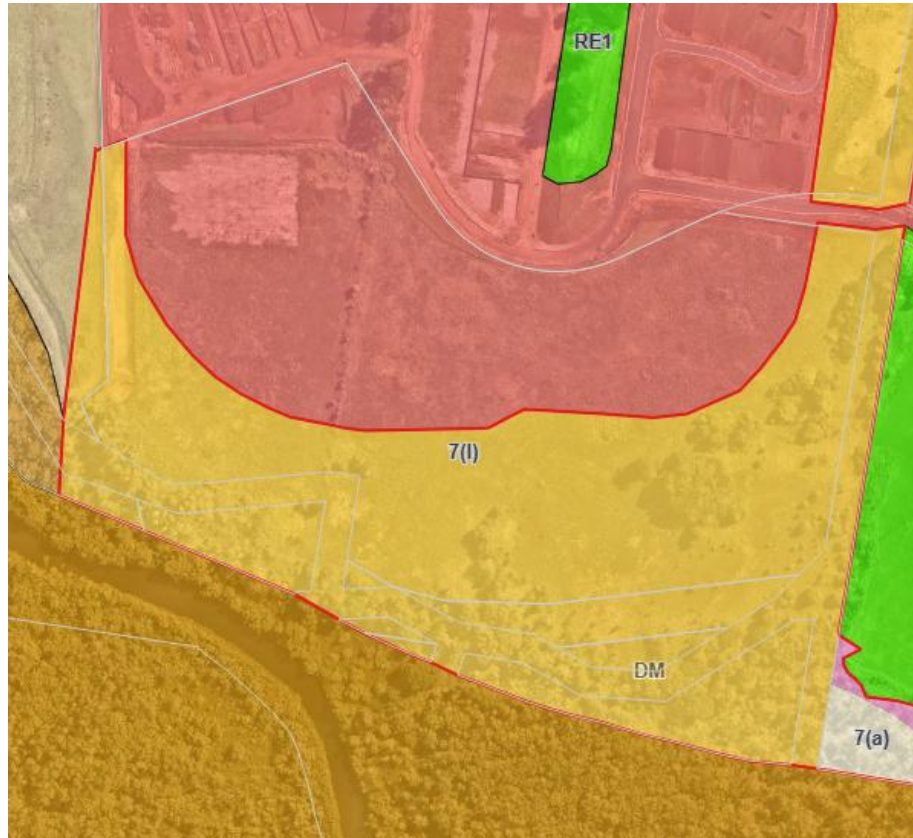


Figure 2: Site Zoning

In the R3 zone detached dwellings, attached dwellings (terrace housing), residential flat buildings, dual occupancies, and secondary dwellings are all permissible with development consent.

While these are the most likely residential uses, there are other housing options permitted with consent, for example, seniors housing and group homes.

LEP development standards in the R3 zone relate to lot size for subdivision, building height, and floor space ratio.

The land is currently mapped as containing local heritage items in Schedule 5 of the BLEP 2012. However, at the 11 December 2025 Ordinary meeting Council resolved to finalise a general amendments planning proposal (BSCPP25/001) that includes removal of the heritage mapping (incorrectly applied to this land). It is expected that this planning proposal will be finalised in the second quarter of 2026.

The 1987 LEP 7(l) Environmental Protection (Habitat) zone applies to the Deferred Matter part of the site.

4.1 Medium Density Housing Review - Council Land - Lennox Head

In the 7(l) zone dwellings and dual occupancy are permitted with consent.

However, the 40ha minimum lot size for subdivision that applies zone effectively means these uses are not possible.

Development of this part of the site would require rezoning to a residential zone.

Housing Options

Three medium density concepts were prepared to demonstrate options for achieving a diverse housing mix, style and density. Increased building heights were explored as well as smaller lot sizes.

For comparison purposes, a standard subdivision layout that would meet current development standards was also prepared.

This is described as the 'business-as-usual' model below. Refer to Attachment 1 for the concepts in A3 size.

While presented as distinct options, there is scope to consider other options, with alternative mix of dwelling types and densities.

Business as Usual Subdivision

The business-as-usual option was prepared as a reference point to illustrate a standard subdivision layout pattern with a minimum lot size of 600m². The result would provide a total of 73 lots, each accommodating a single detached four bedroom dwelling, with an estimated total population of 292 residents.



Figure 3: Business-as-usual residential subdivision

4.1 Medium Density Housing Review - Council Land - Lennox Head

Concept 1: Medium Density – LEP Compliant

Concept 1 combines detached dwellings with secondary dwellings, dual occupancies, residential flat buildings and terrace housing across five precincts and has been designed to achieve compliance with LEP development standards.

It could meet the housing needs of an additional 382 residents.



Figure 4: Concept 1 – Medium Density LEP Compliant

Concept 2: Medium Density – Building Height Increase and Zone Change

Similar to Concept 1, in terms of the number of precincts and variety of dwelling types, this concept proposes an increased building height limit of 12 metres (from 8.5 metres), a reduction in minimum lot size for the terrace housing to achieve increased density, and use of an area of the Deferred Matter land to provide for additional detached housing.

The red line within Precinct 1 in Figure 5 denotes the boundary line between the R3 zoned land and Deferred Matter land.

The dwelling yield achieved would house 513 residents.

4.1 Medium Density Housing Review - Council Land - Lennox Head

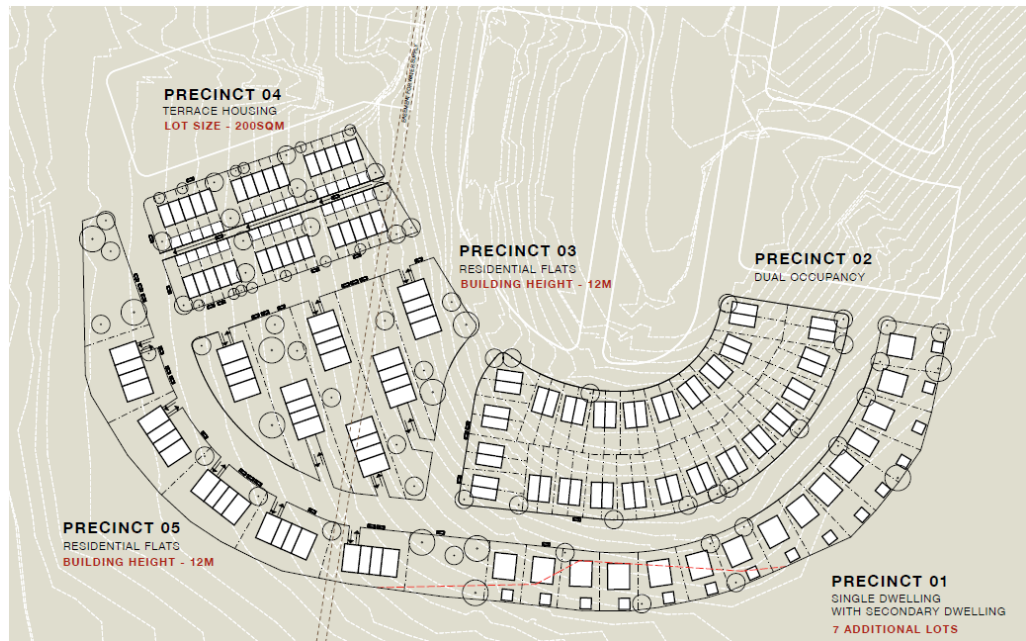


Figure 5: Concept 2 Medium Density – Building Height Increase and Zone Change

Concept 3: Medium Density – Hybrid - Reduced Lot Size and Zone Change

The third concept is a hybrid option that combines elements of Concepts 1 and 2. The layout is like Concept 2 but maintains a LEP compliant building height limit of 8.5 metres and reduces the minimum lot size in the terrace housing precinct, which allows for increased dwelling yield and housing for 447 future residents.

Concept 3 also proposes detached housing within an area of the Deferred Matter part of the site (refer to Precinct 1 in Figure 6).

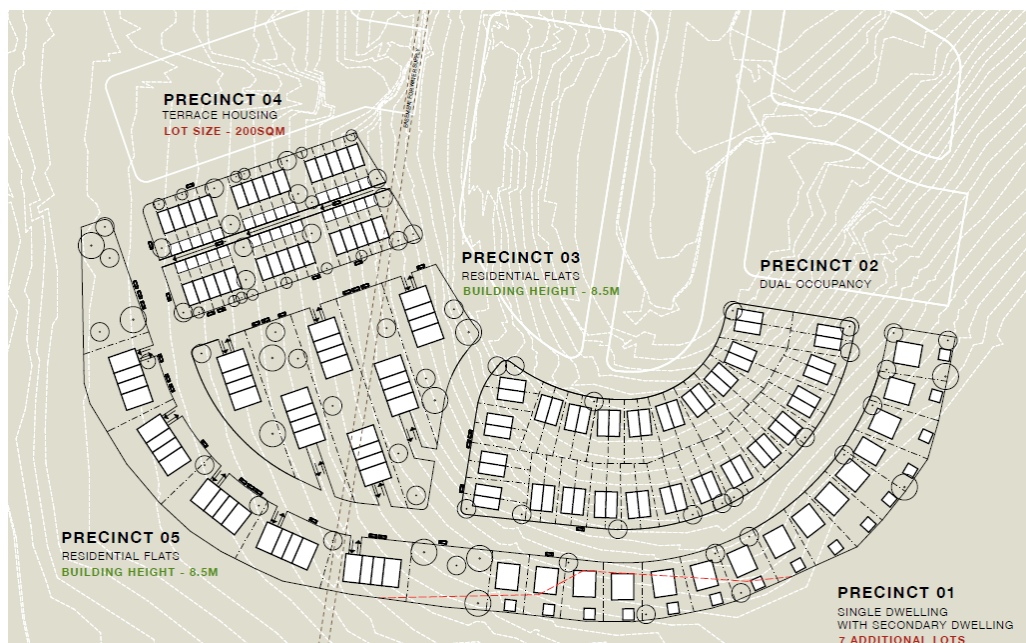


Figure 6: Concept 3 Hybrid Medium Density – Reduced Lot Size and Zone Change

Planning Pathways

Section 5 of the NDC report details the current planning approval pathways required for each of the different types of housing in the options above.

Notably, there is currently no complying development pathway for all types of housing.

Local Environmental Plan Compliance

An LEP compliant option is available with Concept 1 and the Business-as-Usual option.

Concept 1 also provides an increase in housing diversity and density.

Increased housing density, dwelling numbers and the population proposed in Concepts 2 and 3 requires amendments to the LEP development standards and / or zoning.

Amendments to the LEP to enable the potential to develop the land as presented in Concepts 2 and 3 are recommended, as they will provide flexibility and enable a wider range of development options than available at present, without committing Council to a particular concept option for subdivision.

Deferred Matter Land

7.56 hectares of the site is zoned Deferred Matter under LEP 2012. As noted earlier, the substantive zoning is 7(l) Environmental Protection (Habitat) under LEP 1987, which enables dwellings and dual occupancies but no other forms of housing.

Further, the minimum lot size for subdivision is 40 hectares, effectively prohibiting residential subdivision.

Concepts 2 and 3 propose that around 2,000m² of this land could be rezoned to R3 Medium Density Residential, to enable higher density forms of housing and subdivision of the land for residential purposes.

Council's environmental scientists have undertaken a preliminary survey of this area and found there is potential to consider rezoning this portion only to R3. Elsewhere on the site is Hairy Joint Grass, a vulnerable species.

In general, the land is in a degraded condition.

Before proceeding with any rezoning to a residential zone, a detailed ecological survey of the land will be undertaken. This survey is also needed to inform future management of the land by Council.

Indicative Construction Costs

The primary purpose of the project was to review the potential options for medium density housing on Council owned land in Hutley Drive, Lennox Head.

However, to obtain an indication of feasibility of the different housing typologies, a review of the project costs to create a 'business-as-usual' subdivision,

4.1 Medium Density Housing Review - Council Land - Lennox Head

together with the estimated development costs for each medium density development option and a market appraisal of the residential typologies based on current market rentals and sales was also undertaken.

The results of the costings and market appraisal review are detailed in section 6 of the NDC report.

Community Engagement Strategy

Community engagement has not occurred in this project. However, community engagement will occur if Council decides to pursue amendments to the Ballina Local Environmental Plan 2012 to enable greater housing density diversity to be achieved on the site.

Financial / Risk Considerations

If Council resolves to prepare a Planning Proposal to amend the Local Environmental Plan to enable higher density forms of housing, the costs of the Planning Proposal would be met from within the Strategic Planning budget.

Regarding the financial implications and risks for Council in developing the land for housing, this will be the subject of future reporting to Council.

The draft Long Term Financial Plan, for 2026/27 to 2035/36, includes funding as part of Council's commercial property development portfolio, to investigate the feasibility of developing this site.

For further information on the proposed feasibility funding, refer to the report titled "Commercial Property Projects and Cash Reserves – Update", located later in this agenda.

Options

Option 1 – Endorse the preparation of a Planning Proposal to amend the Local Environmental Plan 2012 to enable increased building height limit and a reduced minimum lot size and rezone part of the Deferred Matter land to R3 Medium Density Residential.

This option would involve staff preparing a Planning Proposal with the aim of enabling Concept 2 and 3 or aspects of these concepts to occur.

A detailed ecological survey of the site would inform any proposal to rezone the Deferred Matter land.

This option is recommended as it would not commit Council to undertake development of any of these options but would simply provide a planning pathway for Council, or other proponents, to proceed with more flexibility and potential for a greater diversity housing types on the site.

Option 2 – Note the contents of this report and take no action to amend the Local Environmental Plan.

This option would maintain an ability to proceed with Concept 1, described as *Medium Density Housing – LEP Compliant*, which includes a range of medium density and diverse housing typologies.

4.1 Medium Density Housing Review - Council Land - Lennox Head

The recommendation is to proceed with the Planning Proposal, as per Concepts 2 and 3, noting that amendments to the LEP can proceed while Council reviews its preference for how the land may be developed and managed for housing.

Any amendments are enabling and do not commit Council to any decisions around development of the site.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council endorses the preparation of a Planning Proposal to amend Ballina Local Environmental Plan 2012 to enable the dwelling densities, numbers and types provided in Concepts 2 and 3, within this report.

Attachment(s)

1. DFJ - Hutley Drive Housing - Medium Density Analysis and Concepts (Under separate cover) [⇒](#)
2. Newton Denny Chapelle (NDC) - Design Report - Hutley Drive Housing - Medium Density (Under separate cover) [⇒](#)

4.2 Special Purpose Financial Statements - Business Activities Review

4.2 Special Purpose Financial Statements - Business Activities Review

Section	Financial Services
Objective	To review Council's Declared Business Activities for the Special Purpose Financial Statements.

Background

On an annual basis, Council is required to prepare General Purpose Financial Statements (GPFS) and Special Purpose Financial Statements (SPFS). These Statements are audited by the NSW Audit Office.

The Special Purpose Financial Statements are prepared for use by Council and the Office of Local Government, in fulfilling requirements under National Competition Policy (NCP).

NCP commenced in the early 1990s and one of the principles was that businesses should not be disadvantaged by Government advantages, such as not paying certain taxes. The SPFS are designed to include those benefits to provide a comparison between the council's results and a private sector operator.

In recent years, Council has applied the principle of competitive neutrality to the following declared business activities:

- Water Supply Business Activity
- Wastewater Business Activity
- Airport
- Land Development
- Landfill and Resource Recovery

There is a significant amount of work to complete the SPFS and following a review of the benefit / cost it is recommended that Council no longer identify the Airport, Land Development and Landfill and Resource Recovery activities as "declared business activities".

The Water Supply and Wastewater Business Activities would continue to have SPFS prepared, as they are mandated.

Key Issues

- Compliance with statutory reporting requirements
- Best use of staff resources

Discussion

Overview of Legislative Requirements

The GPFS and the SPFS must be prepared in accordance with the Code of Accounting Practice and relevant legislative requirements and guidance.

4.2 Special Purpose Financial Statements - Business Activities Review

Councils are expected to apply the principles to all activities that meet the criteria of “business activities”.

Specifically, this requires the council to compete in the marketplace on a basis that does not use their public sector position to gain an unfair advantage over a private sector competitor.

Councils are subject to the following State Government guidance documents on competitive neutrality:

- Local Government Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting – Section 3 – Special Purpose Financial Statements, link provided below [Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting Update 2024-25 Section 3 Special Purpose Financial Statements](#)
- Local Government Pricing and Costing for Council Businesses – A Guide to Competitive Neutrality (July 1997), link provided below [Pricing-and-Costing-for-Council-Businesses-A-Guide-to-Competitive-Neutrality.pdf](#)

The above provide guidance as to whether components of a council’s operations should be declared as business activities.

With reference to the Local Government Pricing and Costing for Council Businesses, Council is mandated to classify the following activities as businesses:

- Water supply
- Wastewater services

With respect to other activities, Council has discretion as to whether it treats an activity as a business but must support its decision with respect to the criteria outlined in the Guidelines.

The factors to be considered include:

- Objectives of the activity including whether the activity is intended to make a profit
- Council’s bidding activities, including whether Council bids for external contracts, or for internal contracts
- Competitive environment, including whether users are restricted, or unrestricted, by law or policy from choosing alternative sources of supply
- Economic impact of the activity on the local and regional communities and whether the activity is being provided by Council as a small-scale activity, within a larger function of Council, or in isolation
- Socio-economic environmental factors and the nature of the activity.

4.2 Special Purpose Financial Statements - Business Activities Review

The review of the Ballina Byron Gateway Airport, Land Development and Landfill and Resource Recovery activities is as follows.

Ballina Byron Gateway Airport

The objective of this activity is defined as being the provision of a regional airport facility.

The income from the activity is derived from user charges received for passenger charges, landing fees and security charges along with car parking income and rental fees.

The activity of the airport, after review, is not considered to be a business activity under the principle of competitive neutrality.

The reasons for this include the primary objective of the airport is to provide a service to the region. Also, Council does not bid for external contracts and there are no other comparable private organisations, within the Ballina Shire, that provide a similar service.

Land Development

The main objective of the activity is to develop land for sale.

The income from the activity is mainly derived from land sales, residential and industrial, and rental income from commercial investment properties. The activities within this SPFS include only a subset of the wider property management functions.

The activity of land development, after review, is not considered to be a business activity under the principle of competitive neutrality.

The reasons for this include:

- Most of Council's landholdings have been developed, notwithstanding the Lennox Head residential land, which is planned for development over the coming years.
- Revenue for land development is only generated when a stage is sold, which means that it is not uncommon for the development not to generate revenue in certain years.

Landfill and Resource Recovery

The objective of the activity is to provide a landfill site, along with other waste initiatives. The income from the activity is mainly derived from user charges from internal and external customers.

The activity of Landfill and Resource Recovery, after review, is not considered to be a business activity under the principle of competitive neutrality.

The objective of the operations is to provide a waste disposal facility, within the Ballina Shire, as a service to the community. There are no other comparable private organisations, within the Ballina Shire, that provide a similar service.

4.2 Special Purpose Financial Statements - Business Activities Review

Financial / Risk Considerations

Consultation has taken place with the Audit Partner, HLB Mann Judd, contractor to the Audit Office of NSW and Council's Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee (ARIC).

The Audit Partner confirmed they have no objection to the removal of the business activities from the SPFS, for the year ending 30 June 2026, and would not expect such to have any impact on the Audit Opinion to be issued.

ARIC has endorsed the recommendation proposed in this report in the minutes of the meeting held 16 March 2026.

Individual financial reports are prepared each year, as part of the March and April Finance and Facilities Committee meetings, to review the performance of the Ballina Byron Gateway Airport, Council's Resource Recovery Operations and the forecast cash flow for Council's property development activities.

Options

The options available are:

1. Remove the Airport, Land Development and Landfill and Resource Recovery as "declared" business activities"
2. Not remove them
3. Remove a combination of the activities.

The recommendation is to remove the Airport, Land Development and Landfill and Resource Recovery activities from being "declared business activities", due to the objectives of the activities and the expected resource saving in preparing the SPFS.

This recommendation is supported by Council's ARIC in consultation with the NSW Audit Office.

This will save a reasonable level of staff resources in preparing the Annual Financial Statements, with staff typically under tight deadlines and limited timeframes to prepare those statements.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council resolves that the Airport, Land Development and Landfill and Resource Recovery activities are no longer "declared business activities" in respect to the preparation of Council's Special Purpose Financial Statements.

Attachment(s)

Nil

4.3 Fees and Charges - 2026/27

4.3 Fees and Charges - 2026/27

Section	Financial Services
Objective	To obtain Council approval to exhibit the draft 2026/27 fees and charges for public comment.

Background

An important part of Council's resourcing strategy is the setting of fees and charges for the provision of works and services.

Ordinary rates, waste, water, and wastewater annual charges are the primary income sources for Council, and this report deals with the myriad of other Council fees and charges.

A list of all these fees and charges is compiled annually and advertised for public comment as part of the draft Operational Plan.

A copy of the draft fees and charges document for 2026/27, is included as Attachment 1 to this report.

The Local Government Act and National Competition Policy also require councils to establish pricing categories to allocate against each fee and charge, with the category identifying the level of cost recovery for the fee.

Council's adopted categories, which are standard for most councils, are as follows:

- Business / Commercial – Fee set in accordance with the market, with the fee aiming to generate a return for Council
- Full Cost Recovery – Fees set to recover the full cost of the service
- Partial Cost Recovery – Fees set at a reasonable cost for the user to bear. The balance of the cost of providing the service is funded from general revenue, as a Council subsidy
- Fixed by Legislation – Fees set by legislation

Key Issues

- Opportunities to recover the cost of Council services
- Affordability and reasonableness

Discussion

The fees mentioned in this report include new fees, price changes which may fall outside of an expected cost of living increase and other fees and charges that may be of interest.

Indicators that are relevant for consideration include the Consumer Price Index (CPI), the rate peg announced by IPART, which is underpinned by a Local Government Cost Index (LGCI), and anticipated salaries and wages increases, as per the Local Government Award.

4.3 Fees and Charges - 2026/27

The CPI released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics was 3.8% for the 12 months to 31 December 2025. Notably, due to the impacts of the Middle East conflict on the Australian economy, the CPI may show a further increase in the period ahead.

Council applied to IPART for a Special Rate Variation (SRV) increase of 6% for rates.

In the context of all other fees and charges, it is relevant to consider the rate peg of 3.4% that IPART approved for Council for 2026/27, prior to the SRV.

The rate peg is underpinned by reference to the LGCI, which represents a weighted index of price movements incurred by local government.

The LGCI is generally relevant in the context of council costs for delivery of services. The LGCI does have a longer lag and so can be an unreliable indicator in an economic environment of increasing inflation and uncertainty.

Wages and salaries, underpinned by the Local Government Award, increased by approximately 4% in July 2025. The Award salary increase for 2026/27 has not yet been determined, however is anticipated to have a similar increase for July 2026.

In reviewing the proposed fees and charges for 2026/27, a benchmark of around 4% to 5% has been applied, with this report commenting on increases that fall outside that benchmark.

Corporate and Community Division – Financial Services (Page 2)

Apart from as noted below, fees within the Financial Services Section have generally been increased (with rounding) in the range of 4% to 5%.

Ordinary Rates (page 2)

Indicative rate in dollar and base charges for residential, farmland and business ratepayers are as per the Land Valuations and Rating Structure report to the March 2026 Finance and Facilities Committee meeting, where the rating structure was confirmed. Rates for adoption will be presented to the June 2026 Ordinary meeting.

Interest on Overdue Rates and Charges (page 2)

Council charges interest on overdue rates and charges in accordance with Section 566 of the Local Government Act.

The maximum interest rate is determined by the Minister of Local Government, by notice in the State Government Gazette, on an annual basis.

Council adopted an interest rate of 10% per annum for the 2025/26 year, which was below the maximum allowable of 10.5%, as determined by the Minister.

The maximum interest rate for the 2026/27 year has yet to be announced by the Minister. This will be available prior to the June 2026 Ordinary meeting, to allow Council to adopt an interest rate at that meeting.

Corporate and Community Division – Communications and Destination and Economy (Pages 2 to 3)

These fees remain unchanged.

Corporate and Community Division – Information Management (Page 3)

Most of the non-statutory fees are increased by 3% to 4%.

Corporate and Community Division – Commercial Services (Pages 3 to 4)

Commercial Use of Council Footpaths (pages 3 to 4)

The rentals charged for the commercial use of footpaths in the CBDs of Ballina, Lennox Head and Alstonville were subject to review by an independent valuer during the 2024/25 year. Benchmarking of Council charges to surrounding councils was also undertaken.

A resulting recommendation was made for increases to the 2025/26 charges to reflect an increase in land values and the improvements Council had undertaken on footpaths. Due to the large increases identified by that review, Council resolved at the 24 July 2025 Ordinary meeting as follows:

That Council increase the footpath dining Fees and Charges by 10% for 2025/26 with the intention to increase by 10% annually for the next four years.

The 2026/27 proposed charges for the commercial use of footpaths are increased by 10%, in accordance with that resolution.

Corporate and Community Division – Ballina Byron Gateway Airport (Pages 4 to 7)

Airport General Public Car Park (page 6)

On the most part, the charges per hour are increased by \$1. The Maximum Daily Rate is increased \$5, to \$25. The Maximum Weekly Rate is increased \$35, to \$175.

Ground Transport Access (page 7)

The charge per precinct departure for Taxi/Rideshare/Limousines is increased from \$3 to \$4. The charge per precinct departure for Shuttle Bus/Courtesy/Tour Coach is increased from \$5 to \$6.

Corporate and Community Division - Community Facilities (Pages 8 to 18)

There are no structural changes for the fees charged, with increases in the range of 3.8% to 6%.

Standard Charges for all Community Facilities – Late Payment Fee (page 9)

A new fee, of \$35, is introduced.

4.3 Fees and Charges - 2026/27

Corporate and Community Division – Community Swimming Pools (Pages 18 to 19)

Single visit family and Single visit single parent family passes (page 18)

Family passes were introduced in the 2025/26 year, following a resolution from the 27 February 2025 Ordinary meeting as follows:

That Council review the swimming pool admission pricing and seek options (such as the introduction of single-entry tickets for larger families) for making general entry fee to the Alstonville and Ballina swimming pools more accessible.

A family entry fee of \$23 for two adults and two children with further children charged at a reduced rate of \$5 per child was discussed within the Fees and Charges report to the 8 April 2025 Finance and Facilities Committee meeting.

The comments were based on benchmarking of other regional council pool facilities and were based on competitive charges. Council subsequently resolved at the 24 April 2025 Ordinary meeting as follows.

That Council add to the draft Fees and Charges for 2025/26

- a single visit family pass for access to Ballina Shire pools at a price of \$21 (including 2 adults and 2 children) plus \$4.70 for each additional child.*
- a single visit single parent family pass for access to Ballina Shire pools at a price of \$15 (including 1 adult and 2 children) plus \$4.70 for each additional child.*

There are no changes to the proposed single family or single parent family passes within the draft fees and charges.

However, given the increasing operational and maintenance costs for the pools, it is important to note that it is challenging to keep a hold on any of the entry fees and charges.

Other pool fees (pages 18 to 19)

The spectator and supervisor/parent/guardian fees are proposed to increase by \$0.50, to \$3.50. Other fees (including single entry for Child, Concession and Adults, ten ticket passes, three month passes, and full season passes) have increases in the range of 3% to 4%.

Civil Services Division - Water (Pages 20 to 21)

The draft Water Access and Consumption Charges are as per the outcomes from the report titled “Water Operations – Long Term Financial Plan”, to the Finance and Facilities Committee meeting, held 9 March 2026.

Most other charges have increased in the range of 3.7% to 4%.

Rous County Council has recently advised that Council’s bulk purchase pricing has increased higher than forecast, with this issue discussed later in this report.

4.3 Fees and Charges - 2026/27

Civil Services Division – Wastewater Services *(Pages 21 to 24)*

The draft Wastewater Access and Usage Charges are as per the outcomes from the report titled “Wastewater Operations - Long Term Financial Plan”, to the Finance and Facilities Committee meeting, held 9 March 2026.

Most other charges have increased in the range of 3.7% to 4%.

Civil Services Division – Waste Management *(Pages 24 to 26)*

The draft Waste Charges are as per the outcomes from the report titled “Waste Operations - Long Term Financial Plan”, to the Finance and Facilities Committee meeting, held 9 March 2026.

Civil Services Division – Infrastructure Planning *(Pages 26 to 27)*

Fee increases are generally in the range of 4%.

Civil Services Division – Engineering Works *(Pages 27 to 28)*

Stormwater Management Service Charges (Page 27)

These statutory charges have remained capped at the same rate for 20 years, since their introduction in 2005.

Civil Services Division – Burns Point Ferry *(Page 28 to 29)*

Increases are varied across these fees. Some fees, such as the motor vehicle 3 to 10 tonne, motorcycle weekly and quarterly tickets, and books of 25 tickets have been removed, due to overall low levels of use.

Refer to page 28 for the full list of proposed fees.

The proposed single trip bicycle fee is increased to \$1.50, and motorcycle single trip is increased to \$4.

The proposed single trip motor vehicle under 3 tonne is unchanged at \$8, however increases have been proposed for the weekly, quarterly and annual tickets.

Civil Services Division – Airport Sandpit Site *(Page 29)*

A large portion of Ballina Shire is impacted by acid sulfate soils (ASS), and the management of this material significantly increases the cost of Council construction and stormwater maintenance projects.

To address this, Council will beneficially re-use ASS material to rehabilitate the 12-hectare, water-filled sand quarry void near the airport.

The NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) has amended Council’s Airport Sandpit Environment Protection Licence to permit the use of potential ASS (PASS), treated actual ASS (AASS), and virgin excavated natural material for site rehabilitation works.

4.3 Fees and Charges - 2026/27

To manage the ongoing site operation and material processing costs, new fees, based on a per tonne rate, are proposed.

The proposed fees are based on handling and processing costs, while remaining competitive with other disposal sites.

Variable rates between \$17 to \$40 per tonne are proposed to reflect different material types and liming rates.

The fees shown are for internal (Council) charges for material to be received at the sandpit site.

It is also anticipated to include Commercial rates for the same product lines, which has been proposed as Price-on-Asking (POA) until EPA permission is granted to accept this material.

Planning and Environmental Health Division - Development Services *(Pages 30 to 39)*

Building Information Certificates (pages 30 to 31)

Some of the listed fees are increased in the range of 22% to 33%, based on market analysis and reasonable cost recovery.

Section 138 Roads Act Applications (page 31)

The fee relating to development applications for residential dwellings has increased 18%, from \$242 to \$285 based on benchmarking against other councils.

Section 735A Certificate Refunds (page 31)

A new fee, of \$30, is introduced for partial cost recovery for processing of refunds resulting from duplicate orders by customers.

Essential Fire Services Annual Notification and Registration (page 32)

Fee increase of 14%, from \$105 to \$120, based on benchmarking against other councils.

Manufactured Home and Associated Structure (page 32)

Two new fees are proposed:

Description	2025/26	2026/27
LG Act S.68 Part A 1 Application to Install a Manufactured Home or Associated Structure. Includes site inspection, assessment, issue of Approval to Install and receipt of LG Reg S.159 Notice of Completion of Installation.	N/A	\$1,195
Additional Fee per Associated Structure (e.g. car port, garage, shed, pergola, verandah or other attached or integrated structure).	N/A	\$305

4.3 Fees and Charges - 2026/27

The first fee includes the application and assessment, inspections, issue of approval and completion review. The second fee is applied where additional associated structures are proposed.

Plumbing and Drainage – Section 68 Application (page 32)

Two new fees are proposed:

Description	2025/26	2026/27
Section 68 Plumbing/Drainage Application Fee (Multi dwelling (three or more) / Commercial or Industrial).	N/A	\$565
Additional Plumbing Inspections - Due to non-compliance (in addition to one re-inspection).	N/A	\$305

The first fee is a new fee based on additional assessment time required for these types of developments. The second fee is applied for each re-inspection above an initial re-inspection.

Wastewater Services – Diagram Refund Fee (page 33)

A new fee, of \$30, is introduced for partial cost recovery for processing of refunds resulting from duplicate orders by customers.

Development Enquiries (page 33)

These enquiries have been split into two fees:

Description	2025/26	2026/27
Dwelling Entitlement Enquiry Fee (per vacant lot)	\$250	\$350
Dwelling Entitlement Enquiry Fee (per lot - with dwelling constructed on site)	N/A	\$230

This is to differentiate the type of dwelling entitlement enquiry.

Development Application Written Response (page 33)

Increase of 15%, to \$150, based on benchmarking against other councils.

Subdivision Certificates – Review/Endorsement of s88b instrument (page 35)

Increase of 13%, to \$330, based on benchmarking against other councils.

Development – Modification of a Consent – Local Development Application Fee (page 36)

There are statutory fees within this section that are presented in a different format to the previous year, as they are separated out rather than combined into one fee, with no substantive changes.

4.3 Fees and Charges - 2026/27

Section 10.7 Planning Certificates – Refund Fee (page 39)

A new fee, of \$30, is introduced for partial cost recovery for processing of refunds resulting from duplicate orders by customers.

Planning and Environmental Health Division – Health and Environment (Pages 39 to 43)

Apart from the statutory fees, fee increases are generally in the range of 3.5% to 4%.

Public Swimming Pool Water Quality- Registration and Inspection (page 43)

Increase of 10%, to \$390, based on a review of staff time and laboratory costs, and to align with high-risk commercial premises fees.

Planning and Environmental Health Division – Strategic Planning (Pages 43 to 45)

Planning Proposals and Local Environmental Plan Amendments (Page 43 to 44)

All the fees are proposed to increase by 10%, reflecting an ongoing increase in complexity of proposals and associated staff time. These increases are warranted using State Government fees as a benchmark.

Post Gateway Determination Fees – Stage 3 (Page 44)

All the fees are proposed to increase by 10%, reflecting an ongoing increase in complexity of proposals and associated staff time. These increases are warranted using State Government fees as a benchmark.

Development Control Plan Amendments (Page 44)

These fees are proposed to increase by 10%, reflecting on going increase in complexity of amendments and associated staff time. These increases are warranted using State Government fees as a benchmark.

Planning and Environmental Health Division – Northern Rivers Community Gallery (NRCG) (Pages 45 to 47)

Hire Charges for Gallery Spaces – Exhibitor Fees. Fees Waived (page 45)

A new line has been added, for Exhibitor Fees, which are at no charge, for clarification. Two new fees, in relation to the hire of iPads, are proposed:

Description	2025/26	2026/27
iPad Hire - Daily Rate	N/A	\$6
iPad Hire - Bond Payment (per device).	N/A	\$100

The Gallery has a set of iPads from a previously funded project which can be utilised. All other hire fees for Ignite Studios and Artists in Residence have been left unchanged from 2025/26.

Planning and Environmental Health Division – Open Spaces (Page 47)

Sports Fields (page 47)

Two new fees are proposed for non-commercial use of sports fields:

Description	2025/26	2026/27
Community Use of Sports Field - Within Ballina Shire Non-for-profit Hirers and Schools - Per Field / Per Day	N/A	No Charge
Community Use of Sports field – Outside Ballina Shire Non-for-profit Hirers and Schools - Per Field / Per Day	N/A	\$52

Planning and Environmental Health Division – Cemetery Fees (Pages 47 to 50)

Most fees are increased in the vicinity of 3.8%.

Planning and Environmental Health Division – Events on Public Land (Pages 50 to 51)

Food Inspection (per hour, minimum ½ hour) (page 51)

Increase from \$240 to \$385 per hour, aligned with the Public Health Inspection fee, as per page 41.

Planning and Environmental Health Division – Filming Application (Pages 51 to 52)

Assessment of Traffic Control Plans (page 52)

Statutory fees increase in the range of 14% to 25%. The State Government has recently updated the NSW Local Government Filming Protocol (2025) which outlines an updated structure and fees associated with filming and film related activities. The changes reflect the updated protocol.

Other Matter – Rous County Council Bulk Water Charge

The long-term financial plan (LTFP) presented in the 'Water Operations - Long Term Financial Plan' report to the 9 March 2026 Finance and Facilities Committee meeting was based on an increase of 7% to the cost of water purchased from Rous County Council (Rous). Rous has since advised that the increase to Council will be 10.76%.

The methodology used by Rous to apportion cost, between the constituent councils, is based on the proportion of consumption, for the previous year ending 28 February. This means that the impact on an individual constituent council in any year can be more or less than the Rous increase.

The calculation of the proposed allocation between the constituent councils provided by Rous, for 2026/27, is as follows.

4.3 Fees and Charges - 2026/27

Table 1 - Rous – Bulk Water Sales Schedule

2024/25 Consumption for 2025/26			Area	2025/26 Consumption for 2026/27				
Kilolitres	%	Cost @ 2.6564 Cents / KL		Kilolitres	Trend %	% of Total	Cost @ 2.6051 cents / KL	% Increase
3,015,599	28.38	7,745,900	Lismore	3,054,958	1.31	27.25	7,958,400	2.74
2,613,994	24.60	6,714,300	Byron	2,679,639	2.51	23.90	6,980,700	3.97
568,809	5.35	1,461,000	Richmond	586,172	3.05	5.23	1,527,000	4.52
3,695,634	34.78	9,492,600	Ballina	4,036,026	9.21	36.00	10,514,200	10.76
9,894,036	93.11	25,413,800	Sub Total	10,356,795	4.68	92.38	26,980,300	6.16
731,071	6.89	1,877,900	Rous	852,873	16.66	7.62	2,221,800	18.31
10,625,107	100.00	27,291,700	Total	11,209,668	5.50	100.00	29,202,100	7.00

This table confirms a consumption increase of 9.21% for Ballina Shire, based on the 12-month period ending 28 February 2026, with Ballina Shire's overall percentage of total sales increasing from 34.78% to 36.0%. This results in a total cost to Council of \$10,514,200 for 2026/27, or a 10.76% increase.

This is an increase for 2026/27 of \$356,200 over the draft budgets presented to the 9 March 2026 Finance and Facilities Committee meeting.

The revised LTFP, inclusive of the revised cost of water and keeping the price path as per the 9 March 2026 Finance and Facilities meeting is as follows.

Table 2 - Water Operations – LTFP - Revised (Cash Movements) (\$'000)

Description	25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29	29/30	30/31	31/32	32/33	33/34	34/35	35/36
Operating Revenues	17,814	18,807	19,853	20,796	21,899	23,164	24,467	25,235	26,044	26,916	27,838
Operating Expenses	17,141	18,627	19,547	20,574	21,710	22,861	24,056	24,588	25,160	25,744	26,344
Operating Result	673	180	306	222	189	303	411	647	884	1,172	1,494
Add Back Depreciation	2,250	2,307	2,365	2,425	2,487	2,551	2,617	2,685	2,755	2,828	2,903
Cash Surplus	2,923	2,487	2,671	2,647	2,676	2,854	3,028	3,332	3,639	4,000	4,397
Capital Income	350	375	395	415	435	455	475	495	515	535	555
Capital Expenditure	2,839	2,884	6,227	5,953	3,624	4,985	5,096	5,167	4,088	4,219	4,350
Loan Principal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Net Reserve M'ment	434	(22)	(3,161)	(2,891)	(513)	(1,676)	(1,593)	(1,340)	66	316	602
Total Reserves	19,909	18,987	15,826	12,935	12,422	10,746	9,153	7,813	7,879	8,195	10,127

4.3 Fees and Charges - 2026/27

The revised LTFFP still maintains an operating result and sufficient reserves in the short term.

No changes to the 2026/27 water charges, as per the recommendation to the 9 March 2026 Finance and Facilities meeting (and subsequently resolved for exhibition in the March 2026 Ordinary meeting) are proposed.

The increase to the Council consumption and access charges in the March report was 6%, and the preference is not to increase Council's charges further, in response to the 10.76% Rous increase.

This will place further financial pressure on Council's water operations.

Community Engagement Strategy

This report has been prepared following consultation across Council's entire operations.

Once approved, the draft fees and charges document will be exhibited for public comment as part of the draft 2026/27 Operational Plan.

Financial / Risk Considerations

Discretionary fees and charges are a major source of revenue to Council.

It is important for Council to recover as much of the cost of providing a service as possible, from discretionary fees, as otherwise Council is subsidising the service through general rate revenue, which is restricted.

Options

Council may approve the contents of this report or resolve to add, delete, or amend the proposed 2026/27 fees and charges.

The recommendation is to exhibit the draft fees and charges for public comment.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Council approves the exhibition of the draft Fees and Charges for 2026/27, as per Attachment 1 to this report, as part of the draft 2026/27 Operational Plan.
2. That Council notes the revised long term financial plan for the Water Operations, as per Table 2 of this report, for exhibition in the draft 2026/27 to 2029/30 Delivery Program and 2026/27 Operational Plan.

Attachment(s)

1. Fees and Charges - 2026/27 (Draft) (Under separate cover) ⇨

4.4 Strategic Asset Management Plan - Update - 2026/27

Section Resource Recovery

Objective To present the annual update of Council's Strategic Asset Management Plan.

Background

The NSW Office of Local Government's Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) framework requires councils to have a resourcing strategy. This strategy includes Asset Management Plans (including the Strategic Asset Management Plan – SAMP), Long Term Financial Plan, and Workforce Management Strategy.

This report outlines key elements of the SAMP, first adopted by Council in June 2023, and provides an overview of the updates included in the 2026 review.

A list of the key improvements implemented has also been included to illustrate the maturation of Council's asset management function.

The updated SAMP is included as Attachment 1 to this report.

Key Issues

- Asset management principles
- Financial sustainability
- Service delivery

Discussion

The SAMP considers the objectives of Council's Community Strategic Plan. It develops the asset management objectives, framework and strategies associated with delivering the broad range of services identified through the annual Operational Plan.

In doing this, the SAMP contains the following key elements:

- Service overview – an overview of the services provided for the community
- Asset statistics – an overview of asset classes, value and condition
- Strategic Issues and Options – these include climate change, global pandemics, natural disasters and other global risks. We must also consider our community's wants, risks, and technical levels of service
- Asset management objectives – developed to ensure that our assets are managed efficiently and sustainably and that asset costs are optimised over their lifecycle
- Asset management planning (Action Plan) – overseen by the Strategic Asset Management Group and formulated to address risks, increase maturity and meet our asset management objectives

- Financial summary – Ensuring Council’s budget is sufficient to meet our expected asset performance.

The SAMP is reviewed annually to ensure that the information is contemporary and continues to align with the Council’s IP&R framework.

The 2026 SAMP includes the following updates:

- Increase in asset current value to \$2.3 billion
- Updated population demographics
- Added an Item in Economic Climate to reflect international events
- Updated asset replacement costs that incorporate asset revaluations conducted throughout the year and indexation
- The Action Plan has been reviewed
- Update of an estimated schedule for the review of asset management plans, for each asset class
- Added a paragraph on a current project to replace the existing asset management system
- Reviewed asset data confidence of each asset class
- Updated the Asset Renewal Funding Ratio section to reflect the impact of risk factors on our ability to fund and maintain assets

Key improvements to Council’s Asset Management Function

An internal review conducted in 2022/23 identified gaps in delivering an effective asset management framework.

The review identified the need for additional resources to bridge these gaps, ensuring we could effectively meet our SAMP objectives and the organisation’s current and future asset management demands.

Since this review, the following actions have been implemented:

- The formation of an internal Strategic Asset Management Group with key internal stakeholders from across Council

This group provides oversight into implementing the SAMP and associated Action Plan

- The formation of a dedicated asset management team tasked with maturing asset management and the asset management system
- The asset management signoff process included in the project implementation review process has been significantly improved. This aims to increase efficiency by ensuring all information has been received for asset creation, mapping, and costing

- Reducing time and expenditure on asset capitalisation through data management efficiencies. This process is ongoing; however, the initial pilot and testing processes are producing good results
- Ongoing review of internal asset management processes
- Review and streamline the asset management system's asset hierarchy to facilitate the implementation of works management and strategic asset lifecycle modelling
- Development and implementation of asset management process reporting, which assists in resource allocation and quantification to identify opportunities for efficiencies
- Purchased online revaluation software to allow Council to conduct its revaluations internally, saving significant expenditure on external consultancy fees
- Stormwater and Transport Asset Management Plans completed
- Initiated project to replace the existing Asset Management System.

Community Engagement Strategy

The updated Strategic Asset Management Plan will be exhibited for public comment, as part of the draft 2026/27 to 2029/30 Delivery Program and 2026/27 Operational Plan.

Financial / Risk Considerations

The SAMP is an integral component of our planning framework and sits within the resourcing strategy of the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework.

Options

The options are to approve or amend the document, based on differing priorities. It is recommended that Council approve exhibition.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council approves the exhibition of the draft Strategic Asset Management Plan, as per Attachment 1 to this report, as part of the exhibition of the draft 2026/27 to 2029/30 Delivery Program and 2026/27 Operational Plan.

Attachment(s)

1. 2026/27 - Strategic Asset Management Plan - 2026 to 2029 (Draft) (Under separate cover) [⇒](#)

4.5 Ballina - Byron Gateway Airport - Long Term Financial Plan

4.5 Ballina - Byron Gateway Airport - Long Term Financial Plan

Section Commercial Services

Objective To complete a review of the long term financial plan for the Ballina - Byron Gateway Airport for inclusion in the draft 2026/27 to 2029/30 Delivery Program and 2026/27 Operational Plan.

Background

The Ballina - Byron Gateway Airport (BBGA) is a major business undertaking for Council and this report provides an overview of the latest update of the Long-Term Financial Plan (LTFP) for inclusion in the draft 2026/27 to 2029/30 Delivery Program and 2026/27 Operational Plan.

Key Issues

- Financial performance and sustainability

Discussion

Operating Result (Attachment 1)

Table 1 provides actual results for the last two financial years and estimates for the current financial year and for the four-year life of the Delivery Program.

Table 1 - BBGA – Actual and Estimated Operating Results (\$'000)

Item	Actual 2023/24	Actual 2024/25	Estimate 2025/26	Estimate 2026/27	Estimate 2027/28	Estimate 2028/29	Estimate 2029/30
Operating Revs	9,387	10,319	10,512	11,167	11,801	12,946	14,134
Operating Exps	8,550	9,172	9,032	9,225	9,507	10,028	10,387
Operating Result	837	1,147	1,480	1,942	2,294	2,918	3,747
Add Back Deprec	1,689	1,678	1,600	1,700	1,704	1,758	1,814
Cash Result	2,526	2,825	3,080	3,642	3,998	4,676	5,561
Passenger#	621,000	612,000	585,000	599,000	615,000	630,000	645,000

The more detailed review of the ten-year forecast for Operating Revenues and Expenses, and the Operating Result, for the BBGA, for inclusion in Council's LTFP, is included as pages 1 and 2 of Attachment 1 to this report.

The information in that Attachment includes:

- Actual results from 2002/03 to 2024/25 to highlight long term trends in revenues and expenses (with some previous year's hidden to ensure that the Attachment can fit on one page).
- Estimates for 2025/26 to 2035/36, along with the actual results to 31 March 2026 for 2025/26 (75% of the current financial year), to highlight trends for this financial year.

4.5 Ballina - Byron Gateway Airport - Long Term Financial Plan

Points of note in Table 1 and Attachment 1 are as follows.

- Passenger Charges income is based on a 13% increase for 2026/27, with a new agreement in place for Jetstar and Virgin negotiations almost finalised.
- Passenger numbers are based on marginal increases in future years, as numbers have plateaued at around the 600,000 mark.

Passenger numbers can vary substantially, when a major jet carrier adds a daily flight (can potentially add 50,000 to the annual numbers). The preference is to forecast conservatively, as the BBGA has no control over a jet carrier adding flights.

- Car Parking income is forecast to remain relatively static for 2026/27 and 2027/28, and then grow substantially in 2028/29, when the expanded car park is operational.
- Airport Shuttle Bus Rent income has decreased in 2026/27 as one operator has ceased operating.
- Operating expenses are forecast to increase by 2% for 2026/27, as compared to 2025/26.

The Salaries and Oncosts line item does have an increase of 16%, however this is due to a change in cost allocation, for 2026/27, with all staff charged to this line item rather than to operational areas, such as cleaning and paid car parking. This direct allocation will assist with budget management for staff time.

The budgets for Consumables and Cleaning, and Paid Car Parking have reduced to offset the increase in Salaries and Oncosts.

- The forecast operating result for 2026/27 is for a \$1.942m surplus, inclusive of depreciation, which represents a 31% increase on the forecast result for 2025/26.

The increase in Passenger Charges income is the major reason for this jump in the operating surplus.

The forecast cash operating surplus (i.e. depreciation and loss on disposal eliminated) for 2026/27 is \$3.642m, with the surplus funds reinvested back into the business for loan principal repayments and capital works.

- Earnings before interest, tax, depreciation, and amortisation (EBITDA) for 2026/27 is \$4.359m, which represents a 14% increase from the 2025/26 estimate.

EBITDA is important, as this figure is often used to determine a business's financial health and ability to generate cash.

In summary the overall operating result remains financially sound, although it needs to be, as all the surplus funds generated finance the high level of capital expenditure required for the BBGA, along with associated loan repayments, as

4.5 Ballina - Byron Gateway Airport - Long Term Financial Plan

per the Capital Movements section of this report, which is included as Attachment 2.

Capital Movements (Attachment 2)

Attachment 2 provides capital movements, which include capital expenditure, capital funding sources, the Airport Reserve Balance, and loan repayments, along with the loan principal outstanding.

In respect to capital expenditure, the major projects planned for the next four years are:

- Car Park Expansion and Equipment Upgrade - This project remains a high priority to generate additional revenue for the BBGA. Close to \$8m is allocated between 2025/26 to 2027/28 to complete this work.
- Drainage Master Plan and Works - \$250,000 is allocated in 2026/27 and 2027/28 to undertake these works, with major rain events continuing to impact the performance of the BBGA runway.

From 2028/29 onwards, major projects are included to improve the taxiways, apron overlays, along with planning for the terminal expansion.

Ideally the terminal expansion would be brought forward, however there is insufficient funding in the Airport Reserve to allow that work to progress.

The LTFP has the terminal expansion funded 50% from capital grants and 50% from the Airport Reserve, in 2029/30 and 2030/31, as without grants the works cannot be funded.

A high priority is to continue to try and seek grant funding for the terminal expansion, which is why preliminary funding is included for 2026/27 onwards, to allow plans and approvals to be finalised, which will then increase Council's ability to secure grant funds.

There are numerous capital works that should be brought forward, such as the terminal expansion, the taxiway upgrades, bay 1, 3 and 4 upgrades, bay 5 construction, etc, however unless grant funds are secured, there is insufficient funding available to advance those works.

The final two tables in Attachment 2 are the Airport Reserve Balance movements and the movement in loan repayments and loan debt.

The Airport Reserve closing balance figures highlight that there is little in the way of revenue available to finance additional capital expenditure, which is why grant funding is needed to bring projects forward.

Financial / Risk Considerations

The BBGA carries a reasonable level of financial risk, particularly when there are large loan repayments and the major proportion of the operating income is generated by only two jet airlines.

Asset renewal and expansion is also a major financial risk, as Council needs to ensure that critical infrastructure remains in a good operating condition.

4.5 Ballina - Byron Gateway Airport - Long Term Financial Plan

Options

The primary purpose of this report is to provide an update on the BBGA LTFP and to outline the preferred capital expenditure program.

The BBGA remains an important economic driver for the region and a profitable business for Council, albeit that all profits are reinvested back into the BBGA, as Council continues to upgrade the infrastructure following a period of rapid growth.

The recommendation is to approve the inclusion of the latest review of the LTFP for the BBGA, as per Attachments 1 and 2 to this report, in the draft 2026/27 to 2029/30 Delivery Program and 2026/27 Operational Plan, which also includes Council's ten-year LTFP.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council approves the inclusion of the draft Long-Term Financial Plan for the Ballina Byron Gateway Airport, as per Attachments 1 and 2 to this report, for inclusion in the draft 2026/27 to 2029/30 Delivery Program and 2026/27 Operational Plan.

Attachment(s)

1. Ballina - Byron Gateway Airport - Operating Results - 2026/27 to 2035/36
[⇒](#)
2. Ballina - Byron Gateway Airport - Capital Movements - 2026/27 to 2035/36
[⇒](#)

4.6 Community Infrastructure - Recurrent Capital Projects

4.6 Community Infrastructure - Recurrent Capital Projects

Section	Financial Services
Objective	To confirm the preferred works program for the recurrent revenue funded community infrastructure projects for inclusion in the draft 2026/27 to 2029/30 Delivery Program and 2026/27 Operational Plan.

Background

The capital expenditure in Council's ten-year, long term financial plan (LTFP), can be classified into two groups being recurrent and non-recurrent funded projects.

Recurrent refers to items in the LTFP where an allocation of general revenue funding is provided, every year, to assist Council renew and deliver core community infrastructure.

Non-recurrent refers to items in the LTFP, where capital expenditure funding is not required every year, however there are times when major injections of funding are needed (e.g., swimming pool redevelopments, major community facility refurbishments, town centre renewals etc).

This report deals with the recurrent funded items within the General Fund.

The recurrent funding allocated in the draft General Fund LTFP, for 2026/27 onwards, is as follows:

1. Open Spaces – \$858,000 pa
2. Sports Fields – \$357,000 pa
3. Public Amenities – \$160,000 pa
4. Community Buildings – \$604,000 pa plus approximately \$293,000 for Depot and Administration Centre improvements
5. Stormwater / Drainage – \$1m pa
6. Street Lighting and Car Parks – \$150,000 pa
7. Footpaths / Shared Paths – \$578,000 pa
8. Roads – Recurrent revenue funding of approximately \$7.2m including recurrent grants, with this amount subject to change, dependent on other income sources such as loans, grants, and Section 7.11 contributions for road works

For each of these items a four year works plan is included in the draft 2026/27 to 2029/30 Delivery Program to outline the projects planned for the term of the document.

The four-year programs are based on asset condition assessments, and the priorities focus on the areas of highest need (i.e. assets in poorer condition or due for renewal to avoid failure).

The funding identified assumes Council's application for a special rate variation (SRV) is approved.

4.6 Community Infrastructure - Recurrent Capital Projects

The funding for certain categories of infrastructure increases by more than CPI over the four-year life of the draft 2026/27 to 2029/30 Delivery Program, based on the SRV, with the additional SRV funding for capital works distributed as per the following table.

Table 1 - Additional Capital Expenditure Funding from SRV

Infrastructure Class	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30
Open Spaces	50,000	200,000	300,000	310,000
Sports Fields	100,000	200,000	300,000	500,000
Community Buildings	80,000	160,000	300,000	750,000
Stormwater	100,000	200,000	375,000	550,000
Footpaths and Shared Paths	0	50,000	150,000	210,000
Roads	150,000	300,000	475,000	550,000
Total	480,000	1,110,000	1,900,000	2,870,000

If the SRV is not approved, the recurrent funding for each of the infrastructure classes listed will need to be reduced by the amounts in Table 1.

For the purposes of this report, the works program assumes the SRV is approved, with an appendix in the draft 2026/27 to 2029/30 Delivery Program, listing the reduced works program, with no SRV funding.

A report on the draft 2026/27 to 2029/30 Delivery Program and 2026/27 Operational Plan is included later in this agenda.

The Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) does not advise councils of the outcomes of SRV applications until mid-May, which means the LTFP and works program, with and without the SRV funding, must be exhibited for public comment.

If the SRV is not approved, it may be necessary to provide a further detailed report on the four-year capital works program, to the 25 June 2026 Ordinary meeting, to ensure Council is satisfied with the reduced program.

This report takes a positive approach and assumes the SRV is approved, with Council able to rearrange the works program to reflect community priorities.

Key Issues

- Level of recurrent funding
- Asset condition and management
- Community priorities

Discussion

From a financial perspective it is paramount that a council minimises its operating expenses, whilst maximising revenues, to ensure the highest level of funding is available for capital expenditure, especially asset renewal.

Without adequate asset renewal and maintenance funding, infrastructure deteriorates, resulting in reduced service levels, increased maintenance costs, increased risk due to asset failures and lower levels of community satisfaction.

4.6 Community Infrastructure - Recurrent Capital Projects

It is also important that a council focuses, as the first priority for capital expenditure, on asset renewal, rather than expanding the asset base, as councils need to have adequate funds to maintain existing assets, before building new facilities.

One of the major financial issues facing Council is the on-going maintenance and renewal of new infrastructure, delivered during the last ten years, through Council projects, substantial grant programs, and assets transferred from new subdivisions.

In respect to the recurrent funding allocated in the draft 2026/27 to 2029/30 Delivery Program, the proposed works for the next four years are as follows.

Open Spaces - Manager – Cheyne Willebrands

The Open Spaces Program includes open spaces (playgrounds) and sports fields.

For open spaces, Council has an adopted Playground Upgrade and Management Plan that guides this program of works, with the plan available at the following link.

[Playground Upgrade and Management Plan 2022](#)

The recommended program of works, and allocated funding, is as follows.

<i>Item</i>	<i>2026/27</i>	<i>2027/28</i>	<i>2028/29</i>	<i>2029/30</i>
Open Spaces	2,363,000	2,174,000	1,118,000	2,131,000
Crown Reserve Improvements	56,000	58,000	60,000	62,000
Park Shelters and PUMP Actions	28,000			80,000
Lilli Pilli Park, Lennox Head	164,000			
Faulks Reserve, Ballina	280,000			
Lions Park, Lennox Head	90,000			
Ferngrove Park, Ballina	110,000			
Apex Park, Alstonville	130,000			
Missingham Park, Ballina		955,000	1,058,000	
Coastal Grove, Lennox Head				180,000
Skate Park, Alstonville (Site to be Determined)				529,000
Spoonbill Reserve, Skennars Head				280,000
Sub Total – Recurrent Revenue Funded	858,000	1,013,000	1,118,000	1,131,000
Alstonville Creek Restoration (1))	430,000	86,000		
Cawarra Park Boating Infrastructure (2)	1,075,000	1,075,000		
Section 7.11 Works Program (3)				1,000,000
Total	2,363,000	2,174,000	1,118,000	2,131,000

- (1) Alstonville Creek Restoration – Fully funded by a State Government grant.
- (2) Cawarra Park Boating Infrastructure – 50% grant funded, with the balance sourced through a dividend from Council's Property Reserves.
- (3) Section 7.11 Works Program – Allowance for works identified in the Section 7.11 Open Spaces and Community Facilities Developer Contributions Plan. Works subject to level of contributions collected.

From an asset management perspective, the annual depreciation expense for open spaces, which includes playground equipment and related infrastructure, is approximately \$1.5m. With recurrent funding reaching approximately \$1.1m by 2029/30, excluding Section 7.11 contributions, the level of funding is still below the preferred level to match depreciation, even with the SRV increase.

4.6 Community Infrastructure - Recurrent Capital Projects

The recommended program of work for sports fields is as follows.

<i>Item</i>	<i>2026/27</i>	<i>2027/28</i>	<i>2028/29</i>	<i>2029/30</i>
Sports Fields	357,000	434,000	542,000	750,000
Williams Reserve – Surface and Fencing	127,000			
Skennars Head – Surface and Vegetation	80,000			
Top Dressing (Various)	60,000			
Hutley Drive – Surface and Fencing	50,000			
Fripp Oval – Safety Works	10,000			
Saunders Oval – Cricket Pitch	30,000			
Kingsford Smith, Ballina – Upgrades		434,000		
Geoff Watt Over, Alstonville – Improvements			292,000	
Gap Road, Alstonville - Improvements			250,000	
Saunders Oval, Ballina – Clubhouse				542,000
Wollongbar Sports Fields – Lighting				208,000

The annual depreciation expense for sport fields is around \$900,000, with the recurrent budget not far below that figure by 2029/30.

Facilities Management - Manager – Kerry Condon

<i>Item</i>	<i>2026/27</i>	<i>2027/28</i>	<i>2028/29</i>	<i>2029/30</i>
Community Facilities and Halls	15,794,000	753,000	912,000	1,382,000
Alstonville Cultural Centre – Improvements				100,000
Alstonville Pre-School – Paint	30,000			
Alstonville Pre-School – Drainage			80,000	67,000
Ballina Surf Club – General Upgrades	180,000			
Ballina Surf Club – Internal Paint			50,000	
Ballina Surf Club – Refurbishments				82,000
BISC – Refurbishments	50,000			66,000
BISC – Security Fencing			50,000	
Community Gallery – Paint			40,000	67,000
Crawford House – Roof and Paint	100,000			82,000
Depot – Additional Works			550,000	
Kentwell Centre – Boundary Fence / Gates		39,000		
Kentwell Centre – Air Conditioning		212,000		
Kentwell Centre – Refurbishments	80,000			100,000
Lennox Head CC – Ceiling Meeting Rooms		50,000		
Lennox Head CC – Operable Wall			50,000	
Lennox Head CC – Children’s Play Area – Softfall			50,000	
Lennox Head CC – Building Refurbishments				66,000
Library / Richmond / VIC – Refurbishments				120,000
Library / Richmond VIC – Solar	33,000			
Marine Rescue Tower – Roof Hatch	20,000			
Marine Rescue Tower – Window Repairs		150,000		82,000
Naval Museum – Paint and Refurbishments	61,000			66,000
Pimlico Hall – Paint		20,000		100,000
River Street Pre-School – Paint		32,000	42,000	100,000
Wardell Hall – Paint		100,000		120,000
Wollongbar Hall – Paint and Refurbishments		150,000		82,000
Wollongbar Pre-School – Paint	50,000			82,000
Sub Total – Recurrent Revenue Funded	604,000	753,000	912,000	1,382,000
Other Works				
Alstonville Cultural Centre - Redevelop	15,190,000			
Total	15,794,000	753,000	912,000	1,382,000

The Alstonville Cultural Centre is funded through a combination of grants, Section 7.11 contributions, reserves and loans.

4.6 Community Infrastructure - Recurrent Capital Projects

<i>Item</i>	<i>2026/27</i>	<i>2027/28</i>	<i>2028/29</i>	<i>2029/30</i>
Administration Centre and Depot	896,000	732,000	756,000	781,000
Depot – Compound - Store and Small Plant	187,000			
Depot – Engineering Works – Shed	597,000			
Depot – Pavements	112,000	232,000	356,000	
Depot – Existing Amenities		500,000		
Depot – Security and Fencing			400,000	
Depot – Additional Works				781,000

In addition to the works listed, \$550,000 is included in the Community Facilities and Halls program in 2028/29, for essential improvements at the Council Depot.

The annual depreciation expense for the various categories of community buildings (i.e. Cultural Centres, Administration Centre, Visitor Centre, Indoor Sports Centre, Public Halls, Depot etc.) is approximately \$2.5m (\$1.1m Administration Centre and Depot, \$1.1m for Community Facilities, \$220,000 for Libraries etc.), and with around \$2m allocated in recurrent funding by 2029/30, there is still a funding shortfall, even after the SRV.

<i>Item</i>	<i>2026/27</i>	<i>2027/28</i>	<i>2028/29</i>	<i>2029/30</i>
Public Amenities	320,000	160,000	160,000	160,000
Compton Drive, Ballina (changing places)	160,000			
Lumley Park, Alstonville	160,000			
Bicentennial Park, Ballina		160,000		
Faulks Reserve, Ballina			160,000	
Hill Park, Wollongbar and Riverview Park, Ballina				160,000

The Compton Drive refurbishment was deferred from 2025/26. Council resolved at the 27 February 2025 Ordinary meeting to confirm a preferred location for another changing places facility, with Compton Drive chosen due to its proximity to accessible car parking, and to accessible waterways including Shaws Bay and the new Lighthouse Beach Disability Access.

The annual depreciation expense for public amenities is \$180,000 and with \$160,000 allocated, Council is close to matching the depreciation expense.

Stormwater – Manager – Paul Crozier

<i>Item</i>	<i>2026/27</i>	<i>2027/28</i>	<i>2028/29</i>	<i>2029/30</i>
Stormwater	1,015,000	1,145,000	1,351,000	1,578,000
Urban Lanes	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
Asset Data Collection	25,000	25,000	25,000	50,000
Tide Gates to Urban Streets	55,000	55,000	155,000	103,000
Grant Street, Ballina	150,000			
Oakland Avenue, Ballina	255,000			
Norton Street, Ballina	205,000			
Daydream Avenue, Ballina		153,000		
Wardell		200,000	300,000	
Ballina Lanes		240,000		
Lennox Head Lanes			255,000	
Relining Package	145,000	342,000	170,000	750,000
Prospect Street, Ballina	50,000			
Overland Flood Studies			316,000	525,000
Open Channel Renewal	80,000	80,000	80,000	100,000

4.6 Community Infrastructure - Recurrent Capital Projects

The annual depreciation expense for stormwater is \$2.15m which means there is a shortfall of approximately \$0.6m in recurrent funding by 2029/30.

Ancillary Transport – Manager – Paul Crozier

<i>Item</i>	<i>2026/27</i>	<i>2027/28</i>	<i>2028/29</i>	<i>2029/30</i>
Street Lighting	50,000	52,000	54,000	56,000
Amber Drive, Lennox Head (part)	20,000			
Cherry Street, Ballina	15,000			
Perry Street, Alstonville	5,000			
Burnet Street and Day Lane, Ballina	10,000			
Piper Drive, Ballina		11,000		
De-Havilland Crescent, Ballina		25,000		
Sheather Street, Ballina		8,000		
Simmons Street, Ballina		8,000		
College Avenue, Skennars Head			8,000	
Bayview Drive Underpass, Ballina			4,000	
Burnet Street, Ballina			8,000	
Moon Street, Ballina			4,000	
North Creek Road, Lennox Head			21,000	
Lismore Road, Alstonville			9,000	
River Drive, Empire Vale				56,000

This program is based on adding street lighting where there are known gaps in the urban areas based on community feedback.

<i>Item</i>	<i>2026/27</i>	<i>2027/28</i>	<i>2028/29</i>	<i>2029/30</i>
Car Park Improvements	107,000	110,000	114,000	118,000
Shelly Beach Road (nth of SLSC) - Lighting	27,000			
Pop Denison Park - Lighting	27,000			
Pacific Parade at Ross Street - Lighting	25,000			
Rutherford Street - Line Marking	4,000			
Alston Avenue (Pool) - Line Marking	4,000			
Alstonville Cultural Centre - Line Marking	3,000			
Pop Denison Park - Line Marking	5,000			
Beach Road (Suvla St) Car Park - Line Marking	4,000			
Shelly Beach Road (Suvla St) - Line Marking	4,000			
Shelly Beach Road Car Park - Line Marking	4,000			
Quays Reserve - Lighting		26,000		
Emigrant Creek Boat Ramp - Lighting		15,000		
Ferngrove Estate - Lighting		22,000		
Faulks Reserve - Lighting		22,000		
Ross Street at Pacific Terrace - Line Marking		5,000		
Megan Crescent - Line Marking		5,000		
Mackney Lane at LHCC - Line Marking		5,000		
Faulks Reserve - Line Marking		5,000		
Quays Reserve - Line Marking		5,000		
Eyles Drive at Antrim Street - Line Marking			5,000	
Wardell Boat Ramp - Lighting			22,000	
Megan Crescent - Lighting			23,000	
Tamar Street (10 Moon Street) - Lighting			64,000	
Sharpes Beach Car Park - Line Marking				5,000
Flat Rock Carpark-Linemarking				5,000
Patches Beach Car Park - Line Marking				5,000
Boulders Beach Car Park - Line Marking				5,000
Lake Ainsworth Car Park - Line Marking				5,000
Tamar Street (10 Moon Street) – Resurfacing				48,000
Pacific Parade Near Ross Street - Resurfacing and Line Marking				45,000

This is a relatively new recurrent program, with the works mainly focusing on lighting and line marking for the four-year period.

4.6 Community Infrastructure - Recurrent Capital Projects

The depreciation expense for ancillary transport is \$300,000, which includes car parks and boat ramps. This means the approximately \$100,000 recurrent budget will need to be increased further to match the depreciation expense.

An expanded car park upgrade program is examined as part of the next report in this agenda.

Item	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30
Footpaths and Shared Paths	578,000	647,000	766,000	846,000
Mellis Circuit, Alstonville	163,000			
Moon Street, Ballina	15,000			
Shelly Beach Road, Ballina	10,000			
Castle Drive, Lennox Head	20,000			
Bonview Street, Ballina	130,000			
Tanamera Drive, Alstonville		200,000	90,000	
Main Street, Alstonville (Bike Plan)	90,000			
Eyes Drive, Ballina		5,000		
Deegan Drive and Parklands Drive, Alstonville		90,000		
Northumberland Drive, Ballina			200,000	
South Street, Alstonville (Bike Plan)		112,000		
Canal Road, Ballina			160,000	
Whipps Avenue, Alstonville		90,000		
Jarrett Street, Ballina			108,000	
Coral Street, Alstonville		20,000		
Brunswick Street, Ballina			50,000	
Henderson Lane / Meadows Drive, Lennox Head				205,000
Lindsay Crescent and Pine Street, Wardell				230,000
Greenfield Road, Lennox Head		21,000		
Queens Park Court, Wollongbar			111,000	
Ballina RSL - Boardwalk	100,000	59,000		
Existing Path Network - Renewal	50,000	50,000	47,000	
River Drive, Wardell				70,000
Ballina Road, Alstonville				70,000
Smith Lane, Wollongbar				80,000
Gap Road, Alstonville				191,000

The priorities for the balance of the works program are sourced from asset condition reports, along with works identified in Council's adopted Bike Plan and Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan (PAMP).

The Bike Plan and PAMP are available on Council's website as per the following links:

PAMP:

[Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan | Ballina Shire Council \(nsw.gov.au\)](https://www.ballina.nsw.gov.au/pedestrian-access-and-mobility-plan)

Bike Plan:

[Bike Plan | Ballina Shire Council \(nsw.gov.au\)](https://www.ballina.nsw.gov.au/bike-plan)

During 2026/27 Council will prepare an Integrated Transport Network plan.

The Integrated Transport Network Plan will establish a strategic, long-term framework for the coordinated planning and delivery of the road and active transport networks.

The annual depreciation expense for footpaths and shared paths is \$1.1m, with this expense having increased significantly in recent years.

4.6 Community Infrastructure - Recurrent Capital Projects

The recurrent funding is not too far short of this figure, however, components of the recurrent funding are often allocated to new paths, especially shared paths, as per the Bike Plan, which means that renewals, based on the annual depreciation expense, are often underfunded.

Roads and Bridges – Manager - Paul Crozier

<i>Item</i>	<i>2026/27</i>	<i>2027/28</i>	<i>2028/29</i>	<i>2029/30</i>
Roads and Bridges Funding:	87,243,000	11,769,000	12,091,000	10,574,000
Council Revenue	7,212,000	7,479,000	7,801,000	8,231,000
Grants				
Federal Govt - Roads to Recovery Grant	1,673,000	1,760,000	1,760,000	1,813,000
State / Federal - Northern Rivers Recovery	24,917,000			
State / Federal – Ross Lane Betterment	3,200,000			
State / Federal – Essential Public Assets	14,666,000			
State / Federal – Business Activation	780,000			
Other Funding				
Developer Contributions	14,283,000	2,200,000	2,200,000	200,000
Loan Funds	18,000,000			
Internal Reserves	2,512,000	330,000	330,000	330,000
Total	87,243,000	11,769,000	12,091,000	10,574,000

The roads program can be grouped into the following categories.

<i>Roads and Bridges</i>	<i>2026/27</i>	<i>2027/28</i>	<i>2028/29</i>	<i>2029/30</i>
Urban Roads Reconstruction				
Preliminary Designs	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000
Moon Street, Ballina Segment 20	650,000			
Skennars Head Road Segment 80	467,000			
Skennars Head Road Segment 70	272,000			
Cawarra Street, Ballina Segment 20	220,000			
Owen Street, Ballina Segments 20-100	50,000			
Bagot Street, Ballina Segment 30	50,000			
Tamar Street, Ballina	50,000			
Cherry Street, Ballina Segment 180	300,000			
Cherry Street, Ballina Segment 30	615,000			
North Creek Road, Ballina Segment 80	448,000	234,000		
South Street, Alstonville Segment 30	236,000			
Barlow's Road, Ballina Segment 20	320,000			
Byron Street, Lennox Head Segments 40 -50		340,000		
Grant Street, Ballina Segment 40		487,000		
Main Street, Alstonville Segment 5		267,000		
Latta Avenue, Ballina Segment 10		163,000		
Temple Street, Ballina Segment 30		332,000		
Temple Street, Ballina Segment 40		130,000		
Kalinga Street, Ballina Segment 60		348,000	130,000	
Treelands Crescent, Ballina Segment 10			686,000	
Wejuba Gardens, Ballina Segment 10			230,000	
Hamilton Street, Ballina Segment 10			200,000	400,000
Cedar Street, Wardell Segment 10			430,000	
Rifle Range Road, Wollongbar (Kerb and Gutter and Widening)			100,000	
Tweed Street, Ballina Segment 30			390,000	
Camburt Street, Ballina Segment 10			283,000	
Stewart Street, Lennox Head Segments 20-30-40			256,000	
North Creek Road, Lennox Head Segment 180				332,000
Grant Street, Ballina Segment 90				238,000
Johnson Drive, Ballina				340,000
Greenhalgh Street, Ballina				435,000
River Street, Ballina Segments 80 - 90				305,000
Aspley Street, Ballina Segment 20				382,000
Camoola Avenue, Ballina Segment 10				260,000
Ambrose Lane, Alstonville Segment 10				74,000

4.6 Community Infrastructure - Recurrent Capital Projects

<i>Roads and Bridges (continued)</i>	<i>2026/27</i>	<i>2027/28</i>	<i>2028/29</i>	<i>2029/30</i>
Urban Roads Reconstruction (continued)				
Rayners Lane, Lennox Head				704,000
Panorama Drive, Alstonville Segment 10				483,000
Fig Tree Hill, Lennox Head 10				198,000
Catherine Crescent, Ballina Segment 10				170,000
Kalinga Street, Ballina Segment 10				89,000
Rural Roads Reconstruction				
Marom Creek Road Segment 140				293,000
Bagotville Road Segment 30	402,000			
Dalwood Road, Segment 80	420,000			
Fernleigh Road, Segment 90	606,000			
Houghlahans Road, Segment 140	402,000		463,000	
Fernleigh Road, Segment 50	630,000			
Teven Road, Segments 50 -52-54	200,000	418,000		
Riverbank Road, Segment 10	275,000			
The Coast Road Segment 203		320,000		
Friday Hut Road, Segment 60		280,000		
River Drive, Segment 180		400,000		
Hermans Lane, Segment 10		485,000		
Fernleigh Road, Segment 80		210,000	500,000	461,000
Pearces Creek Road, Segment 50		312,000		
Marom Creek Road, Segment 120		139,000		
Marom Creek Road, Segment 130		90,000		
Pimlico Road, Segment 120		575,000		
Pimlico Road Segment 100			538,000	
Pearces Creek Hall Road, Segment 10			263,000	
Sneaths Road, Segment 90			341,000	
Uralba Road, Segments 10-20			160,000	
Uralba Road, Segment 70			112,000	
Uralba Road, Segment 80				291,000
Teven Road, Segment 37				239,000
River Drive, Segment 120				350,000
Friday Hut Road, Segment 150				423,000
Watson Lane, Newrybar				307,000
River Drive, Segment 30				307,000
Dust Seal Program				
Buckombil Mountain Road	120,000			
Old Bagotville Road		120,000	132,000	
Beautification				
Cherry / Moon / Grant Streets - Pavers / Kerb etc		830,000	1,551,000	
Road Furniture Renewal	150,000			
Bridges	103,000	106,000	109,000	113,000
Reseals and Patching				
Urban Roads - Bitumen Reseals	588,000	609,000	630,000	650,000
Urban Roads - Heavy Patching	713,000	738,000	764,000	789,000
Rural Roads - Bitumen Reseals	575,000	595,000	616,000	636,000
Rural Roads - Heavy Patching	445,000	461,000	477,000	493,000
Sub Total	2,321,000	2,403,000	2,487,000	2,568,000
Bypass Reserves				
Bypass Funds - Alstonville	100,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
Bypass Funds - Ballina	180,000	180,000	180,000	180,000
Bypass Funds - Tintenbar to Ewingsdale	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000
Sub Total	380,000	330,000	330,000	330,000

4.6 Community Infrastructure - Recurrent Capital Projects

<i>Roads and Bridges (continued)</i>	<i>2026/27</i>	<i>2027/28</i>	<i>2028/29</i>	<i>2029/30</i>
Grants and Section 7.11				
Grant - Betterment – Ross Lane	3,200,000			
<i>Essential Public Asset Repair (EPAR)</i>				
Landslip Teven Road	7,300,000			
Uralba Cutting Road	2,150,000			
The Coast Road, Lennox Head	2,453,000			
Sneaths Road	500,000			
Marom Creek Road	600,000			
Tamarind Drive	1,198,000			
Bagot Street	280,000			
Owen Street	185,000			
<i>Grant - Resilient Business Activation Program</i>				
Ballina - River Street Roundabout	1,240,000			
Wardell CBD	1,000,000			
Section 7.11 Roads Plan				
Fishery Creek Bridge Duplication (49.6%)	24,050,000			
Canal Bridge Duplication (98.6%)	33,050,000			
North Creek Road /Tamarind Drive Lanes (100%)		2,000,000	2,000,000	
Section 7.11 Heavy Haulage Plan				
Resealing and Heavy Patching	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000
Total Roads and Bridges	87,243,000	11,769,000	12,091,000	10,574,000

In reviewing this works program, Council general revenue and the Federal Government Roads to Recovery Grant, largely fund the urban and rural roads and bridges reconstruction program, reseals and heavy patching.

In respect to other elements of the road and bridges program, the bypass reserve works are funded from internal reserves, which were created from funds transferred to Council, by Transport for NSW, for the estimated maintenance cost for the first ten years of the bypassed highways, with those road assets transferred to Council.

Based on current expenditure forecasts, the estimated cash balances for these internal reserves, as at 30 June 2036, which is the current 10-year life of the LTFP, are Alstonville (\$345,000) Ballina (\$306,000) and Tintenbar to Ewingsdale (\$103,000).

Once the reserves are exhausted, the annual maintenance for these road assets will be funded by Council.

This will leave a \$330,000 shortfall in Council's budget based on average annual expenditure levels.

The grant, reserve and loan funded projects are a mixture of projects based on existing grant programs.

In respect to the Section 7.11 Program, Council has a Road Contributions Plan, with works totaling close to \$160m, funded in part from developer contributions paid to Council.

The \$160m is based on the estimates for the projects when the original plan was adopted, in 2011.

4.6 Community Infrastructure - Recurrent Capital Projects

The updated estimates now more than double the original figures and this is one of the major issues facing Council, as the Section 7.11 contributions collected are capped at \$20,000 per residential lot, when the actual cost is well in excess of that figure.

Council has been very fortunate to have secured close to \$48m in grant funding from the State and Federal Governments through the Northern Rivers Recovery and Resilience Program, because of the 2022 floods, with that funding able to assist with the duplication of the Fishery Creek and Canal Bridges.

Unfortunately, the cost of these projects increased significantly, and Council has had to fund the total works using \$18m in loan funds, along with more than \$14m in developer contributions.

The report on Community Infrastructure – Non-recurrent Capital Projects, later in this agenda, provides a more detailed review of the Section 7.11 Roads Contributions works plan, including commentary on the inclusion of the four laning of North Creek Road, between Tamarind Drive and Southern Cross Drive, in 2027/28 and 2028/29, as per the recommended works plan.

There is also a Heavy Haulage Section 7.11 Contributions Plan, where operators of quarries in the Ballina Shire pay a contribution rate to Council, for material removed from the quarry and transported along Council roads.

The funds received by Council are then used to maintain and repair those roads.

Council typically sources around \$200,000 per annum from that plan for road repair works.

The other major projects relate to:

- Essential Public Asset Repair – A total of \$14.666m is works is planned for 2026/27 through this funding program, which relates to works arising from the 2022 floods.
- Ross Lane - Betterment – This 100% grant funded project should be completed during 2026/27, which will improve the flood resilience for Ross Lane.
- Resilient Business Activation Program – This grant program is part funding two town centre enhancement projects for the Ballina CBD (River Street, Martin Street Roundabout including footpaths) and the Wardell CBD (Connecting to the River component of the Wardell Village Centre Revitalisation Master Plan).

The grants total \$400,000 for each project, with the balance of the budget funded by Council.

Community Engagement Strategy

The priorities endorsed by Council will be included in the draft 2026/27 to 2029/30 Delivery Program and 2026/27 Operational Plan for public comment.

4.6 Community Infrastructure - Recurrent Capital Projects

Financial / Risk Considerations

The purpose of this report is to highlight the funding available for recurrent community infrastructure projects and to outline the preferred priorities.

The major financial risk is that Council does not allocate sufficient recurrent funding for the renewal of existing infrastructure, which results in asset deterioration and possible failure over a lengthy period.

A large part of the SRV funding is allocated to recurrent capital works, and the following table matches the estimated depreciation expense with the recurrent capital funding, for each of the asset classes identified in Council's LTFP, as at 2029/30, being the end of the four-year SRV, if approved.

Forecast Annual Estimated Depreciation and Funding – 2029/30 (\$'000)

Description / Asset Class	Depreciation Estimate	Recurrent Funding
Cemeteries (1)	29	N/A
Open Spaces – Playgrounds, fencing, signage	1,758	1,131
Sports Fields – Buildings and other infrastructure	998	750
Public Amenities	199	160
Stormwater	2,361	1,578
Roads	11,196	10,000
Ancillary Transport	331	118
Footpaths and Shared Paths	1,264	846
Ferry	31	0
Emergency Services	178	0
Landfill and Resource Management (1)t	561	N/A
Commercial Property (1)	90	N/A
Flat Rock (1)	29	N/A
Ballina – Byron Gateway Airport (BBGA) (1)	1,814	N/A
Quarries (1)	157	N/A
Community Buildings (Halls, Child Care Centres, Cultural Centres, Surf Clubs etc)	1,208	2,163
Libraries	243	
Swimming Pools	512	
Destination and Economy	24	
Administration Centre and Depots	1,208	
Animal Pound	11	
Gallery	54	
<i>Sub Total Community Buildings</i>	<i>3,260</i>	
Plant Operations (1)	1,648	N/A
Sub Total – General Fund	25,904	16,746
Water (1)	2,037	N/A
Wastewater (1)	5,322	N/A
Total – Consolidated Operations	33,263	16,746
Total – Excluding Business Operations	21,576	16,746

The items marked with (1) represent business activities that generate their own revenues for asset renewal and expansion.

No recurrent funding from General Revenue is needed for Cemeteries, Landfill and Resource Management (LRM), Commercial Property, Flat Rock, BBGA, Quarries, Plant Operations, Water and Wastewater.

4.6 Community Infrastructure - Recurrent Capital Projects

These are distinct business activities that can rely on their own operating surplus, excluding depreciation, to reinvest funds back into asset renewal. Council is also able to determine our own pricing for these businesses.

Items such as the Cemeteries, Commercial Property and Flat Rock provide a dividend to the General Fund, as the operating surplus is sufficient to fund the business's own asset renewals and pay a dividend. The BBGA also generates a significant cash surplus, however that surplus is funding a large loan debt and new infrastructure.

The \$10m estimate for roads recurrent funding is based on Council recurrent revenue plus recurrent grants such as the Roads to Recovery Program.

The highlighted bottom line is the depreciation expense, excluding business activities, matched with the total recurrent revenue. As per these figures, the difference in recurrent funding and the depreciation expense is forecast to be approximately \$4.8m per annum by 2029/30.

Council will regularly secure grants to assist with the renewal of assets, however it is this gap in asset renewal funding, which remains the biggest financial risk to Council, as it can result in asset deterioration, in the long term.

Options

The options available relate to the timing of the works identified in the report, along with the priorities, with Councillors able to amend priorities based on community feedback.

There are also many requests for works that have not been included in the four-year program, along with major projects, and this report also needs to be read in conjunction with the "Community Infrastructure – Non-recurrent Capital Projects" report, later in this agenda. That report deals with large one-off projects that cannot be funded entirely by recurrent revenue.

The recommendation is to endorse the four year works programs listed, for exhibition, as the priorities represent adopted programs or technical assessments.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Council approves the inclusion of the recurrent capital expenditure priorities, as outlined in this report, in the draft 2026/27 to 2029/30 Delivery Program and 2026/27 Operational Plan, for public exhibition, with this program based on the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal approving Council's application for a special rate variation (SRV) for 2026/27 to 2029/30.
2. That Council notes that if the SRV is not approved, the works program will be reduced, with that reduced program to be included as an appendix in the draft 2026/27 to 2029/30 Delivery Program and 2026/27 Operational Plan, and subject to further review at the June 2026 Ordinary meeting.

Attachment(s)

Nil

4.7 Car Park - Upgrade Program

4.7 Car Park - Upgrade Program

Section Engineering Works

Objective To examine options to develop a priority listing for a car park upgrade program.

Background

The management of ageing sealed and unsealed car parks has been one of the more difficult asset management issues for Council, with little or no funding allocated on a recurrent basis for many years to improve car parks.

Council commenced rectifying this in the 2020/21 budget, through the creation of a \$50,000 recurrent budget, which has now grown to approximately \$100,000 per annum.

In preparation for creating this new budget, in April 2019, Council compiled a comprehensive register of all Council-owned car parks.

The register included details for each location, including parking capacity, pavement type and condition, the presence of line marking, and the availability of lighting.

Based on this inventory, a program of works was developed using the following assessment criteria:

- Importance to the community
- Capacity and demand
- Pavement type and condition
- Presence and condition of line marking
- Availability of lighting
- Signage and drainage

At the 27 August 2020 Ordinary meeting, Council adopted an eight-year program for car park improvements, based on the inventory.

The adopted program focussed on improving existing car parks, many of which were highly utilised, prior to creating new car parks, or formalising unsealed car parks.

A copy of the adopted 2020 program is included as Attachment 1 to this report. The program focuses on more minor works, such as line marking and lighting, due to the limited funding.

The car parks identified as the highest priority for expansion, or a major upgrade in the 2020 program, as per Attachment 1, are:

- Pat Morton Lookout
- Missingham Park Amphitheatre
- The Serpentine
- Rocky Point Road

4.7 Car Park - Upgrade Program

The identified program of works was not immediately incorporated into the Delivery Program and Operational Plan, having regard to competing funding priorities, within Council's existing maintenance and renewal programs.

Even though the program of works was not fully funded in the Long-Term Financial Plan (LTFP), due to a combination of grant funds, the reallocation of existing revenues and transfers from Council's Property Reserves, a reasonable number of car park improvements have been completed since 2020, along with several projects now funded, as per the following summary:

- The Serpentine – Completed 2021
- North Creek Road – Boat Ramp Access – Completed 2021
- Flat Rock – Completed 2021
- Rocky Point Road – Completed 2022
- Patches Beach Car Park – Completed 2023
- Shelly Beach Café Car Park – Completed 2023
- Kingsford Smith Reserve – Northern Car Park – Completed 2023
- Meldrum Park Improvements – Completed 2023
- Lake Ainsworth Improvements – Completed 2025
- Sharpes Beach Car Park Master Plan – Completed 2026
- Pop Denison – \$530,000 allocated in 2025/26 – Works behind schedule
- Kingsford Smith Reserve - New Car Park to Assist with Pump Track Usage – \$350,000 allocated in 2025/26 – Works behind schedule
- Pat Morton - \$900,000 allocated in 2025/26 – Works behind schedule
- Missingham Park – Funding of close to \$2m included in the Open Spaces Recurrent Capital Works program for 2027/28 and 2028/29 for improvements to this park, which will include the car park. Refer to the Community Infrastructure - Recurrent Capital Projects report earlier in this agenda for further details.

In addition to the above, Council has still the recurrent budget of approximately \$100,000 for minor car park improvements, which is primarily for line marking and lighting.

This program is reviewed every year as part of the preparation of the draft Delivery Program.

In preparing the 2025/26 to 2028/29 Delivery Program, Council examined options to formalise the car parking at Geoff Watt Oval and Crawford Park, Alstonville, with estimates for the works ranging from \$350,000 for one car park and \$700,000 for both car parks.

This information was reported to the 8 April 2025 Finance and Facilities Committee meeting in the report titled "Community Infrastructure – Recurrent Capital Works", with the works not being funded in the LTFP.

Partially because of this debate, the following activity was included in the adopted 2025/26 Operational Plan:

LP1.3h Develop Car Park Upgrade Program

The following report now responds to this Operational Plan Activity.

4.7 Car Park - Upgrade Program

Key Issues

- Levels of service and public amenity
- Financial sustainability of assets

Discussion

Since 2019, the provision of car parks has increased substantially, with Council's asset information identifying that 29 new, or upgraded, car parks have been delivered, with an additional 1,161 spaces available.

This includes privately funded (i.e. development) related car parks.

This increase demonstrates the continued growth of the shire and reflects rising demand associated with population growth, increased visitation, and the expansion of residential and commercial activity.

Council has proactively chased grant opportunities and invested in expanding and improving parking infrastructure to support this growth.

This is evidenced by upgrades to several car parks, since the car park program was adopted in 2020, as per the background information to this report.

High usage sites, such as Sharpes Beach, Shelly Beach, Kingsford Smith Reserve, Lake Ainsworth, Pop Denison and Pat Morton have been improved, or are now funded in the LTFP.

Sealed Car Parks

In assessing a new car park upgrade program, it is important to understand the distribution of existing Council owned, or controlled, sealed car parks, as summarised in Table 1.

Table 1 - Summary of Existing Council Sealed Car Parks by Location

Suburb	Number of Sealed Off Road Car Parks	Total Spaces
Alstonville	5	115
Ballina East	30	673
Ballina Island	16	641
Ballina North	4	175
Ballina West	6	156
Cumbalum	1	108
Lennox Head	17	668
Rural –Newrybar	1	19
Patches Beach	1	19
Skennars Head	7	325
Wardell	1	15
Wollongbar	5	123
Total	94	3,037

4.7 Car Park - Upgrade Program

To improve transparency and support informed decision-making, it is necessary to identify the extent of Council-owned car parks and establish a prioritised program of improvements.

This approach enables more consistent and equitable investment decisions, while providing the community with greater confidence and clarity around how and what car park upgrades are planned.

A contemporary assessment has now been completed, for the existing sealed car parks, including an assessment of the condition ratings of the key infrastructure attributes, to inform asset management decisions and maintenance planning.

This assessment included the condition of pavement surfaces, line marking, lighting, and drainage infrastructure, identifying defects, levels of deterioration, and overall asset performance.

The findings provide an evidence-based understanding of asset condition to support the prioritisation of future maintenance, renewal, and funding decisions.

Based on the condition ratings, the top ten sealed car parks identified for upgrade are:

- Three car parking areas in Pop Denison Park, Ballina
- Three car parking areas along Shelly Beach Road, Ballina
- Two car parking areas within Missingham Park, Ballina
- Pat Morton Lookout
- King Street, Lennox Head

Several of the car parks identified are located on Crown land, and some are subject to Aboriginal land claims, which can delay the timing of works.

Detailed cost estimates have not yet been completed for these car parks, at this stage, excluding the Pat Morton Car Park, which is in the 2025/26 capital works program, with a budget of \$900,000.

A full list of the assessed sealed car parks and their condition ratings is included as Attachment 2.

Unsealed Car Parks

Several Council car parks, some of which are informal car parks, remain unsealed.

Unsealed pavement surfaces are more susceptible to weather related deterioration, particularly during periods of heavy rainfall.

Water ingress can result in softening of the subgrade, loss of pavement materials, rutting, potholes, and surface deformation.

Consequently, unsealed car parks require frequent grading, resheeting, and drainage repairs to maintain acceptable service levels.

These activities are labour intensive and need to be undertaken multiple times per year, resulting in comparatively higher lifecycle maintenance costs.

4.7 Car Park - Upgrade Program

In contrast, sealed pavements provide improved surface durability, enhanced drainage performance, reduced material loss, and greater resilience to traffic loading and weather events.

Upgrading unsealed car parks supports a more sustainable asset management approach by reducing recurrent maintenance expenditure, improving accessibility and safety for users, and delivering more predictable long-term asset performance.

Targeting unsealed car parks through a structured upgrade program would enable Council to address ongoing maintenance pressures, reduce reactive repair requirements, and progressively transition these assets to a more cost-effective and manageable standard over time.

Table 2 provides a priority list of unsealed car parks, identified as higher priorities, as part of a preferred upgrade program.

Table 2 - Priority Unsealed Car Park Upgrades

Car Park	Location	Spaces	Estimate (\$)
Geoff Watt Oval - Deegan Drive, Alstonville	Alstonville	60	352,000
Geoff Watt Oval - Ballina Street, Alstonville	Alstonville	35	150,000
Alstonville Tennis Centre - Lumley Park	Alstonville	17	50,000
Alstonville Tennis Centre - Park Avenue	Alstonville	33	125,000
Regatta Avenue, Ballina	Ballina	16	50,000
Keith Hall Boat Ramp	Keith Hall	30	125,000
Chickiba Drive Sports Fields, Ballina	Ballina	20	60,000
Bicentennial Gardens, Ballina	Ballina	60	350,000
Totals		271	1,262,000

The estimates are based on high-level unit rates and are not site specific.

The car parks in Table 2 support access to key community destinations, including sports fields, recreational facilities, and high-tourist-use areas.

The proximity to sporting venues supports regular training, competition events, and community use, while car parks in tourist precincts facilitate access to town centres, and visitor amenities.

As such, these assets play an important role in supporting community participation, tourism activity, and local economic outcomes.

Community Engagement Strategy

No community consultation has been undertaken to prepare this report.

Any preferred works program will be exhibited as part of the draft 2026/27 to 2029/30 Delivery Program and 2026/27 Operational Plan.

4.7 Car Park - Upgrade Program

Financial / Risk Considerations

The depreciation expense for ancillary transport is \$300,000, which includes car parks and boat ramps.

This means the approximately \$100,000 recurrent budget is not covering the depreciation expense.

The draft four-year program of works, for the recurrent car parking budget, as reported in the Community Infrastructure – Recurrent Capital Projects report, earlier in this agenda, is as follows.

<i>Item</i>	<i>2026/27</i>	<i>2027/28</i>	<i>2028/29</i>	<i>2029/30</i>
Car Park Improvements	107,000	110,000	114,000	118,000
Shelly Beach Road (nth of SLSC) - Lighting	27,000			
Pop Denison Park - Lighting	27,000			
Pacific Parade at Ross Street - Lighting	25,000			
Rutherford Street - Line Marking	4,000			
Alston Avenue (Pool) - Line Marking	4,000			
Alstonville Cultural Centre - Line Marking	3,000			
Pop Denison Park - Line Marking	5,000			
Beach Road (Suvla St) Car Park - Line Marking	4,000			
Shelly Beach Road (Suvla St) - Line Marking	4,000			
Shelly Beach Road Car Park - Line Marking	4,000			
Quays Reserve - Lighting		26,000		
Emigrant Creek Boat Ramp - Lighting		15,000		
Ferngrove Estate - Lighting		22,000		
Faulks Reserve - Lighting		22,000		
Ross Street at Pacific Terrace - Line Marking		5,000		
Megan Crescent - Line Marking		5,000		
Mackney Lane at LHCC - Line Marking		5,000		
Faulks Reserve - Line Marking		5,000		
Quays Reserve - Line Marking		5,000		
Eyles Drive at Antrim Street - Line Marking			5,000	
Wardell Boat Ramp - Lighting			22,000	
Megan Crescent - Lighting			23,000	
Tamar Street (10 Moon Street) - Lighting			64,000	
Sharpes Beach Car Park - Line Marking				5,000
Flat Rock Carpark-Linemarking				5,000
Patches Beach Car Park - Line Marking				5,000
Boulders Beach Car Park - Line Marking				5,000
Lake Ainsworth Car Park - Line Marking				5,000
Tamar Street (10 Moon Street) – Resurfacing				48,000
Pacific Parade Near Ross Street - Resurfacing and Line Marking				45,000

In reviewing options to fund the extra sealed and unsealed car park works identified in this report, the draft 2026/27 to 2029/30 Delivery Program and 2026/27 Operational Plan, as reported later in this agenda, includes the following two actions for 2026/27:

- *Prepare master plan for Geoff Watt Oval, Alstonville (include consideration of a skate park).*
- *Prepare Management Plan for Lumley Park.*

The Open Spaces recurrent infrastructure program, for sports fields, includes \$292,000 for Geoff Watt Oval in 2028/29, with that funding focused more on field improvements.

4.7 Car Park - Upgrade Program

There is no Open Spaces funding for Lumley Park, although there is an allocation of \$160,000 for public amenities improvements in 2026/27.

In looking at the major car park upgrade works completed in recent years, such as Sharpes Beach and Kingsford Smith Reserve, along with those planned, such as Pat Morton and Pop Denison, the projects have not been funded from recurrent budgets, but rather through successful grant applications, developer contributions or transfers from Council's Property Reserves.

With Geoff Watt Oval (Deegan Drive and Ballina Street) and Lumley Park being:

- a) the three highest priorities for the unsealed car parks; and
- b) acknowledging that sealing these car parks will save maintenance resources for the Engineering Works Section and
- c) with Master Plan and Management Plan community consultation planned for 2026/27

these three projects could be identified as priorities for the allocation of funding sourced from future dividends generated from Council's Property Reserves.

The Commercial Property Projects and Cash Reserves – Update report, being the next report in this agenda, identifies that based on forecast land sales, there should be Community Infrastructure Reserve dividends, that are currently unallocated, of \$3m in 2027/28, \$3m in 2028/29 and \$1m in 2029/30. These dividends are included in the draft LTFP and are currently not allocated to any specific projects.

The recommendation to this report is to identify, particularly the Geoff Watt Oval Master Plan, which would include the car parks listed in this report, as a high priority for the allocation of part, or all the funding, sourced from the \$3m dividend in 2027/28.

The Lumley Park, or Alstonville Tennis Club, car park works, are more affordable and could possibly be included as a priority for the \$3m dividend in 2028/29.

The allocation of these top four projects, during 2027/28 and 2028/29, will help to significantly reduce the number of unsealed car parks, while at the same helping to reduce ongoing maintenance costs for Council.

Options

This report deals with sealed and unsealed, or informal, car parks.

In respect to sealed car parks, there is the recurrent budget of approximately \$100,000 that is funding relatively minor improvements to those car parks.

The updated Register and Condition Rating – 2026 – for the sealed car parks has identified that the following car parks are a priority, with Pat Morton currently funded in the 2025/26 budget.

- Three car parks in Pop Denison Park, Ballina
- Three car parks along Shelly Beach Road, Ballina

4.7 Car Park - Upgrade Program

- Two car parks within Missingham Park, Ballina
- Pat Morton Lookout
- King Street, Lennox Head

In respect to the Pop Denison Car Parks, Council has \$530,000 allocated in the 2025/26 capital works program to improve the main car park and there may be an opportunity to extend that funding to improve the three car parks identified in this priority listing.

The Pop Denison project is funded through Developer Contributions, and the scope of works can potentially be expanded depending on the level of contributions held by Council.

The Open Spaces recurrent capital works program, as per the previous report in this agenda, also includes close to \$2m for Missingham Park in 2027/28 (\$955,000) and 2028/29 (\$1,058,000).

This should provide an opportunity to improve the two Missingham car parking areas identified in this report.

That would then leave the three car parking areas along Shelly Beach Road and the King Street Car Park, as the only existing sealed car parks, without an identified funding source, during the four-year term of the 2026/27 to 2029/30 Delivery Program.

In looking at the current four year program of works, for the recurrent budget for car parks, as outlined earlier in this report, they may be an opportunity to review that program, to undertake these higher priority sites, within that four year program, albeit that the \$100,000 recurrent budget does not allow major works to be completed, and alternative funding sources are typically needed.

The preference, at this stage, is to improve the Pop Denison, Missingham and Pat Morton Car Parks, from the funds identified in the four-year Delivery Program and then annually review the funding available to assess whether there are opportunities to undertake the Shelly Beach and Kings Street works.

These car parks can form part of the inventory of works listed in the Community Infrastructure – Non-recurrent Capital Projects report, later in this agenda, that lists all the various projects Council would like to see completed, many of which do not have an identified funding source.

In respect to unsealed car parks, it is recommended that the highest priorities, being Geoff Watt Oval and Lumley Park and Park Avenue, be identified as preferred priorities in respect to the allocation of the future dividends from the Community Infrastructure Reserve, with the decision on the preferred allocation of those funds, also subject to separate reports in this agenda, being the reports titled:

Commercial Property Projects and Cash Reserves – Update
Community Infrastructure – Non-recurrent Capital Projects
General Fund – Long Term Financial Plan

The remaining unsealed car parks, being Regatta Avenue, Keith Hall Boat Ramp, Chickiba Sports Fields and Bicentennial Gardens, will remain as priorities, albeit they will be beyond the life of the draft 2027/28 to 2029/30

4.7 Car Park - Upgrade Program

Delivery Program, unless alternative funding sources are identified. These car parks can also form part of the inventory of works in the annual Community Infrastructure – Non-recurrent Capital Projects report.

Importantly, this report needs to be read in conjunction with the other reports mentioned in this agenda, to ensure that a holistic approach is taken to all the various competing priorities for Council funding.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That in respect to sealed car parks, Council confirms the priority and potential funding sources for improvements to the car parks is as follows:
 - Three Car Parking Areas in Pop Denison Car Park, Ballina – To be examined as part of scope of works for the \$530,000 allocated to the Pop Denison Car Park in the 2025/26 budget, with the scope of that work able to be expanded dependent on the level of Open Spaces and Community Facilities Developer Contributions held by Council
 - Two Car Parking Areas within Missingham Park – To be examined as part of the scope of works, for the allocation of recurrent funding in the Open Spaces Recurrent Capital Works program, which currently includes approximately \$2m in total for 2027/28 and 2028/29.
 - Pat Morton Lookout - \$900,000 allocated in the 2025/26 budget.
 - Three Car Parks along Shelly Beach Road, Ballina and King Street, Lennox Head – To be included as part of the inventory of capital works included in the annual report on Community Infrastructure – Non-recurrent Capital Projects, with no funding source currently identified.
2. That in respect to unsealed car parks, Council confirms the priority and potential funding sources for formalising the car parks is as follows:
 - Geoff Watt Oval - Deegan Drive and Ballina Street, Alstonville – To be included as part of the priority works program for the \$3m dividend forecast from the Community Infrastructure Reserve in 2027/28
 - Alstonville Tennis Centre - Lumley Park and Park Avenue – To be included as part of the priority works program for the \$3m dividend forecast from the Community Infrastructure Reserve in 2028/29.
 - Regatta Avenue, Ballina, Keith Hall Boat Ramp, Chickiba Drive Sports Fields, Ballina and Bicentennial Park, Ballina - To be included as part of the inventory of capital works included in the annual report on Community Infrastructure – Non-recurrent Capital Projects, with no funding source currently identified.

Attachment(s)

1. Car Park - Upgrade Program - 27 August 2020 [⇒](#)
2. Car Parks - Sealed - Register and Condition Rating - 2026 [⇒](#)

4.8 Commercial Property Projects and Cash Reserves - Update

4.8 Commercial Property Projects and Cash Reserves - Update

Section Commercial Services

Objective To provide an update on the forecast cash flows for Council's commercial property projects and to provide an overview of the indicative funding available for community infrastructure projects.

Background

Council has several commercial property projects underway, or planned, and the objective of this report is to provide an update on the status of those projects and the forecast cash flows.

This information also assists Council in confirming the funds available for the delivery of non-recurrent community infrastructure projects.

Key Issues

- Risk and return
- Potential for variances in the forecasts
- Cash reserves and future allocation of the surplus funds

Discussion

Council's commercial property development activities support increased economic activity, largely through residential and industrial land developments, and provide supplementary revenue streams, to assist Council in delivering services and infrastructure to the community.

In recent years, due to the high number and cost of the commercial property development projects underway, Council has had to undertake major loan borrowings, which in turn increases project risk.

Several of the projects are now well-advanced, with land sales having occurred, which has helped reduce the overall loan liability.

The major land developments still in progress are the Southern Cross Industrial Estate – Boeing Avenue subdivision, the Russellton Industrial Estate subdivision and the Wollongbar Urban Expansion Area – Stage 3, residential land subdivision.

In the last few months, Council has also resolved to examine leasing, or potential sale, of three major properties, being 89 Tamar Street, Ballina, 26 Endeavour Close, Ballina and the Tuckombil Quarry, Alstonville.

Council manages all the various commercial property development activities, through two internal cash reserves, being the Property Development Reserve and the Community Infrastructure Reserve.

4.8 Commercial Property Projects and Cash Reserves - Update

The Property Development Reserve provides the cashflows in and out for commercial property developments, with dividends transferred to the Community Infrastructure Reserve.

The Community Infrastructure Reserve is funded from these dividends, along with rental income from some commercial properties, with any surplus funds transferred from this reserve to finance community infrastructure.

It is important that Council has a contemporary financial plan in place for both reserves, recognising that major cash contributions are needed from the Community Infrastructure Reserve for:

- a) the construction of the new Ballina SES building, which has a total project cost of more than \$6m, with \$4.5m in funding sourced from Council's property reserves and
- b) the refurbishment of the Alstonville Cultural Centre, which has a total project cost of approximately \$18m, with over \$14m sourced from Council's property reserves.

Both projects have construction contracts signed, with the SES building well advanced.

The one other major community infrastructure project scheduled for the next two years, funded in part from the Community Infrastructure Reserve, is the Cawarra Park Boating Infrastructure. This project has an estimated cost of \$2.2m, with \$1.1m funded through a State Government grant and a matching amount sourced from the Community Infrastructure Reserve.

Updated forecasts for the two reserves form a major part of this report, as the forecasts assist Council in determining what funds are available to finance additional community infrastructure projects.

The next part of this report provides the latest update on the major commercial property projects underway or planned.

Southern Cross Industrial Estate – Boeing Avenue – Land Subdivision

The final stage of the Southern Cross Industrial Estate subdivision, saw the creation of 12 lots. A copy of the subdivision plan is included as Attachment 1 to this report.

The road that runs through the subdivision is now named Hercules Crescent (named after the plane, consistent with other street names in the subdivision).

Council resolved to sell lots 1 to 9, by auction, with lots 10 to 12 being held for potential lease.

The auction was held on 30 April 2025, with all nine lots sold, generating sales income of \$15.8m, excluding GST.

The overall average sale price, per square metre, excluding GST, was close to \$800 (\$884 including GST).

4.8 Commercial Property Projects and Cash Reserves - Update

During 2024/25, approximately \$6m of the sale proceeds were applied to the repayment of loan debt, relating to the construction of Airport Boulevard and the development of the 12 lots.

The balance of the funds has been applied to other commercial property projects, along with cash being retained in the Property Development Reserve.

In respect to leasing the remaining three lots, Council has not set any funds aside to construct a commercial / industrial building, and it may be preferable to provide a land lease only, with the tenant constructing the building.

As an example, the Shelly Beach Café and Norfolk Homes (6 Piper Drive, Ballina) leases are based on land leases only.

Commercial leases, where Council has constructed the building, are 89 Tamar Street, Ballina, Fawcett Street Café, and 2-6 Cessna Crescent (Southern Cross Industrial Estate).

The recent land sales have allowed Council to assess the commercial value of the land, with that pricing able to be factored into determining what is a commercially viable lease.

As a guide, indicative development costs for an industrial building, on the three lots held by Council, are as per Table 1.

**Table 1 - Lots 10 to 12 – Hercules Crescent
Building Development Estimates**

Lot	Filled Site Area (Sq M)	Est. Building Area (Sq M)	\$ Rate Per Sq Metre	10% Fees (\$'000)	Total (\$'000)
10	1,824	912	2,500	228	2,510
11	1,985	993	2,500	248	2,730
12	1,694	847	2,500	211	2,330
Totals	5,503	2,752		687	7,570

If a land value of \$800 per square metre is added to the development costs, based on a 6% return, Council would be seeking lease income, on average, of approximately \$4,800 to \$5,000 per week, or \$240,000 to \$260,000 per annum, per lot.

This is comparable to the figure paid by Australia Reinforced Concrete Pty. Ltd., to Council for 2-6 Cessna Crescent, and if all three lots were leased, Council would be generating approximately \$800,000 in revenue, per annum.

As Council has resolved to retain the three lots, an allowance of \$100,000 has been included in the draft LTFP, in 2026/27, to allow the feasibility of leasing the land to be fully investigated, including the potential for the design and approval of industrial buildings.

Nominal construction allowances of \$2.5m, per annum, are also included for 2027/28, 2028/29 and 2029/30 based on the assumption that the leases will progress at a rate of one leasing proposal per annum.

Lease rental income is included for 2028/29, growing by \$260,000 per annum, based on one new building a year, for three years and then indexed.

4.8 Commercial Property Projects and Cash Reserves - Update

The figures for construction and leasing for 2027/28 onwards provide a guide as to the financial benefits of leasing, with the forecast revenues generated, substantially increasing the funds available in the Property Development Reserve, for distribution to the Community Infrastructure Reserve for future community infrastructure projects. This also significantly improves Council's operating result for the General Fund.

The key expenditure is the allocation of \$100,000 in 2026/27 to allow the leasing proposals to be investigated.

Russellton Industrial Estate - Land Subdivision

Council has constructed 27 serviced industrial lots and a residue lot that includes a water reservoir and buffer zones. Attachment 2 to this report contains the registered plan of subdivision, which was updated in 2025 and did result in some lots being renumbered as compared to an earlier subdivision plan.

Council approved the sale of then Lots 17, 18, 28 and 30 to Rous County Council, with Lots 17, 18 and 28 settled for a total price of \$2.5m (ex GST), and Lot 30 due to settle by 30 June 2026, subject to minor works being completed including the construction of a driveway and relocation of a switchboard. A further lot, being Lot 20, was sold to a local business, for \$2m, ex GST.

Council has also approved the sale of then Lot 15 to the adjoining owner (Williams Brothers Service Pty. Ltd., trading as Duraplas Industries Pty. Ltd), with the sale of that lot depending on the adjoining owner finalizing approvals.

Council resolved to sell the remaining lots by public auction, with the first auction, for seven lots, held 11 March 2026. This resulted in six lots being sold, generating income of \$3.8m ex GST, with one remaining lot, being Lot 26, now on the market for an asking price of \$1.2m (incl GST). A copy of the marketing brochure for this lot is included as Attachment 3 to this report.

Details of the auction sale prices are as per Table 2.

Table 2 - Russellton Industrial Estate – Auction Summary

Lot #	Site Area m2	Reserve (\$) (incl. GST)	Reserve (\$) \$/m2 (incl. GST)	Sale Price (\$) (incl GST)	Sale Price (\$) \$/m2 (incl. GST)
19	1,328	770,000	580	810,000	610
21	1,284	670,000	522	805,000	627
22	1,399	730,000	522	855,000	611
23	1,123	585,000	521	675,000	601
24	1,068	560,000	524	560,000	524
25	1,068	560,000	524	560,000	524
26	2,304	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Totals	9,574	3,875,000	532 avg.	4,265,000	583 avg.

4.8 Commercial Property Projects and Cash Reserves - Update

A summary of the sales and forecast sales is as follows.

Table 3 – Russellton Sales – 2025/26 – Actual (\$) (Ex GST)

Lot No	2025/26
17,18,28	2,500,000
20	2,000,000
19	736,364
21	731,818
22	777,273
23	613,636
24	509,091
25	509,091
Totals	8,377,273

Table 4 – Russellton Forecast Sales – Estimates (\$) (Ex GST)

Lot No	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
26	1,000,000		
29		720,000	
30		610,000	
31		580,000	
32		580,000	
33		580,000	
34		580,000	
35		580,000	
36		580,000	
37		580,000	
38		633,000	
1			700,000
2			800,000
3			1,200,000
4			1,500,000
14, 15			3,951,000
Totals	1,000,000	6,023,000	8,151,000

The actual and forecast results have been included in the draft LTFP.

Wollongbar – Urban Expansion Area – Stage 3 – Residential Land Subdivision (WUEA)

Stage 3 of Council's Wollongbar Urban Expansion Area comprises 30 serviced residential lots and one large lot, being 10 Dundee Avenue, which is allocated for the development of a childcare facility (Lot 31). The plan of subdivision for this development is included as Attachment 4.

Council resolved to sell the childcare lot, with contracts exchanged. Council also resolved to sell lots 1 to 18, being the northern part of the site, with the first auction, held 6 August 2025, with no lots sold. Since that date, Council has sold Lots 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 12, with lots 8 to 11 still on the market.

In respect to Lots 19 to 30, Council originally allocated these lots for a staged residential housing development, however following the receipt of construction tenders, Council resolved as follows at the 26 February 2026 Ordinary meeting, based on a recommendation from the 11 February 2026 Finance and Facilities Committee meeting:

4.8 Commercial Property Projects and Cash Reserves - Update

1. That Council in accordance with the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 Section 178(1)(b), declines to accept any tenders for the Wollongbar Medium Density Housing - Construction Tender as the tenders submitted would not provide commercial viability for the project.
2. That Council, in accordance with Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 Section 178(3)(a) cancels the proposal for the contract due to the difficulty in Council securing competitive construction tenders for the project.
3. That Council adopt Option 1 to sell, subject to a further report to Council.

As per this resolution, subject to further reporting to Council, the remaining lots will now be placed on the market, on a progressive basis.

Forecast sales income is estimated at \$5.7m for 2025/26, \$4.85m for 2026/27 and \$5.7m for 2027/28.

Lennox Head Residential Land

Council has held land in Lennox Head for over 25 years, with that land forming part of what was originally referred to as the Henderson Farm.

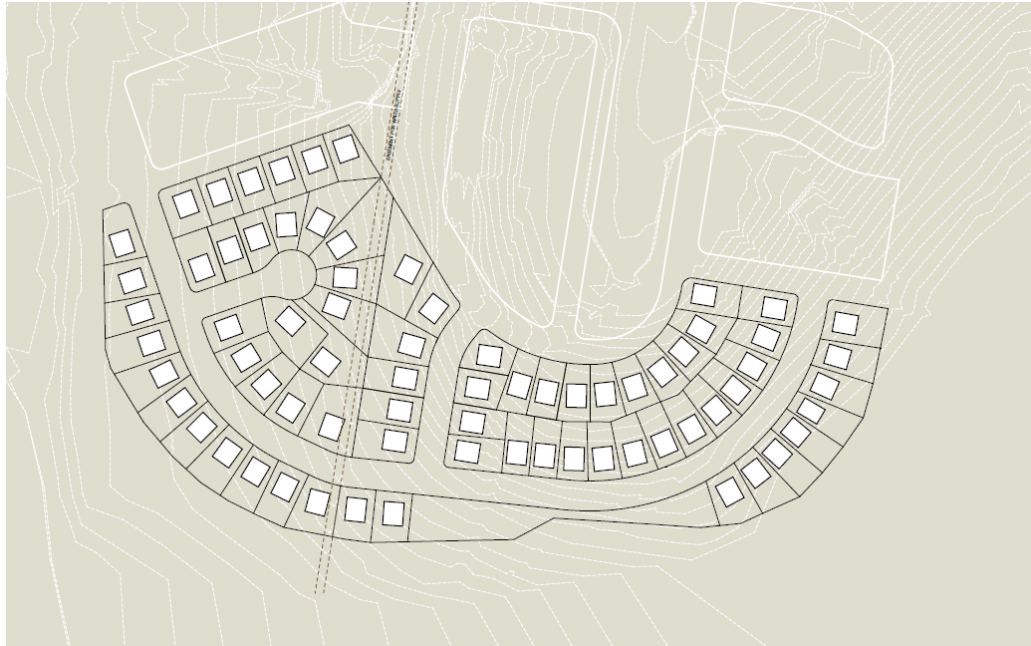
The northern part of the land was sold by Council in the early 2000s to a private developer. That development is now known as "The Lennox Rise" subdivision, with land sales well advanced. The remaining Council owned land is located off Hutley Drive, Lennox Head and is described as Lot 1 DP1270120, being 14.36 hectares in area. A locality map is as follows.

Figure 1 - Locality Map - Lot 1 DP1270120, Hutley Drive, Lennox Head



As a guide, based on the business-as-usual approach, a standard subdivision layout pattern with a minimum lot size of 600m². could potentially provide a total of 73 lots, as per the following concept plan.

Figure 2 - Business-As-Usual Residential Subdivision



This site, based on the 73-lot yield, has the potential to yield Council tens of millions of dollars in sale proceeds, if that is ultimately the preferred objective.

Development costs will be significant based on the constraints of the site (slope, buffers etc), however an average of \$300,000 per lot for construction, with forecast sales of \$700,000 per lot, would generate a net cash surplus in the order of \$30m plus.

Council is still to determine the preferred strategy for this land holding and to ensure that the project progresses, it is recommended that Council allocate \$200,000 per annum, for the next year three years, to commence the design and approval process.

This will allow the project to move forward, and this is timely seeing that the developments mentioned earlier in this report, being Boeing Avenue, Wollongbar and Russellton, are all coming to close, in respect to land development.

89 Tamar Street

There has been some interest in leasing this vacant site, and on that basis lease income has been included in the draft LTFP, of \$385,000 in 2026/27, rising to \$500,000 in 2027/28, along with associated expenses. This is a conservative approach with the previous lease income being above \$700,000.

26 Endeavour Close

Council is pursuing the lease of this site, and with the possibility of leasing the site still unclear, from a financial planning perspective, no rental income has been included in 2026/27, with a 6% return on the land value included for 2027/28 onwards. This equates to approximately \$120,000 per annum.

4.8 Commercial Property Projects and Cash Reserves - Update

Snapper Drive

Council has resolved to investigate commercial opportunities for this site with that work underway, yet to be completed.

No income or expense has been included in the draft LTFP for this site.

Tuckombil Quarry

Council has resolved to call for expressions of interest for the use of this site, with the EOI yet to be exhibited. There has been some interest, from a local business, in leasing part of the site, albeit that has not significantly advanced.

At this stage, no income has been included in the draft LTFP, with the Quarry Program currently having a nil cash result, as the rental income from the one remaining tenant offsets the current holding costs.

Property Reserves

Based on the updated cash flows in this report the latest forecast movements for the Property Development and Community Infrastructure Reserves, for the four-year term of the 2025/26 to 2028/29 Delivery Program, are as follows.

Property Development Reserve

Recent and forecast movements for this reserve are outlined in Table 3.

Table 5 - Property Development Reserve Movements (\$'000)

Item	2024/25 Actual	2025/26 Estimate	2026/27 Estimate	2027/28 Estimate	2028/29 Estimate	2029/30 Estimate
Opening Balance	(2,791)	6,750	6,555	7,554	14,208	9,727
Add: Cash Inflows						
Interest Accrued	98	253	328	378	710	486
Rental - Norfolk Homes	190	200	207	213	219	226
Rental - ARC	345	341	356	368	335	391
Loan Income - Russellton-	4,000	0	0	0	0	0
Miscellaneous and Dividend	11	76	0	0	55	321
Sales – Russellton	0	9,315	6,023	8,151	0	0
Sales - Southern Cross	15,550	0	0	0	0	0
Sales - WUEA Stage 3	0	5,700	4,850	5,700	0	0
Sub Total	20,194	15,885	11,764	14,810	1,319	1,424
Less: Cash Outflows						
Estate Operating Expenses	277	345	267	255	100	103
Airport B'vard – Loans P and I	4,318	0	0	0	0	0
Lennox Head Development	0	0	200	200	200	0
Russellton – Land Development	3,061	8,739	0	0	0	0
Southern Cross – Development	69	381	100	2,500	2,500	2,500
Southern Cross - Loan P and I	1,602	0	0	0	0	0
WUEA – Development	212	294	0	0	0	0
Dividend – General Fund	0	321	308	201	0	0
Dividend – Community Infrass	1,084	6,000	9,890	5,000	3,000	1,000
Sub Total Outflows	10,623	16,080	10,765	8,156	5,800	3,603
Closing Balance	6,750	6,555	7,554	14,208	9,727	7,548

In respect to the forecast movements in Table 5 for the Property Development Reserve, a brief explanation for the major items listed is as follows.

Cash Inflows

- a) Interest Earned – Interest generated from funds held in the reserve.
- b) Rental Income – Income from the Norfolk Homes land lease and the ARC building lease, both of which are located at the Southern Cross Industrial Estate, is transferred to this reserve.

This helps to ensure the reserve balance remains positive, following payment of Council overheads and a dividend to the General Fund.

- c) Loan Income – Russellton – Loan funding needed to finance the construction of the Russellton Industrial Estate lots.
- d) Sales – Russellton, Southern Cross and WUEA – Stage 3 – Represents sale proceeds as outlined earlier in this report.

Cash Outflows

- a) Operating Expenditure – Includes rates, charges and mowing for our landholdings, as well as corporate overheads distributed to this program.
- b) Airport Boulevard – Loan Principal and Interest - Loan repayments for the construction of Airport Boulevard. These loans were paid out in 2024/25.
- c) Lennox Head Development – Represents the feasibility allowance, as outlined earlier in this report, to obtain approvals for this Council land holding. No finance has been included for construction costs, and there are no forecast land sales included in the draft LTFP.
- d) Russellton - Land Development – Represents the remaining land development costs.
- e) Southern Cross – Land Development – Land development costs for this Estate. The figures for 2026/27 onwards represent the leasing feasibility and development costs outlined earlier in this report.
- f) Southern Cross – Loan Principal and Interest - Payment – Loan repayments for the Southern Cross land development activities, with the loans paid out in 2024/25.
- g) WUEA – Development – Remaining development costs for this project.
- h) Dividend – General Fund Dividends - Operations – The Property Development Reserve provides an annual transfer to the Commercial Property Program to support the recurrent operations of Council.

This figure varies each year, as it is dependent on movements in operating income and expenses in the Commercial Property Program. A review of the draft LTFP, as per the report on the General Fund – LTFP elsewhere in this agenda, highlights that the Commercial Property Program provides an annual net contribution of \$600,000 from 2026/27 onwards, to the General Fund, which assists in funding the operations of Council.

4.8 Commercial Property Projects and Cash Reserves - Update

It is interesting to note that if the three leasing proposals for Southern Cross eventuate, there is no need for a dividend from this reserve for 2028/29 onwards, as per Table 5, as the Commercial Property Program is generating sufficient revenues to make a dividend, without drawing on this reserve.

Funds are transferred back to this reserve, as per the line titled Miscellaneous and Dividend in Table 5, which includes a transfer to the reserve of \$55,000 in 2028/29 and \$321,000 in 2029/30.

- i) Community Infrastructure - General Fund Dividends – Infrastructure – This line is an allowance transferred from the Property Development Reserve to the Community Infrastructure Reserve, to help fund community infrastructure. The amount of the dividend is based on ensuring that the Property Development Reserve is not overdrawn and retains a healthy balance.

It is important to have a reasonable balance of funds in the reserve, as sales income and land construction costs can vary substantially and Council still has major property developments planned, for the Lennox Head land subdivision and the three leasing proposals for Southern Cross.

Attachment 5 to this report provides all the movements for the Property Development Reserve between 2012/13 to 2035/36.

Community Infrastructure Reserve

The Community Infrastructure Reserve is where funds are held, based on transfers from the Property Development Reserve, or net income received from rental properties, that can then be applied to fund, in full, or in part, infrastructure that is a priority for Council.

The importance of the Community Infrastructure in funding infrastructure for Council cannot be understated with tens of millions of dollars transferred from the reserve over the years to ensure essential projects are completed.

Examples of major projects funded from this reserve include:

- Angels Beach Drive and Prospect Bridge
- Lennox Head bypass (Byron Bay Road)
- Northern Rivers Community Gallery Refurbishment
- Kentwell Centre
- Lennox Head Cultural Centre
- Ballina Surf Club
- Ballina Marine Rescue Centre
- Skennars Head Sports Fields Expansion
- Coastal Recreational Path and Walk
- Lake Ainsworth Eastern Side Road Closure
- Shaws Bay Coastal Management Plan
- Wollongbar District Park
- Alstonville, Ballina, Lennox Head and Wardell Town Centre Upgrades
- Lennox Head Rural Fire Shed
- Ballina SES Building
- Alstonville Cultural Centre

4.8 Commercial Property Projects and Cash Reserves - Update

Recent and forecast movements for this reserve are outlined in Table 6.

Table 6 – Community Infrastructure Reserve Movements (\$'000)

Description	2024/25 Actual	2025/26 Estimate	2026/27 Estimate	2027/28 Estimate	2028/29 Estimate	2029/30 Estimate
Opening Balance 1 July	4,271	4,207	6,682	181	1,587	1,614
Add Cash Inflows						
Interest Earned on Reserve	213	136	334	9	79	81
Rental – 89 Tamar Street	740	466	385	500	515	530
Rental – Fawcett Park Café	83	76	78	80	82	84
Dividend - Prop Dev Reserve	0	6,000	9,890	5,000	3,000	1,000
Sub Total Cash Inflows	1,036	6,678	10,687	5,589	3,676	1,695
Less Cash Outflows						
Outgoings – 89 Tamar Street	119	132	136	140	144	148
Outgoings – Fawcett Park Cafe	19	27	27	27	27	27
Loan Payments – Town Centres	475	478	478	478	478	478
Ballina Naval Museum	0	100	0	0	0	0
Ballina SES Building	0	2,850	1,620	0	0	0
Cawarra Park Boating	0	25	537	538	0	0
Gallery Deck	70	0	0	0	0	0
Kingsford Smith Upgrades	0	261	0	0	0	0
Lennox Rural Fire Shed	267	0	0	0	0	0
Public Amenities	0	47	0	0	0	0
Swimming Pools	32	0	0	0	0	0
Wardell Centre Revitalisation	135	283	0	0	0	0
Alstonville Cultural Centre	0	0	14,390	0	0	0
Community Infrastructure	0	0	0	3,000	3,000	1,000
Sub Total Cash Outflows	1,117	4,203	17,188	4,183	3,649	1,653
Closing Balance 30 June	4,207	6,682	181	1,587	1,614	1,656

Attachment 6 to this report provides all the movements for the Community Infrastructure Reserve between 2012/13 to 2035/36.

In respect to the forecast movements listed in Table 6 for the Community Infrastructure Reserve, a brief explanation for the major items listed, is as follows.

Cash Inflows

- Interest Earned – Interest generated from funds held in the reserve.
- Rental – 89 Tamar Street and Fawcett Street Café – Represents gross rental incomes from these properties. 100% of the income for 89 Tamar Street and Fawcett Park Café is transferred into this reserve. 89 Tamar Street income is reduced in 2026/27 and then returned to a level, below previous levels, in 2027/28, on the assumption the property is once again leased. These figures are conservative.
- Dividend – Represents the dividend from the Property Development Reserve, as outlined in Table 5, which is transferred to this reserve to assist in funding community infrastructure projects.

Cash Outflows

- Outgoings – Relates to the operating expenses for the rental properties.

4.8 Commercial Property Projects and Cash Reserves - Update

- Loan Repayments Community Infrastructure – The principal and interest repayments for loan funds relating to certain projects, most notably the Ballina Town Centre upgrades, and the Lennox Village Vision works, is financed from this reserve. The funding of these loan repayments is the primary reason 100% of the rental income from 89 Tamar Street is transferred into this reserve.

When taking out loans, Council needs to be mindful of the impact the repayments can have on the recurrent funding available for essential services and infrastructure.

When a funding source for loan repayments is identified, it then negates any reduction in recurrent funding for essential services. Applying the 89 Tamar Street rental income to offset the loan repayments minimises the impact on the recurrent budget.

- Ballina SES Building – A major component of the funding for this project is sourced from this reserve, as per the 2025/26 and 2026/27 allocations.
- Cawarra Park Boating Infrastructure – The transfers from this reserve match the 50% grant funding for this project.
- Kingsford Smith Upgrades – Relates to car parking and improvements to Kingsford Smith associated with the Ballina Pump Track.
- Wardell Centre Revitalisation – Relates to funding allocated to complete the next stage of the adopted Wardell Master Plan (Connecting to the River)
- Alstonville Cultural Centre (ACC) – The major allocation from this reserve is the \$14.39m in funding sourced from the reserve in 2026/27 for this project. The ACC is currently funded as follows in the LTFP, prior to the adjustments outlined in this report.

Table 7 - Alstonville Cultural Centre (ACC) Funding – As per LTFP (\$'000)

Item	2025/26 Estimate	2026/27 Estimate	Total
Expenditure	2,546	15,190	17,736
Funded by			
ACC Refurbishment Reserve	786	0	786
Section 7.11 Contributions	1,760	800	2,560
Loan Funds	0	2,890	2,890
Community Infrastructure Reserve	0	11,500	11,500
Total	2,546	15,190	17,736

Explanations for the various sources of funding are as follows.

Alstonville Cultural Centre Refurbishment Reserve

The Alstonville Cultural Centre (ACC) Refurbishment Reserve is an existing internal reserve that was created through an earlier transfer from the Community Infrastructure Reserve (\$400,000) plus transfers from general revenue that relates to Council's Facilities Management program.

4.8 Commercial Property Projects and Cash Reserves - Update

The \$786,000 figure is the opening balance for 2025/26, which means those funds are available for the project.

Section 7.11 Developer Contributions

The Section 7.11 Developer Contributions allocation relates to Council's Open Spaces and Community Facilities Developer Contributions Plan, which includes the following project:

- *Alstonville Cultural Centre Refurbishment and Expansion – Estimated Cost \$10.8m – Contribution from development – 16% – \$1,683,249*

This plan is in the process of being reviewed to update the works program, to remove projects completed and to ensure the forward works plan reflects the latest project estimates.

Once the Alstonville Cultural Centre estimate is updated to the actual budget of \$17.7m, Council could source 16% of that figure, being \$2.832m from developer contributions.

This is subject to sufficient developer contributions being held by Council.

The collection of developer contributions can vary from year to year, based on the rate of development, with the closing balance for the Open Spaces and Community Facilities Contribution Plan, for 30 June 2025 being approximately \$5.2m.

Currently those funds are financing the following works in 2025/26:

- Ballina Pump Track - \$1.194m – Project completed for slightly underbudget
- Sharpes Beach Master Plan – \$1.3m – Project completed for slightly underbudget
- Pop Denison Car Park - \$530,000 – Project yet to commence
- Alstonville Cultural Centre – Contract signed with works to commence shortly.

Assuming the first three projects are completed on budget, means that a total of \$3.024m (\$1.194 plus \$1.3m plus \$530,000) is sourced from the Open Spaces and Community Facilities developer contributions held by Council.

With a balance held of \$5.2m, as at 30 June 2025, this leaves approximately \$2.2m available for the ACC.

Even though the existing Open Spaces and Community Facilities Developer Contributions Plan is currently under review, it is unlikely that the review will be finished during 2025/26.

This means that there will not be an opportunity to increase the value of the Alstonville Cultural Centre Refurbishment and Expansion project (estimated cost of \$10.8m) until 2026/27.

4.8 Commercial Property Projects and Cash Reserves - Update

With the plan currently only allowing a contribution of \$1,683,249 from development, there is a risk that the \$1,760,000 included in the budget for 2025/26 might not be able to be fully sourced from the plan.

This is a relatively minor shortfall and if that does occur funds will need to be transferred from the Community Infrastructure Reserve, at year end, with those funds then able to be reimbursed when the review of the contributions plan is completed in 2026/27.

Loan Funds

Loan funds are currently in the adopted LTFP for this project, primarily as a balancing item, when the funding was approved, as the forecast level of Section 7.11 contributions held was uncertain, along with the balance of the Community Infrastructure Reserve, which was heavily dependent on land sales.

The \$2.89m in loan borrowings results in annual repayments of approximately \$252,000 based on a 20-term year term at 6%.

These loan repayments impact negatively on the recurrent revenue Council has available for service delivery, and the General Fund operating result.

With the General Fund budget under constant pressure to finance numerous services and with Council needing to reduce the operating deficit, it is recommended that the loan funding of \$2.89m be replaced by a transfer from the Community Infrastructure Reserve.

This means that the transfer of \$11.5m included in Table 7 is increased to \$14.39m, which is the figure that is included in the forecast movements for the Community Infrastructure Reserve, as per Table 6.

There is a high level of confidence that the cash flows for the Community Infrastructure Reserve, as per Table 6, will eventuate, and it is important that loan debt be minimised, particularly when the Bridge Duplication Project includes \$18m in loan funding.

The difference with that loan funding is that Council is aiming to include those loans in the current review of the Section 7.11 Roads Developer Contributions Plan, which then allow the repayments to be funded from developer contributions, as they are collected.

This should negate any impact on the cash flow for the General Fund recurrent budget.

- Community Infrastructure – The final line item in Table 6, is the allocation of funds for future Community Infrastructure Projects, with \$3m allocated in 2027/28 and 2028/29 and \$1m in 2029/30.

This funding is subject to the earlier forecasts coming to fruition, both sales and expenditure, and the figures are subject to continuous review.

At this stage, the funding has not been allocated to any projects, as it is a nominal allocation that might be available.

4.8 Commercial Property Projects and Cash Reserves - Update

Council could identify potential priorities, to assist with forward financial planning, or alternatively leave the funding unallocated for now.

In looking at other suitable projects, the report titled “Community Infrastructure – Non-recurrent Capital Projects” located next in this agenda, identifies several priority projects that are currently not funded in Council’s LTFP.

Financial / Risk Considerations

Commercial property development carries a medium level of risk due to fluctuations in the property market, as well as potential for variances in construction costs.

Options

This report provides an overview of Council’s commercial property development projects to highlight the funding potentially available from those projects, and how that funding is allocated in Council’s draft LTFP.

The options are to approve the inclusion of the forecast cash flows in the draft LTFP or to make amendments.

This report should also be read in conjunction with the “Community Infrastructure – Non-recurrent Capital Projects” and “General Fund – Long Term Financial Plan” reports later in this agenda.

Those two reports provide an overview of the preferred allocation of the Community Infrastructure Reserve dividends and the overall financial result for the General Fund.

The major items listed in this report, in respect to the draft LTFP for 2026/27 onwards, are summarised as follows, along with the figures as sourced from the draft LTFP.

Southern Cross Industrial Estate – Boeing Avenue – Land Subdivision – Hercules Circuit

An allocation of \$100,000 in 2026/27 to develop the feasibility and potential approvals for the leasing of lots 10, 11 and 12.

Construction allowance of \$2.5m in 2027/28, 2028/29 and 2029/30, for the potential construction of industrial buildings for lots 10, 11 and 12.

This expenditure is sourced from the Property Development Reserve as per Table 5 of this report.

Offset by rental income of \$260,000 in 2028/29, \$528,000 in 2029/30, \$804,000 in 2030/31, and then indexed per annum for 2031/32 onwards.

4.8 Commercial Property Projects and Cash Reserves - Update

This represents the potential rental income from three industrial buildings.

Item	2026/27 Estimate	2027/28 Estimate	2028/29 Estimate	2029/30 Estimate	2030/31 Estimate	2031/32 Estimate
Capital Expenditure	100,000	2,500,000	2,500,000	2,500,000		
Operating Income						
Lease 1			260,000	268,000	276,000	284,000
Lease 2				260,000	268,000	276,000
Lease 3					260,000	268,000
Total Income			260,000	528,000	804,000	828,000

Russellton Industrial Estate - Land Subdivision

Sales income of \$23.489m for 2025/26 to 2027/28, with no further construction costs, other than that already allocated.

Item	2025/26 Estimate	2026/27 Estimate	2027/28 Estimate	2028/29 Estimate
Capital Income	9,315,000	6,023,000	8,151,000	0

Wollongbar – Urban Expansion Area – Stage 3 – Residential Land Subdivision (WUEA)

Sales income of \$16.25m for 205/26 to 2027/28, with no further construction costs, other than that already allocated.

Item	2025/26 Estimate	2026/27 Estimate	2027/28 Estimate	2028/29 Estimate
Capital Income	5,700,000	4,850,000	5,700,000	0

Lennox Head Residential Land

A budget of \$200,000 per annum for 2026/27, 2027/28 and 2028/29, funded by the Property Development Reserve, to progress the development of this subdivision. No capital expenditure for construction of the residential lots, or sales income, has been included, as this subdivision is in the early concept stage and there is too much uncertainty in respect to the final nature of the subdivision.

Item	2026/27 Estimate	2027/28 Estimate	2028/29 Estimate	2029/30 Estimate
Capital Expenditure	200,000	200,000	200,000	0

89 Tamar Street

A conservative rental income of \$385,000 in 2026/27 being approximately 50% of the previous rental paid by the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ), increasing to \$500,000 in 2027/28 and then indexed per annum for 2028/29 onwards.

Item	2025/26 Estimate	2026/27 Estimate	2027/28 Estimate	2028/29 Estimate	2029/30 Estimate	2030/31 Estimate
Operating Income	466,000	385,000	500,000	515,000	530,000	546,000

4.8 Commercial Property Projects and Cash Reserves - Update

26 Endeavour Close

Rental income commencing in 2027/28 at \$120,000, based on a 6% return on the land value, indexed per annum for 2028/29 onwards.

Item	2025/26 Estimate	2026/27 Estimate	2027/28 Estimate	2028/29 Estimate	2029/30 Estimate	2030/31 Estimate
Operating Income	0	0	120,000	124,000	128,000	132,000

Snapper Drive

No income or expenditure included in the draft LTFP, with ongoing investigations to be carried out from existing budgets.

Tuckombil Quarry

No income or expenditure included in the draft LTFP, with the EOI process and ongoing negotiations with potential lessees to be carried out from existing budgets.

Community Dividends

- Alstonville Cultural Centre – Removal of the \$2.89m loan, offset by an increase in the dividend from the Community Infrastructure Reserve. The total dividend for this facility is now \$14.39m in 2026/27.
- Ballina SES Building – No change to the \$1.62m already allocated in 2026/27 to allow the construction of this building to be finalised.
- Cawarra Park Boating Infrastructure – No change to the \$537,000 allocated in 2026/27 and \$538,000 allocated in 2027/28 for the construction of this facility, with this dividend matching grant income.
- Unallocated Community Dividends – Allowances of \$3m in 2027/28, \$3m in 2028/29 and \$1m in 2029/30 for new community infrastructure projects, based on potential dividends from the Community Infrastructure Reserve in future years.

These dividends are subject to annual reviews based on actual land sales, rental income and construction costs.

Item	2026/27 Estimate	2027/28 Estimate	2028/29 Estimate	2029/30 Estimate	2030/31 Estimate
Dividends	16,547,000	3,538,000	3,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000
Allocated to:					
Alstonville Cultural	14,390,000				
Ballina SES Building	1,620,000				
Cawarra Park Boating	537,000	538,000			
Unallocated Dividends		3,000,000	3,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000
Total Dividends	16,547,000	3,538,000	3,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000

4.8 Commercial Property Projects and Cash Reserves - Update

The biggest risk is in 2026/27, which requires significant land sales in 2025/26 and 2026/27 to ensure adequate funding is available in the Community Infrastructure Reserve to finance these dividends.

In conclusion, the recommendation that follows is to approve the forecast cash flows outlined in this report, in the draft LTFP, for public exhibition.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Council notes the contents of this report on the Commercial Property Development Projects and Cash Reserves.
2. That Council approves the inclusion of the financial information, as outlined in Tables 5 and 6 of this report, in Council's draft 2026/27 to 2029/30 Delivery Program, 2026/27 Operational Plan and the draft Long Term Financial Plan for 2026/27 to 2035/36.

Attachment(s)

1. Boeing Avenue Industrial Estate - Subdivision Plan [⇒](#)
2. Russellton Industrial Estate - 2025 Registered Plan - DP1321815 [⇒](#)
3. Russellton Industrial Estate - Brochure - Land Sales [⇒](#)
4. Wollongbar Residential Estate - Stage 3 - Subdivision Plan [⇒](#)
5. 2026/27 - Property Development Reserve - 2012/13 to 2035/36 [⇒](#)
6. 2026/27 - Community Infrastructure Reserve - 2012/13 to 2035/36 [⇒](#)

4.9 Community Infrastructure - Non-Recurrent Capital Projects

4.9 Community Infrastructure - Non-Recurrent Capital Projects

Section	Financial Services
Objective	To confirm the preferred works program for the non-recurrent community infrastructure projects for inclusion in the draft 2026/27 to 2029/30 Delivery Program and 2026/27 Operational Plan.

Background

The capital expenditure in Council's ten-year, long term financial plan (LTFP), can be classified into two groups, recurrent and non-recurrent funded projects.

Recurrent refers to items in the LTFP where an allocation of general revenue funding is provided, each year, to assist Council deliver core community infrastructure.

Non-recurrent refers to items in the LTFP, where funding is not required every year, however there are times when major injections of funding are needed (e.g. swimming pool redevelopments, major community facility refurbishments, major transport-related projects, town centre renewals etc).

This report examines non-recurrent projects under consideration by Council.

Key Issues

- Priorities
- Funding options
- Outcomes

Discussion

This non-recurrent community infrastructure report is submitted to Council, each year, as part of the preparation of the draft Delivery Program and Operational Plan, as it allows Council to take stock of the numerous projects Council has delivered, as well as the projects the community wish to see delivered, or projects that form part of Council's strategic planning.

The report is updated with details of projects completed and / or funded, along with identifying projects not yet funded.

The report provides an opportunity to review existing funding strategies, to confirm priorities, particularly for the next four years, being the term of the draft Delivery Program, and to identify new projects that Council may wish to see considered.

Projects completed, progressing or with a funding strategy in place

This section of the report provides an overview of projects delivered, which then helps to highlight projects that may need to be renewed, replaced or expanded, along with projects that are currently in the LTFP.

4.9 Community Infrastructure - Non-Recurrent Capital Projects

The projects are listed in alphabetical order.

- 9 Commercial Road, Alstonville – Car Park – Complete.
- Administration Centre and Depot Master Plan – There is a recurrent budget for these facilities, however the budget is limited, at approximately \$800,000 per annum.

The recurrent works focus mainly on the depot master plan, with the four-year plan including a range of works to improve facilities such as the Engineering Works Shed, fencing and amenities.

The major funding shortfall is for the Council Administration Centre, which is approximately 40 years old and is showing significant signs of wear and tear, particularly with the floods in 2022 and major weather events. Leaking remains a major issue with replacement of the window glazing required to remedy the building. The estimated cost of this work is approximately \$1m and no funding has been identified. The work could be implemented over a few years.

- Airport Boulevard – Complete.
- Alstonville Cultural Centre – Funding strategy approved, and construction tender accepted by Council with major works commencing May 2026.
- Alstonville Town Centre – Complete.
- Ballina Heights Drive – Complete, with road to be extended as the Cumbalum Urban Release Area (CURA) B is developed.
- Ballina Indoor Sports Centre (BISC) – Complete, with potential demand for increasing the number of sports courts available.
- Ballina Marine Rescue Tower – Complete.
- Ballina SES Building – Works due for completion during 2025/26.
- Ballina Surf Club – Complete.
- Ballina Town Centre – Complete – Eventually Council will need to start planning for the next upgrade or refurbishment of the works previously completed.

Council has secured grant funding of \$400,000, which will allow the reconstruction of the roundabout on the intersection of River Street and Martin Street, based on a budget of \$1.31m, with works planned for 2026/27.

The Urban Roads Reconstruction Program, as per the Recurrent Community Infrastructure Capital Projects report earlier in this agenda, also provides for the extension of the paving, along with kerb improvements, from River Street north to Tamar Street, along Cherry Street, and the same for the extension to the intersection of Moon and Grant Streets. Total funding of approximately \$2.4m is included in 2027/28 and 2028/29 for this work.

4.9 Community Infrastructure - Non-Recurrent Capital Projects

Also, Council resolved at the 28 March 2024 Ordinary meeting to consider extending the River Street beautification works to the Kerr Street traffic lights. The estimate for this work is \$4m, with no funding in the LTFP.

- Car Parks – Sealed and Unsealed – The earlier report in this agenda highlighted the benefits of undertaking improvement works for Council's sealed and unsealed car park program.

Subject to the outcomes from that report, priority projects are as follows:

Sealed

Three car parks in Pop Denison Park, Ballina
Three car parks along Shelly Beach Road, Ballina
Two car parks within Missingham Park, Ballina
Pat Morton Lookout
King Street, Lennox Head

Pop Denison, Missingham Park and Pat Morton have funding strategies in place with the remaining car parks currently unfunded.

Unsealed

Geoff Watt Oval - Deegan Drive, Alstonville
Geoff Watt Oval - Ballina Street, Alstonville
Alstonville Tennis Centre - Lumley Park
Alstonville Tennis Centre - Park Avenue
Regatta Avenue, Ballina
Keith Hall Boat Ramp
Chickiba Drive Sports Fields, Ballina
Bicentennial Gardens, Ballina

Recommended funding strategies are outlined in the options section of this report, for Geoff Watt Oval and the Alstonville Tennis Centre, with the remaining projects unfunded.

- Cawarra Park Master Plan – This plan was adopted in 2022 based on the following works and estimated costs.

Table 1 – Cawarra Park Master Plan Components – 2022 Estimates

Item	Amount (\$)
General Works	210,000
Car Parking and Streetscaping	251,000
Baseball / Softball Field Improvements	56,000
Sports Amenity Building - Part 1	901,000
Sports Amenity Building - Part 2	778,000
Sports Amenity Precinct - Open Space	242,000
Contingency	488,000
Total	2,926,000

Council has secured \$1.1m in grant funds, which has been matched by Council funding, to complete the boating infrastructure component (Sports Amenity Building – Parts 1 and 2). The work is required to be completed by April 2028.

4.9 Community Infrastructure - Non-Recurrent Capital Projects

- Coastal Shared Path and Coastal Walk – Completed from West Ballina to Fig Tree Hill, Lennox Head, with the Coastal Walk being the segment from Boulder Beach to Pat Morton.

Council has previously received submissions to further improve disability access by creating additional links and loops, particularly around Boulder Beach.

The following image describes the options presented to Council in respect to these connections at Boulder Beach, with the high-level estimate for the works, being Upper Section (\$90,000), Middle Section (\$450,000) and Lower Section (\$450,000) (2023 – estimates)



No funding is allocated for these segments in the draft LTFP.

Another item related to this is the West Ballina to Alstonville Shared Path connection.

That concept plan is currently on exhibition and once concepts are approved grant funding will be needed to allow approvals to be obtained and the physical works to progress.

This is similar to what occurred with the shared path north of Lennox Head to Cooper Close, with Council securing a major grant to allow that work to be completed during 2025/26.

4.9 Community Infrastructure - Non-Recurrent Capital Projects

Without grant funds, that connection would have been beyond Council's financial capacity.

Council is also still pursuing the Ross Lane to Byron Shire shared path connection, with a joint grant application submitted by both councils, to the State Government, to try and secure concept funding.

- Kentwell Community Centre – Complete although Council has expressed an interest in the future expansion of the building.

There are no adopted plans for that expansion, although Council is in the process of developing the Treelands Reserve Master Plan.

- Kingsford Smith Reserve Master Plan – Council adopted this Master Plan in 2021. Total value of the works in the plan is estimated at \$25m.

Significant works have been completed to date, including the Ballina Pump Track completed during 2025/26.

Funding is allocated in the Sports Fields Recurrent Capital Works program in 2027/28 to implement further aspects of the Master Plan.

- Lake Ainsworth Coastal Management Plan (CMP) – Large parts of this CMP have been implemented, with Council continuing to secure grant funds, often matched by an allocation from Council's Healthy Waterways Program to allow the works to proceed.
- Lake Ainsworth Southeastern Precinct – Complete.
- Lennox Head Village Renewal – Complete including Lennox and Ross Parks.
- Lennox Head Cultural Centre and Skate Park – Complete, with interest expressed in expanding the skate park.
- Lennox Head Rural Fire Service Shed – Complete.
- Missingham Park Concept Plan and Car Park – Complete, with approximately \$2m in funding included in the Open Spaces recurrent capital budget, for 2027/28 and 2028/29 to undertake renewal works at this park.
- NSW Boating Now Plan for Wharves and Jetties – Majority of smaller boat ramps and jetties complete, with the major projects to be completed being the Martin Street Boat Harbour redevelopment and the Ballina Marina Master Plan (Trawler Harbour).

Both these projects are not funded and are not on land controlled by Council, with Council also resolving not to further progress the Martin Street Plan, during 2024.

- Northern Rivers Community Gallery Refurbishment – Complete including purchase of the adjacent fire station, which has now been converted into Ignite Studios.

4.9 Community Infrastructure - Non-Recurrent Capital Projects

Works are planned to provide improved weather resilience for the Gallery Café, with the planning approval process underway.

- Pop Denison Park Master Plan – Complete or funded, with the car park works scheduled to be completed during 2026.
- Section 7.11 Open Spaces and Community Facilities Plan – This plan is currently under review, and many of the works listed in the plan complement the various Master Plans listed in this report.
- Section 7.11 Roads Plan – The Section 7.11 Roads Plan has tens of millions of dollars of road infrastructure projects identified over the next 20 years and the timing of those works will depend on the collection of developer contributions.

Due to the significant financial liability associated with this plan, more detailed information on the works program is outlined later in this report.

- Sharpes Beach Car Park Master Plan – Complete
- Shaws Bay Coastal Management Plan (CMP) – Largely complete, with the next review of the CMP now underway.
- Skennars Head Sports Field Expansion – Complete.
- Spoonbill Reserve Master Plan – Draft plan currently on exhibition. The Open Spaces recurrent capital budget has \$280,000 allocated in 2029/30 for improvements to this reserve.
- Swimming Pool Upgrades – Alstonville and Ballina – Complete. Asset renewal works on both facilities will be required in future years.

These are estimated at \$500,000 for each facility and are unfunded.

- Wardell Village Centre – Boardwalk and other ancillary works completed as part of Council's town centre beautification program.

Council also adopted the Wardell Village Centre Revitalization - Master Plan in 2023, with this plan identifying three key focus areas:

- 1) Connecting to the River – estimated cost \$1.1m
- 2) The Street – estimated cost \$2.2m
- 3) Community Green Space – estimated cost \$1.1m.

The Community Green Space component has been completed with Council securing \$400,000 in grant funding towards the Connecting to the River component.

A total of \$1.05m in funding has now been allocated to that project, with works scheduled to commence during 2026.

The Street component remains unfunded.

- Wollongbar District Park – Complete.

4.9 Community Infrastructure - Non-Recurrent Capital Projects

- Wollongbar Skate Park – Complete.
- Wollongbar Sports Fields – Complete with recent drainage, irrigation and turf works improving the main fields, along with stormwater improvements to the access road.

Projects without a confirmed funding strategy in the draft LTFP

- Bicentennial Park Master Plan – Adopted in 2025, with total works estimated at approximately \$500,000 in value. Currently unfunded, including the car park component.
- Captain Cook Park Master Plan – The various elements to this master plan are as follows.

Table 2 – Captain Cook Master Plan – Staged Implementation (\$)

Ref	Item	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5	Funded
1.	Laneway and Car Park – access		750,000				On hold
2.	Public Art / Monument					50,000	On hold
3.	Improved Pedestrian Entry - River Street		200,000				On hold
4.	RSL Edge Landscaping	150,000					Complete
5.	Open Park Land – Paths etc				200,000		On hold
6.	Public Wharf and Pontoon (Boating Now)	300,000					Complete
7.	Water Play Area – Drainage etc					500,000	On hold
8.	Picnic Shelter – BBQs, Structures				150,000		On hold
9.	Public Toilets					300,000	On hold
10.	Jetty			350,000			On hold
11.	Landscape - Activity Zone / Fawcett Park			150,000			On hold
	Totals	450,000	950,000	500,000	350,000	850,000	

This is a high-profile location, and the project remains a priority, albeit unfunded.

With the Master Plan having been adopted in 2014, it may well be out of date and may require a further consultation process.

If this is a priority, the review of the master plan should be included as a future action in the draft Delivery Program and Operational Plan.

- Coastline and Estuary Coastal Management Plan (CMP) – This plan, relating to the Ballina Shire coastline, is currently under review and typically the works programs, such as beach nourishment, are well beyond the financial capacity of Council.

Grant funds are needed to complete any actions in this plan.

4.9 Community Infrastructure - Non-Recurrent Capital Projects

- Companion Animals Management Plan and Public Order - Priority works consistent with this plan include the embellishment of dog off leash areas (\$100,000). Council's Parking Rangers would also like to see Smart Senior Parking technology installed, at an estimated cost of \$500,000.

No funding for these projects is included in the LTFP.

- Cumbalum Circle – Plan of Management

In response to a submission from the Cumbalum Residents Association, at the 26 June 2025 Ordinary meeting, Council resolved as follows:

That Council makes note of the extensive work undertaken by the Cumbalum Residents Association, in preparing the draft Plan of Management for the Cumbalum Circle.

Council will include that Plan of Management in the annual inventory of works requiring funding as part of the Non-recurrent Community Infrastructure report, submitted each year to the April Finance and Facilities Committee meeting.

Feedback is also sought from the Residents Association on the preferred priority of works to implement the plan.

A response was received from Cumbalum Residents Association on 14 March 2026, and a copy of the associated submission is included as Attachment 1 to this report.

The projects identified have not been specifically costed and Council may need to provide direction on whether this plan is to be implemented, as it is not an adopted priority for Council.

A significant amount of time and resources has been allocated to the submission, and it is important that Council clarifies how, and if, this submission is to be progressed.

- Flood Management Plans – Council has limited funding in the draft LTFP for flood plain management works and many of the works need State or Federal Government funding assistance.
- Hampton Park Master Plan – Adopted in 2025, with no detailed estimates on the value of the works included in the plan.
- Hinterland Shared Path or Walking Trail – Council has previously resolved to look at options for such a project, recognising that funding has focused on the coastal shared path and coastal walk for many years.

It is estimated that consultancy funding of around \$30,000 is needed to complete a high-level assessment of potential route options. No funding has been allocated to that work to date, and there is no construction funding allocated in the draft LTFP.

One of the key priorities is to connect Pearces Creek Road between the Wollongbar Sports Fields and Alstonville, with works completed on Pearces

4.9 Community Infrastructure - Non-Recurrent Capital Projects

Creek Road during 2023/24, funded through the State Government's Strong Country Communities Fund – Round 5.

- Lennox Head Foreshore – There are significant actions under the Lake Ainsworth CMP relating to improved access and connectivity between Lake Ainsworth and Lennox Head CBD that are well beyond Council's recurrent funding budgets.

The work involves the design and implementation of pedestrian pathways, road alignment, car parking and foreshore improvements.

The estimated cost for these works is approximately \$2m, likely to be spread over two financial years.

Council's Public and Environmental Health Section is currently preparing concept plans and subject to Council approval, they could be placed on public exhibition for community feedback.

At this stage, no capital funding is included in the LTFFP, as Council has not yet approved any plans for consultation.

Also related to this is work at Rutherford Street, Lennox Head.

This is a project that aligns with works required on the sand dune and coastal protection works at the Southern end of Seven Mile Beach and adjacent to the Rutherford Street car park, as identified in the Ballina Coastline and Estuary CMP.

Given the ongoing traffic and pedestrian interactions along Rutherford Street and the car park, including the boat ramp area, it is planned to improve accessibility and connectivity with the Lennox Head Town Centre.

Currently there are concept plans and design works completed to place the power lines underground and a detailed design through to implementation is required.

Estimated construction is approximately \$2m, with no capital funding allocated in the draft LTFFP.

- Lennox Head Pre-school – Council has confirmed that 9 Byron Bay Road is available for the Northern Rivers Preschool facility.

In October 2025, Council resolved as follows:

That Council notes the contents of this report in respect to potential options for the use of the residual land at 9 Byron Bay Road, Lennox Head, with the current preference being to liaise with Northern Rivers Preschools in respect to the provision of a preschool on site, with the General Manager to report back to Council within six months on the development of a concept plan and a development application lodged within 12 months.

Council wrote to Northern Rivers Community Preschool in November 2025 advising of the Council resolution. Ongoing correspondence has continued since that time.

4.9 Community Infrastructure - Non-Recurrent Capital Projects

In February 2026 Northern Rivers Community Preschool engaged various consultants to assist deliver the project including Planit Consulting. Council provided confirmation of site access to the land for surveyors to attend.

In February and March 2026, Council requested a written update on the project to meet the six-month timeline as per the resolution. The status update is included as per Attachment 2 to this report. As per the Attachment, October 2026 is now the target date for the development application.

- Lennox Head Surf Club – Estimated cost of \$8m to \$10m based on preliminary designs. This project was identified as a priority due to structural concerns regarding the building approximately ten years ago.

Certain works have been completed to address some of those concerns and the urgency of the project has decreased.

- Newrybar Village Streetscape Master Plan – Adopted in 2025 with no estimates of the value of the works in the plan and no funding included in the LTFFP.
- North Creek Dredging – Approval - The estimated cost of this project, which is to obtain planning consent and is not for actual dredging, is approximately \$1m with Council having undertaken certain stages of the feasibility process.

There is no funding available to complete all stages of the approval process and no readily available funding source.

The project is on hold, until associated Coastal Management Plans (CMP) are completed, with those plans to determine whether dredging is a feasible option.

If dredging is supported in the CMPs, it will help Council seek grant funding to recommence the approval process.

- Richmond River Coastal Management Plan (CMP)- Similar to the other CMPs, the priority actions are typically well beyond Council's financial resources and require State or Federal Government grant funding to be implemented.
- Teven Reserve – Stage 2 of the Teven Reserve project, includes the construction of a toilet facility. The design and approval have already been completed in Stage 1.

The sealing of the car park is included in Stage 1, but not funded, and this is to proceed as part of Stage 2, to provide ongoing protection against traffic movements and flooding at the site.

The estimated cost for this project is \$350,000, with no funding included in the draft LTFFP.

Section 7.11 Roads Contribution Plan

4.9 Community Infrastructure - Non-Recurrent Capital Projects

The Section 7.11 Roads Contribution Plan is major component of Council's infrastructure planning and delivery, and it also represents a significant financial liability based on the works identified in the plan.

The plan is based on three distinct time periods for delivery of the works, with the timing based on future traffic modelling.

An overview of the works in the plan is as follows, using the estimated costs in the plan.

Table 3 – Section 7.11 Roads Plan – Works Schedule (\$'000)

Works Schedule	Developer (%)	2011-2019	2019-2028	2028-2036	Status
Western Arterial	100			35,000	Not started
River St – Fisheries Ck Bridge to Tweed St – 4 Lanes	49.6		4,300		Complete
Tamarind Drive – North Ck Road to Kerr St – 4 Lanes	98.6		7,900		Underway
River Street – Fisheries Ck Bridge – 4 Lanes	49.6		5,900		Underway
Tamarind Drive – Canal Bridge – 4 Lanes	98.6		4,400		Underway
River St - Fisheries Cr Bridge to Interchange – 4 Lanes	98.6		10,600		Part complete
Hutley Drive Extension	100			14,800	Part complete
Bangalow Road / Hogan St – New Left In / Left Out	100		700		Complete
Angels Beach Drive / Sheather St – new Left In / Left out	100		800		Complete
North Creek Road and Bridge	100		21,400		In planning
Ross Lane Improvements – West	100		5,200		Partially complete
Ross Lane Improvements – East	48.5		11,600		Partially complete
Tintenbar Road / Teven Road – Climbing Lanes	325			4,300	Not started
Tamarind Drive to Sthn Cross Drive – Right Turn Ban	100		170		Underway
Nth Ck Rd / Reservoir Rd / Hutley Dve – Traffic Calming	71.6		3,100		Not started
River Street / Cherry Street – Roundabout	70	1,300			Complete
River Street / Moon Street - Roundabout	70	1,300			Complete
Tamar Street / Cherry Street – Roundabout	70	700			Complete
Angels Beach Drive / Bangalow Road – Lane Extensions	100	990			Complete
Ballina Heights Drive	70	5,400			Complete
Cumbalum Interchange - Eastern Roundabout	100	3,900			Complete
Cumbalum Interchange - Eastern R'bout – Upgrade	100			900	Not started
Sandy Flat Road	100		3,300		Not started
Nth Ck Rd - Tamarind Dve to Sth Cross Dve – 4 Lanes	46		1,600		Not started
Tamarind Dve – Flathead Lane to Nth Ck – 4 Lanes	100		2,900		Not started
Bangalow Road – Additional Lane – Angels Beach Drive	100		1,400		Complete
Byron Bay Rd / Hutley Dve R'bout – Connect Hutley Dve	100	3,200			Complete
Coast Rd / Nth Ck Rd / Byron Rd / Ballina St R'about	100			1,600	Not started
Barlows Road Link	64.5		7,800		Concept planning

The total value of the works in the plan is estimated at \$169m based on historical estimates.

These estimates are well out of date as, for example, the Fishery Creek Bridge and Canal Bridge duplication contract is valued at approximately \$80m.

The Developer % column represents the percentage of the total cost of the works able to be funded by developer contributions collected by Council (i.e. the Section 7.11 apportionment).

The Section 7.11 apportionment is high for many of the projects, however the State Government cap on developer contributions for residential lots (\$20,000 since 2012 with some exemptions to \$30,000) means that Council is not collecting sufficient funding from developer contributions to allow the projects to be fully funded.

This means that Council must rely on grants, or Council revenue, for many of the projects to proceed.

4.9 Community Infrastructure - Non-Recurrent Capital Projects

A link to the Section 7.11. Roads Contribution Plan on the Council website is as follows:

[Ballina Shire Roads Contribution Plan Version 4.2.DOCX \(nsw.gov.au\)](#)

This Plan is currently under review, and a report will be submitted to Council later this calendar year to determine whether an application will be submitted to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) to seek approval to increase the \$20,000 cap.

This increase is needed, if Council is ever going to fund all the works listed in the plan.

Currently Council has in the draft LTFP, the following major projects identified as priorities for the next four years:

- Fishery Creek and Canal Bridge Duplication – Funded and construction contract accepted and underway – 2025/26 and 2026/27.
- North Creek Road – Four Laning between Southern Cross Drive and Tamarind Drive - \$4m allocated being \$2m in 2027/28 and \$2m in 2028/29
- River Street – Four Laning between Burns Point Ferry Road and the Teven Interchange - \$8.7m allocated in 2030/31 and 2031/32
- North Creek Road Bridge - \$93m allocated, subject to grant funding, from 2030/31 onwards, highlighting the lengthy period that Council may face in delivering this project.

Importantly North Creek Road four laning has been included in 2027/28 and 2028/29, as originally it was felt that Council may not have had sufficient developer contributions held to undertake that project for several years.

Based on contributions held and collected to date, it now may be feasible to complete this project when the four laning of the Fishery Creek and Canal Bridges is completed, with this work essential to maximise the benefits from the Canal Bridge and Tamarind Drive duplication works.

The timing of this work will be subject to ongoing review and will depend on how the bridge duplication works progress, particularly with respect to any budget variations.

Other Miscellaneous Works

Other projects that have been submitted for consideration by Council, that are not part of formal plans or priority listings include the following.

Alstonville Swimming Pool – Electric Hydraulic Change Tables

A request for electric hydraulic change tables in the bathrooms of the swimming pools has been received by Council.

Quotes obtained in late 2025 are estimated at \$42,000 for both Alstonville and Ballina to be retrofitted with this hydraulic equipment.

4.9 Community Infrastructure - Non-Recurrent Capital Projects

Feedback from the pool contractor is that this is not a frequent request. These works are unfunded.

Ballina Swimming Pool – Hydrotherapy Pool and Recovery Centre

The Ballina pool contractors, Fettell Swim Pty. Ltd., have proposed a new Recovery Centre, including hydrotherapy pool, for the Ballina facility.

The proposal includes a new warm water pool, 15m x 10m in size with ramp and hoist access. The rationale is that the current 25m pool is overloaded restricting the growth of swim and aqua programs.

The Recovery Centre would include hot and cold contrasts including ice bath, compression therapy and consultation rooms for allied health professionals.

The contractor believes there is a gap in service provision in relation to a hydrotherapy pool with the closest facilities located in Lismore and Murwillumbah.

There are no cost estimates provided for this project, however, should Council wish to investigate this community infrastructure project in more detail, this would be a next obvious step.

Significant asset renewal works on both swimming pool facilities will be required in future years, with the estimate being \$500,000 for each facility, with that work currently unfunded.

Ballina Players - Amenities Re-roofing

A request has been received to replace the roof of the amenities at the Ballina Player's Theatre toilet block, this includes elements of carpentry, plumbing and roofing works.

These works are not in a capital works program. The cost estimate for these works is \$22,500 and they are unfunded.

North Creek Road – Prevention of right turn from 2-6 North Creek Road

At the 26 March 2026 Ordinary meeting, Council resolved to receive a report addressing the prevention of right-turn movements from the driveway servicing 2–6 North Creek Road, Ballina (Aldi / Supercheap Auto complex).

As mentioned earlier in this report, North Creek Road, between Tamarind Drive and Southern Cross Drive, is proposed to be upgraded to a four-lane carriageway with a formal centre median.

Until those works are completed, in the interim, the prevention of right-turn movements from the subject property can be effectively achieved through the installation of prefabricated (ready-made) traffic medians, complemented by appropriate regulatory signage.

This treatment would physically restrict right-turn movements while maintaining safe and efficient traffic operations.

The pink line in Figure 1, as follows, shows where the median would be located.



Figure 1 – Proposed Median and Signage

Pedestrian movements across North Creek Road are currently facilitated via pedestrian refuges located at the intersections of North Creek Road with Tamarind Drive and Southern Cross Drive.

These existing pedestrian refuges would remain unaffected by the installation of the proposed road furniture designed to prevent right-turn movements from the subject property.

Given the high traffic volumes along North Creek Road, and to ensure the safety of construction personnel, the installation of the proposed works would be undertaken during night-time roadworks. The works could be completed in a single night. The estimated cost is \$30,000 and is not funded in the LTFFP.

Based on the inclusion of the four laning of North Creek Road, between Tamarind Drive and Southern Cross Drive, in the 2027/28 and 2028/29 capital works program, the preference is to delay the implementation of these interim works. If, for some reason, such as lack of funding, the four laning of North Creek Road did not proceed as planned, these interim works could be completed until the four laning was rescheduled.

Community Engagement Strategy

The priorities endorsed by Council will be included in the draft 2026/27 to 2029/30 Delivery Program and 2026/27 Operational Plan for public comment. Many of the projects in this report reflect community feedback.

Financial / Risk Considerations

The financial implications of this report are dependent on the priorities determined by Council.

4.9 Community Infrastructure - Non-Recurrent Capital Projects

Options

In reviewing the draft LTFP Council has several major non-recurrent projects funded, or part funded, for the four-year life of the Delivery Program.

Overall, the preference is to focus on adopted plans, particularly for non-recurrent project funding, as funding allocations can become ad hoc.

There are numerous plans that are unfunded, and this report provides Council with an opportunity to confirm which works are to be funded.

Based on earlier decisions in this meeting there is the opportunity to confirm the priorities for the allocation of the community infrastructure dividends, that are identified in the earlier reports in this agenda, particularly the "Commercial Property Projects and Cash Reserves – Update" report.

As per that report, and as per the draft LTFP, the following forecast community infrastructure dividends, that are within the term of the draft 2026/27 to 2029/30 Delivery Program, have not been allocated:

- \$3m in 2027/28
- \$3m in 2028/29
- \$1m in 2029/30.

There are numerous options available in respect to the allocation of these funds, which are estimates only, and are dependent upon significant land sales during the next 12 to 18 months.

Overall, based on the contents of this and earlier reports in this agenda, the recommended allocation of this funding is as follows, again noting that this will be subject to regular review.

Table 4 – Community Dividend Allocations for 2027/28 to 2029/30 (\$)

Description	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30
Geoff Watt Oval Master Plan Implementation Including Car Parks and possible Skate Park	2,500,000	500,000	
Community Facilities - Renewals	100,000		
Companion Animals Plan – Embellishment of Dog Off Leash Areas	100,000		
Administration Centre – Window Renewal	300,000	300,000	200,000
Alstonville Tennis Car Parking and Lumley Park		200,000	
Hampton Park Master Plan – Implementation		1,000,000	
Newrybar Village Streetscape Master Plan - Implementation		500,000	
Ballina Swimming Pool – Asset Renewal		500,000	
Alstonville Swimming Pool – Asset Renewal			400,000
Bicentennial Park Master Plan			400,000
Totals	3,000,000	3,000,000	1,000,000

4.9 Community Infrastructure - Non-Recurrent Capital Projects

The focus of this distribution of funding is asset renewal and the implementation of adopted Master Plans.

The funding identified may be needed for other projects, where the recurrent budget may not be sufficient to complete identified projects, but nevertheless the distribution in Table 4 provides a guide as to how the dividends could be distributed in future years.

In respect to Geoff Watt Oval, the Open Spaces recurrent capital budget for Sports Fields includes \$292,000 for these fields in 2028/29, which can be added to the funding identified in Tale 4, if needed.

The Open Spaces recurrent capital budget also includes \$529,000 in 2029/30 for the skate park in Alstonville, with that site to be determined.

This funding may also be available for Geoff Watt Oval, dependent on the outcomes from the Master Planning process.

The Community Facilities allocation is a nominal allowance for various works, with renewal works on Council's community buildings being one of the main areas that struggles with a lack of recurrent funding.

The allocations are all very high-level estimates and will need to be further investigated as part of the detailed design of the projects listed.

This forward planning is subject to regular review, however by confirming preferred priorities, work can commence on the implementation of the projects listed, including approvals and the detailed designs.

The recommendations that follow endorse this approach.

In respect to the balance of this report, it is also recommended that Council support the preliminary feasibility for the Recovery Centre for the Ballina Swimming Pool.

The Council swimming pools are both very well utilised and with an aging population, as well as the Federal Government's National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) providing funding for recovery programs, there is merit in examining a recovery facility / hydrotherapy facility for the Ballina facility.

This could potentially be a joint venture between Council and the contractor, as the contractor should benefit from extra revenue generated through the facility.

The recommendation is to transfer \$10,000 from the Property Development Reserve, to investigate this proposal, as it should be approached on a commercial basis, to ensure that there is no net cost to Council from the provision of this service.

There is space located on the northern side of the Ballina facility for this centre, and it will be interesting to see whether a feasibility analysis can be prepared that demonstrates the provision of the recovery centre is a viable business that would also deliver an essential service to the community.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Council notes the contents of this update on the Community Infrastructure Non-recurrent Capital Projects.

2. That Council approves the following allocation of the forecast Community Dividends for 2027/28 to 2029/30 in the draft Long Term Financial Plan:

Description	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30
Geoff Watt Oval Master Plan Implementation Including Car Parks and possible Skate Park	2,500,000	500,000	
Community Facilities - Renewals	100,000		
Companion Animals Plan – Embellishment of Dog Off Leash Areas	100,000		
Administration Centre – Window Renewal	300,000	300,000	200,000
Alstonville Tennis Car Parking and Lumley Park		200,000	
Hampton Park Master Plan – Implementation		1,000,000	
Newrybar Village Streetscape Master Plan - Implementation		500,000	
Ballina Swimming Pool – Asset Renewal		500,000	
Alstonville Swimming Pool – Asset Renewal			400,000
Bicentennial Park Master Plan			400,000
Totals	3,000,000	3,000,000	1,000,000

3. That Council approves a transfer of \$10,000 from the Property Development Reserve to investigate the feasibility of the provision of a Recovery Centre / Hydrotherapy Pool at the Ballina Aquatic Centre, with the objective being to provide the facility at no net cost to Council, and recognising that there are opportunities for Council and the Ballina Aquatic Centre Contractor to approach this development as a joint venture business opportunity.

Attachment(s)

1. Cumbalum Residents Association - Cumbalum Circle Submission [⇒](#)
2. Northern Rivers Preschool Lennox Head - Progress Report - April 2026 [⇒](#)

4.10 Workforce Management Strategy - 2026/27 to 2029/30

4.10 Workforce Management Strategy - 2026/27 to 2029/30

Section People and Culture

Objective To obtain approval to exhibit the draft Workforce Management Strategy 2026/27 to 2029/30.

Background

The Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) framework requires councils to have a resourcing strategy, which consists of the Long-Term Financial Plan (LTFP), the Strategic Asset Management Plan and the Workforce Management Strategy.

The Workforce Management Strategy outlines the human resourcing requirements of Council's Delivery Program and Operational Plan. This report reviews the draft Workforce Management Strategy for 2026/27 to 2029/30, which is included as Attachment 1.

Key Issues

- Council's future workforce challenges will continue to be shaped by demographic change, skills shortages, housing pressures, environmental risk, and rising expectations of local government.
- Our workforce plan aims to ensure Council has the right people, with the right skills, in the right roles, at the right time, while also building a workforce that is safe, adaptable, engaged and connected to the community it serves.
- Some of the challenges we have include labour market constraints, workforce demographics, critical skills gaps, emerging capability needs, Community and climate resilience and increasing community expectations

Discussion

Workforce Management Strategy

The draft Workforce Management Strategy provides an overview of Council's organisation structure and workforce, along with a summary of the actions to be implemented, to ensure that Council has a contemporary work force to deliver actions from the Community Strategic Plan, Delivery Program and Operational Plan.

With the impact of staff shortages and resourcing, an ageing workforce, cost of living factors and a highly competitive employment market, many areas of the organisation are facing resourcing challenges and high workloads.

Currently 62% of Council's workforce are 45 years or older. Investing in the ongoing recruitment of Apprentices and Trainees, including progression of roles upon completion of studies, is a critical requirement to ensure a future pipeline of candidates.

4.10 Workforce Management Strategy - 2026/27 to 2029/30

Several positions proposed in this strategy relate to permanent career paths for trainees and apprentices.

Casual resources, or contractors, are engaged to assist with peaks and projects, however it is important to employ permanent staff where there is an identified ongoing resource need, and recurrent funding available, as this helps with a more consistent level of service delivery and supports the financial stability of employees.

This year, the Workforce Management Strategy has been refreshed and modernised, with key enhancements including:

- The document reframed as a Workforce Management Strategy, (previously named Workforce Management Plan) aligning with Office of Local Government guidelines and strengthening its strategic intent
- Modern infographics have been incorporated to present demographic data and community insights in a clear, visually engaging way
- Content has been refined to reduce text and replace older style charts, improving readability
- Photographs showcasing our workforce and the Shire have been added to reflect our people, place, and local identity
- Council's Vision and Values are now embedded throughout the strategy to reinforce organisational alignment
- An Acknowledgement of Country has been included to recognise Traditional Custodians
- The workforce environmental scan has been expanded to provide a deeper understanding of internal and external influences shaping our workforce needs
- Stronger links have been made to the Community Strategic Plan, including references to strategic directions and key community statistics.
- The section previously focused on challenges has been reframed as a clear, actionable four-year Action Plan with defined timelines. Measures are now consolidated in a dedicated Monitoring and Evaluation section for improved transparency
- Gender pay gap content has been removed, reflecting that Council has no gender pay gap, as demonstrated from the 2023/24, 2024/25 and 2025/26 workforce management plans. This information is not a requirement of the Office of Local Government guidelines.

4.10 Workforce Management Strategy - 2026/27 to 2029/30

The Workforce Management Strategy 2026/27 to 2029/30 is as per Attachment 1.

The Workforce Gaps Appendix in the Strategy is a summary of the additional resources sought by Directors to ensure that adequate services are delivered to the community, along with confirming which positions have been included in the draft LTFP.

A summary of positions funded, or not funded, for 2026/27 onwards is included in the Workforce Gaps, with more detailed information as follows.

Civil Services Division

Asset Management and Resource Recovery

- *Senior Weighbridge Customer Service Officer* – the role will provide customer service and administrative support to improve waste management operations.

This additional position will be required when the second weighbridge is installed at the Resource Recovery Centre. This will decrease the customer waiting times and improve traffic flow.

Funding for the position is included in the LTFP, as part of the operating costs for the Resource Recovery Centre, with that cost funded through revenues generated by Council's Resource Recovery Operations.

- *Weighbridge and Waste Officer* - the role will provide customer service and high level financial and administrative support to improve waste management operations.

This additional position will be required when the second weighbridge is installed at the Resource Recovery Centre. This will decrease the customer waiting times and improve traffic flow.

Funding for the position is included in the LTFP, as part of the operating costs for the Resource Recovery Centre, with that cost funded through revenues generated by Council's Resource Recovery Operations.

- *Emergency Management Resilience Officer* – the role will support programs related to emergency management planning and the Community Resilience Network.

There is no forward funding for this role in the LTFP as there is no funding source identified, and the General Fund is operating at a cash deficit.

Engineering Works

- *Floodplain Engineer* – the role will profile and manage flood risks across the Shire including computer-based modelling programs to analyse flood impacts.

There is no forward funding for this role in the LTFP as there is no funding source identified, and the General Fund is operating at a cash deficit.

4.10 Workforce Management Strategy - 2026/27 to 2029/30

- *WHS Safety Advisor* – the role will support the delivery of a safe and healthy workplace by partnering with and workers to apply Council's Work Health and Safety Management System and promote safety.

This role will help improve how safety is understood, prioritised, and embedded across the Engineering Works Section.

Funding for the position is included in the LTFP by charging the position to the operating budgets for Engineering Works.

- *Arborist – Road Maintenance* – the role will support proactive maintenance such as tree removal and canopy trimming over our regional and rural road network.

Council has been engaging contractor resources, and a position is under consideration, subject to there being sufficient operational budgets.

Project Management Office

- *Project Manager* – the role will write and develop Review of Environmental Factors (REF) and Conservation Risk Assessments (CRA) for capital projects to ensure Council projects are compliant with the environmental conditions.

Funding for the position is included in the LTFP by charging the position directly to Council's capital works program.

- *Project Engineer* – the role will undertake civil works planning, including assessment of delivery options and procurement strategies for the timely provision of infrastructure associated with civil works programs.

Funding for the position is included in the LTFP by charging the position directly to Council's capital works program.

Water and Wastewater

- *Water and Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator* – the role will operate, monitor and maintain water and wastewater treatment systems to ensure safe, compliant and reliable water services to the community.

This role will support succession planning by developing future talent, filling skills gaps, and ensuring knowledge transfer from experienced staff.

This role is funded through the operational budgets for the Wastewater Treatment Plants.

- *Fitter* – this role will assist in the maintenance, repair and installation of mechanical equipment and infrastructure related to the Water and Wastewater network.

This role will support succession planning by developing future talent, filling skills gaps, and ensuring knowledge transfer from experienced staff.

This role is funded through the operational budgets for the Wastewater Treatment Plants.

Corporate and Community Division

- *Executive Assistant to Mayor* – this role will be a dedicated assistant to support the Mayor, as compared to the current shared position, with the role providing administrative and liaison support, including managing correspondence, scheduling meetings, stakeholder engagement and civic commitments.

There is no forward funding for this role in the LTFP as there is no funding source identified, and the General Fund is operating at a cash deficit.

People and Culture

- *Injury Management Support Officer* – this role will support Council's Return to Work and injury management programs, including provision of suitable duties and recovery planning, managing workers compensation claims and insurer liaison.

The hours will be funded through the reallocation of existing operating budgets.

- *People and Culture Officer* – this role will support the coordination of People and Culture programs, employee recognition initiatives and recruitment and onboarding processes.

The hours will be funded through the reallocation of existing operating budgets.

Communications and Customer Service

- *Communications Officer* - this is an increase in hours for an existing role and will support a growing range of corporate community engagement activities that are increasingly being managed by the communications team.

The hours will be funded through the reallocation of existing operating budgets.

- *Community Facilities Assistant (Cleaner)* – the part time role will provide routine and programmed cleaning services for the Alstonville Cultural Centre, including public areas, amenities, and library to maintain presentation and hygiene standards.

Funding for the position is included in the LTFP, as operating budgets for the Alstonville Cultural Centre have been included in future years.

- *Community Facilities Officer* – the role will support the operation of the upgraded Alstonville Cultural Centre, including booking administration, hirer liaison, daily facility coordination, onsite inspections and integration with library operations.

Funding for the position is included in the LTFP, as operating budgets for the Alstonville Cultural Centre have been included in future years.

Facilities and Services

- *Vehicle Mechanic* – Vehicle Mechanics continue to be difficult to recruit. This position is responsible for supporting Council's Workshop team in the maintenance, servicing and repair of Council's light vehicle fleet.

Funding for the position is included in the LTFP by charging existing operating budgets.

- *Trades Assistant* – this role will support with refuelling vehicles, assisting mechanical trades with manual tasks and picking up and delivery of spare parts.

Council has been engaging labour hire resources for this service and funding for the position is included in the LTFP by charging existing operating budgets.

Information Services

- *Information Technology Support Officer x 2* – these roles will deliver responsive technical support, maintenance and guidance to ensure Council's IT systems and infrastructure are secure, reliable and performing optimally for all users. These roles will support succession planning by developing future talent, filling skills gaps, and ensuring knowledge transfer from experienced staff.

The positions will be funded through the reallocation of existing operating budgets. Recruitment will depend on sufficient funds being available in the operating budgets for this section.

Planning and Environmental Health Division

Development Services

- *Town Planner x 2*– these roles will support with planning and assessing land use and development to ensure growth is sustainable, compliant with legislation, and aligned with community needs and strategic planning objectives.

There is no forward funding for these roles in in the LTFP, noting one position is currently a term contract position of 21 hours per week.

- *Development Assessment Officer* - this role will support with planning and assessing land use and development to ensure growth is sustainable, compliant with legislation, and aligned with community needs and strategic planning objectives.

There is no forward funding for this role in the LTFP as there is no funding source identified, and the General Fund is operating at a cash deficit.

- *Graduate Building Surveyor* – this role will support in assessing and inspecting building work to ensure it complies with relevant legislation, codes and standards. This role will support succession planning by developing future talent, filling skills gaps, and ensuring knowledge transfer from experienced staff.

There is no forward funding for this role in the LTFP as there is no funding source identified, and the General Fund is operating at a cash deficit.

- *Administration and Customer Support Officer* - this role will provide high level administration, customer service and secretarial support to Council's Planning and Environmental Health Section.

There is no forward funding for this role in the LTFP as there is no funding source identified, and the General Fund is operating at a cash deficit.

Open Spaces

- *Horticultural Labourer* – the position will perform a range of horticultural and landscaping tasks to maintain and enhance Council parks, gardens and public open spaces in a safe, sustainable and visually appealing condition.

There is no forward funding for this role in the LTFP, as the Open Spaces operating budgets are already struggling to remain within the allocated funds, and cannot absorb further costs.

- *Cleaner* – this role will clean public amenities, streetscapes and Council assets. The provision of new and further planned facilities adds to the workload of existing cleaning staff. This position will also facilitate additional deep cleaning to maximise the presentation and cleanliness of our public amenities.

Funding for the position is included in the LTFP, as the public amenities maintenance and cleaning budgets have been increased by above CPI, to recognise new facilities, such as Sharpes Beach, as well as improvements to existing facilities.

- *Irrigation Officer* – this role will assist the Irrigation Tradesperson in maintaining Council's recycled and potable irrigation systems.

There is no forward funding for this role in the LTFP, as the Open Spaces operating budgets are already struggling to remain within the allocated funds, and cannot absorb further costs.

Health and Environment

- *Graduate Environmental Health Officer* – The role involves investigating and responding to environmental complaints related to air, water, noise, and land pollution, as well as conducting inspections of swimming pools, food businesses, and skin penetration premises.

This position will assist with succession planning and will provide a progression point for the Environmental Health Cadet role at the end of the grant funded cadetship period.

The position will be part funded through the reallocation of existing operating budgets. Recruitment will depend on sufficient funds being available in the operating budgets for this section. No funding has yet been identified to support this change.

4.10 Workforce Management Strategy - 2026/27 to 2029/30

- *Technical Support Officer* x 3 – The roles would focus on Coastal and Estuary Management, Ranger Services, and Planning, Land Use and Environmental Compliance. This is a redesign of existing positions.

The redesign of these roles will depend on sufficient funds being available in the operating budgets for this section. No funding has yet been identified to support this change.

- *Customer Service and Administration Officer* – this part time role will support customer service and administration tasks including telephone overflow queues, ranger support and authority registers.

The position will be part funded through the reallocation of existing operating budgets. Recruitment will depend on sufficient funds being available in the operating budgets for this section. No funding has yet been identified to support this change.

Community Engagement Strategy

The preparation of the Workforce Management Strategy involves consultation across the organisation along with a review of our service delivery. The draft Workforce Management Strategy will be placed on public exhibition for public comment. Any changes to existing staff positions are subject to Local Government Award consultation and notification requirements.

Financial / Risk Considerations

The positions identified as funded in the Workforce Management Strategy are included in the draft LTFP. The qualifier is that the financial forecast for 2026/27 is a working capital and operating deficit, which means savings still need to be made across Council's operations, in the short to medium term, to improve financial sustainability.

Demand for Council services always outweighs the funding and resources available, and the positions funded in the draft LTFP are core services to support the delivery of essential Council services to the community.

Options

The Workforce Management Strategy forms part of the Integrated Planning and Reporting suite of documents. The options relating to the Workforce Management Strategy are to approve the exhibition of the document or amend it. It is recommended that Council approve the exhibition of the document.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council approves the exhibition of the draft Workforce Management Strategy 2026/27 to 2029/30, as per Attachment 1 to this report.

Attachment(s)

1. Workforce Management Strategy - 2026/27 to 2029/30 (Draft) (Under separate cover) [↔](#)

4.11 General Fund - Long Term Financial Plan

4.11 General Fund - Long Term Financial Plan

Section	Financial Services
Objective	To review the draft General Fund Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP) and to obtain Council approval to exhibit the LTFP as part of the draft 2026/27 to 2029/30 Delivery Program and 2026/27 Operational Plan.

Background

The Long-Term Financial Plan (LTFP) forms a major component of the exhibition of the draft Delivery Program and Operational Plan.

Council's finances consist of a wide range of programs, with the standalone business activities of Water, Wastewater and Waste having been the subject of separate reports to the March Finance and Facilities Committee meeting.

The focus of this report is on the remaining programs, which represent the bulk of the General Fund, with the LTFP at a stage where it can be exhibited, subject to any changes that arise from this meeting.

There are two attachments to this report:

- Attachment 1 – LTFP (provides a summary that helps to explain the LTFP and the assumptions applied) and
- Attachment 2 – LTFP and Budget (provides detailed information on the LTFP and budget)

The more detailed LTFP (Attachment 2) consists of seven main sections:

- Part A – Provides an overview of the forecast results, from an operating result and working capital perspective
- Part B – Provides the operating revenues and expenses for each of the General Fund programs, along with Water and Wastewater
- Part C – Summary of the capital expenditure planned, along with how that expenditure is funded
- Part D – Summary of capital income items and movements in Section 7.11 contributions
- Part E – Transfers to and from the reserves held within the General Fund, along with forecast reserve balances
- Part F – Summarises the General Fund loan repayments and loan debt
- Part G – Appendices for the document.

4.11 General Fund - Long Term Financial Plan

Key Issues

- Financial sustainability and forecast working capital result
- Council services

Discussion

In managing a Council's finances one of the key objectives is to obtain a cash operating surplus, with the surplus funds then invested into capital activities such as asset expenditure, particularly asset renewal, loan principal repayments and transfers to reserve for future activities.

This means it is important to minimise increases in operating expenses, without offsetting revenues, as any net increase results in less funding being available for capital activities.

Council resolved at the 11 December 2025 Ordinary meeting as follows:

That Council authorises the General Manager to apply to IPART for a special rate variation based on 6% per annum for the four-year period from 2026/27 to 2029/30.

The draft LTFP (i.e. Attachment 1), provides the General Fund forecast based on an assumed special rate variation of 6% across 2026/27 to 2029/30 (referred to as Model 1).

Under this Model Council achieves an operating surplus on a consolidated basis for the ten-year period and the General Fund in year four (2029/30).

The forecast operating results, and working capital (WC) movements, for the General Fund are as follows, as per Attachment 1 and Attachment 2 – Part A.

Table 1 - Forecast General Fund Operating Result (\$'000)

Year	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35	2035/36
Operating Revs	104,792	110,353	115,106	121,201	124,903	129,597	134,189	139,146	144,062	149,269
Operating Expenses Excl Non-Cash	82,439	86,388	89,343	92,053	93,335	96,492	99,581	102,007	105,117	107,969
Result before Non-Cash items	22,353	23,965	25,763	29,148	31,568	33,105	34,608	37,139	38,945	41,300
Less Depreciation and Loss on Disposal	26,361	26,411	27,253	28,123	29,020	29,944	30,899	31,883	32,899	33,944
Operating Result (Deficit)	(4,008)	(2,446)	(1,490)	1,025	2,548	3,161	3,709	5,256	6,046	7,356
Operating Ratio	(4.59%)	(3.15%)	(0.88%)	1.30%	2.53%	2.95%	3.30%	4.34%	4.78%	5.54%
WC Result	(739)	(274)	7	594	866	1,277	1,671	2,171	2,676	3,273
WC Balance	999	725	732	1,326	2,192	3,469	5,140	7,311	9,987	13,260

For 2026/27, the forecast Operating Result is a deficit of \$4.008m and the forecast cash result is a reduction to working capital of \$739,000.

4.11 General Fund - Long Term Financial Plan

Council's forecast depreciation expense and loss on disposal of assets for 2026/27 is \$26.36m, which represents 24% of total operating expenses.

Non-Cash adjustments include an estimate of a fair value increment on investment properties and a net gain on disposal of real estate assets and plant.

The fair value increment on investments is estimated at \$960,000 for all years.

The gain on disposal of real estate assets is estimated at 10% of the gross sale proceeds.

The future year forecasts indicate the General Fund reaches an operating surplus and working capital surplus in 2029/30.

These forecasts should be viewed with some caution, as the further out the forecast period, the less reliable the information.

Table 1 also includes the forecast Operating Performance Ratio, as per the draft LTFP.

This is measured as the operating result (total operating revenue less operating expenditure, excluding profit or loss on sale) as a percentage of operating revenue.

The ratio is predicted to be negative for 2025/26 to 2028/29, working towards a positive ratio from 2029/30.

A second scenario (referred to as Model 2) is provided, based on assumed rate peg increases only.

Under that Model, for 2026/27, the forecast Operating Result is a deficit of \$4.497m and the forecast cash result is a reduction to working capital of \$760,000.

In respect to the models presented, matters of note in the General Fund forecasts, include:

- Salaries and wages have been estimated to increase by 4% for 2026/27, with the actual award increases, in accordance with the NSW Local Government Award, yet to be confirmed.

Some salary budgets in higher staff turnover areas have been set at 95% of the total estimated salaries, to reflect leave taken during the year, as well as vacancies that occur during the year.

- Forecast dividends to the General Fund for 2026/27 include \$500,000 from Commercial Property (increased from \$400,000 for 2025/26), \$100,000 from Flat Rock Tent Park, \$50,000 from Cemetery operations and \$50,000 from Waste Management.

These dividends help to reduce the working capital deficits.

- Economic impacts because of the conflict in the Middle East have not been considered within the forecasts presented. Recent events have cast a level

4.11 General Fund - Long Term Financial Plan

of uncertainty around fuel availability, fuel costs and broader inflationary outcomes.

Monitoring of the political and economic environment will continue over the coming months.

This will assist in the assessment of impacts, with any required responses, to be reported back to the 25 June 2026 Ordinary meeting, as part of the report on the adoption of the 2026/27 to 2029/30 Delivery Program and 2026/27 Operational Plan.

The additional revenue from the special rate variation (SRV) has been allocated as follows, which is consistent with Council's SRV application.

Table 2 – SRV Funding Distribution (\$)

Service	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30
Additional Capital Revenue				
Open Spaces Asset Renewal	50,000	200,000	300,000	310,000
Sports Fields Asset Renewal	100,000	200,000	300,000	500,000
Roads Asset Renewal	150,000	300,000	475,000	550,000
Footpaths / Ancillary Transport Asset Renewal	0	50,000	150,000	210,000
Community Facilities Asset Renewal	80,000	160,000	300,000	750,000
Stormwater Asset Renewal	100,000	200,000	375,000	550,000
Expanded Operating Revenue				
Healthy Waterways Program	45,000	100,000	105,000	110,000
Biodiversity Strategy Implementation	45,000	100,000	100,000	100,000
Roads Operations and Maintenance	53,000	54,000	163,000	198,000
Stormwater Operations and Maintenance	10,000	90,000	93,000	196,000
Open Spaces Operations and Mtce	100,000	140,000	280,000	324,000
Facilities Operations and Maintenance	45,000	100,000	120,000	140,000
Crime Prevention Programs (incl CCTV)	50,000	102,000	105,000	108,000
Total Per Annum	828,000	1,796,000	2,866,000	4,046,000

The Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) determination on the SRV application should be known during May 2026.

The draft LTFP and budget (Attachment 2) provides more detailed information on the individual programs, as per Model 1.

An overview of that information is as follows.

Introduction (Attachment 2 – Part A)

Provides a summary of the documents and the financial forecasts for the General, Water, Wastewater and Consolidated operations of Council, with this report focusing on the General Fund.

Operating Budgets (Attachment 2 – Part B)

Planning and Environmental Health Division (pages 15 to 28)

- Development Services

Excluding the direct costs redistributed to other business units, the overall forecast cash result shows an improvement of \$47,000, or 3.6%.

Operating revenue is forecast to be \$197,000, or 8% higher than the 2025/26 forecast.

This is based on an expectation that development activity continues to increase following the relatively low levels for 2023/24 and 2024/25.

The largest budget item for this section is Employee Costs, which is forecast to be \$310,000, or 9.8% higher than 2025/26.

The Employee Costs budget for 2026/27 has been set at 95% of salaries, in comparison to only 90% of salaries for the 2025/26 year. This reflects a more stable recruitment environment for this section, with most of the available positions filled.

To offset this, the budget for consultants, or contract planners, is reduced, with forecast expenditure of \$50,000, being \$170,000 less than 2025/26.

The budget for legal expenses has been set at \$360,000.

The current adopted budget for 2025/26 is \$350,000 and this has been the average net cost for legal expenses in recent years, after deducting legal costs recovered.

- Health and Environment

The cash result after capital movements for 2026/27 shows an overall deterioration of \$230,000, or 10%.

The largest budget item for this section is Employee Costs, which is forecast to be \$199,000, or 8.9% higher than 2025/26.

The Employee Costs budget for 2026/27 has been set at 95% of salaries, in comparison to only 90% for the 2025/26 year, for the same reasons outlined for Development Services.

4.11 General Fund - Long Term Financial Plan

The Healthy Waterways Program budget includes a further \$45,000 funded from the (proposed) special rate variation, with part of the 2025/26 budget having been allocated to other specific waterway related projects.

- Public Order (includes ranger related activities)

The cash result after capital movements for 2026/27 shows an overall deterioration of \$75,000, or 16%.

Operating revenue is forecast to be \$25,000, or 5%, higher than the current adopted 2025/26 budget.

Forecast operating expenses are forecast to be \$107,000, or 11% higher than 2025/26.

The main increases relate to operating costs that cannot be avoided such as cleaning, software and maintenance expenses.

- Strategic Planning

Excluding the direct costs redistributed to other business units, the overall forecast cash result after capital movements shows a deterioration of \$225,000, or 15%.

Operating income for this section includes interest income earned on developer contribution reserves.

Forecast interest income is \$653,000, a decrease of \$222,000 from 2025/26 based on lower forecast reserve balances, primarily as a significant amount of the developer contributions held for roads, are expected to be expended during 2026/27 on the duplication of the Fishery Creek and Canal Bridges.

This impacts on the reserve balances, not the cash result after capital movements.

Employee Costs for 202/27 are \$201,000, or 16% higher than the 2025/26 forecast.

The salaries budget for 2026/27 has been set at 95%, in comparison to only 85% for the 2025/26 year, for the same reason as Development Services.

The budget for Biodiversity Programs includes \$45,000 funded from the special rate variation, with the 2025/26 budget being overly high, due to funds carried forward from the previous year.

- Northern Rivers Community Gallery

Forecast operating income and expenditure budgets are consistent with 2025/26.

- Open Spaces

The cash result after capital movements for 2026/27 shows an overall deterioration of \$516,000, or 6.6%.

4.11 General Fund - Long Term Financial Plan

The operating expenditure budgets for 2026/27 are inclusive of \$100,000 funded from the special rate variation.

Despite the special rate variation funding, these budgets remain under pressure, as evidenced by the large budget variations that have occurred during 2025/26 since the adoption of the budgets in June 2026.

Increasing areas of open space and associated facilities is continuing to require more and more funding for this program.

For example, the Public Amenities, BBQs and Picnic Tables budget has been increased by 10%, to recognise the new facilities delivered during 2025/26.

Ideally further funds would have been allocated to this program, however with operating and working capital deficits, this has not been possible.

Civil Services Division (pages 29 to 52)

- Infrastructure Planning

Employee Costs have increased by a net \$234,000, an increase of 7.7%.

A portion of the salaries budget for 2026/27 has been set at 95%, consistent with the 2025/26 year.

- Stormwater and Environmental Protection

The 2026/27 Stormwater Drainage Maintenance budget is increased by \$56,000, or 9%, with \$10,000 of that increase funded by the special rate variation.

This is another area of Council's operations that again would be allocated significantly more funding.

- Roads and Bridges

Excluding natural disaster budgets and non-cash items such as depreciation and loss on disposal of infrastructure, the recurrent expenditure budgets are similar to the 2025/26 budgets.

Budgets for cleaning of paving and sails are decreased, with a necessity to restrain expenditure wherever possible, and the allocations provided are comparable to previous years.

Depreciation and loss on disposal of assets are significant non-cash expenses within this section, with an increase of \$200,000 to the forecast for 2026/27. These non-cash expenses are difficult to predict.

- Ancillary Transport Services

The 2025/26 budget included grant funding of \$193,000 for the Alstonville to West Ballina Shared pathway, with a matching expenditure budget.

4.11 General Fund - Long Term Financial Plan

The 2026/27 budget includes a Boating Infrastructure Maintenance budget of \$133,000, largely grant funded by Transport for NSW.

The budget for the Burns Point Ferry annual slip is \$140,000 for 2026/27, lower than the expenditure for 2025/26, with that budget alternating high and low every second year.

The 2026/27 expenditure includes a budget of \$200,000 for the Ballina Quays canal works.

- Transport for NSW

These budgets are consistent with 2025/26, incremented 3%. This section forecasts a nil cash result after capital movements.

- Emergency Services

Forecast operating income and expenditure budgets are consistent with 2025/26.

Expenditure budgets include contributions for Fire Brigades, Rural Fire Service and State Emergency Services. These amounts have not yet been confirmed.

- The Landfill and Resource Management, Domestic Waste Management, Water and Wastewater budgets were reported to the 9 March 2026 Finance and Facilities Committee meeting.

Corporate and Community Division (pages 53 to 80)

- Governance

Expenditure budgets are increased by a net \$180,000, or 5%.

Employee Costs are increased by \$20,000, or 2%. The salaries budget for 2026/27 has been set at 95%, consistent with 2025/26.

The budget for Public Risk and Plant insurance is increased by \$110,000, an increase of 11% over 2025/26.

This is yet to be confirmed but is based on indicative increases advised by Council's insurer.

- Communications and Customer Service

Employee and related expenses are increased by \$30,000, or 3%.

The budget for the Festival and Events Program has been maintained at \$145,000, with \$5,000 included for Ward Committee engagement events, as resolved by Council.

The 2025/26 budget of \$185,000 included \$35,000 carried over from the previous year. Refer to additional commentary as follows.

4.11 General Fund - Long Term Financial Plan

Council also resolved as follows at the 26 March 2026 Ordinary meeting, in relation to the Australia Day review report:

1. *That Council notes the contents of this report in respect to the design concepts and operating budget associated with the Australia Day event.*
2. *That Council supports Option 2, as per the contents of this report, in respect to Australia Day themed flags located in River Street, Ballina and additional Community Event Banner Signage, based on the preferred design (Concept Design 1), subject to a further report to Council at the 13 April 2026 Finance and Facilities Committee meeting.*
3. *That the implementation of Point 2, is subject to adequate funding being included in the adopted 2026/27 Australia Day event budget, with this request for funding to be considered at the 13 April 2026 Finance and Facilities Committee meeting, as part of the development of the Long-Term Financial Plan for the General Fund.*
4. *That Council also investigate modifying the banner poles to allow for the Australian flag to be flown in the lead up to Australia Day and on Australia Day.*

The 2026/27 budget for Australia Day is currently \$30,000.

The estimated cost for six Australia Day themed flags in River Street and an additional six Community Even Banner signs for 2027 is \$5,600.

To facilitate this additional cost, the 2026/27 budget will require an additional allocation of \$6,000.

One avenue to fund this expense is to reduce the Community Donations Program, which has \$84,000 allocated in 2026/27.

Reducing the Community Donations budget by \$6,000 to \$78,000 in 2026/27 will still enable the program to be effective, although at a reduced capacity.

The preference is not to fund this extra expenditure from recurrent revenue and increase the working capital deficit, as there have been numerous budgets reduced or provided with a limited increase already, to try and minimise the impact on working capital and the overall operating deficit.

In response to point 4 of the resolution in modifying the banner poles to accommodate the Australian National Flag, further costs are being developed and will be reported to Council, when available.

- Financial Services

Ordinary rates income has increased by \$2.1m, which represents the proposed special rate variation of 6% plus anticipated growth.

An increase of \$235,000 for the Financial Assistance Grant represents an assumed indexation of 3.7%.

Interest earned on investments for 2026/27 is forecast at \$1,550,000.

4.11 General Fund - Long Term Financial Plan

This estimate is consistent with the 2025/26 forecast, based on higher returns on a lower average investment holding.

The budget for Employee Costs has increased by \$94,000, or 5.8%.

- Information Services

Overall, the expenditure budgets within this section are increased by \$176,000, or 3.5%.

The budget for Employee Costs has decreased by \$41,000, or 1.6%, based on various position changes implemented during the year.

The budget for Other Software licence fees is increased by \$98,000, or 14.2% based on forecast prices.

A budget for Crime Prevention Programs and CCTV is included in this section, with \$50,000 funded from the special rate variation.

- People and Culture

The larger budgets for this section include Employee Entitlements, Superannuation and Oncosts Recouped.

Employee Entitlements are increased by \$150,000, or 3%.

This increase is based on trending the 2025/26 actuals to date, with award increases factored in.

The larger component of the superannuation budget relates to the Superannuation Guarantee Contribution (SGC) that applies for most Council employees.

The other component relates to those employees who are in the Defined Benefits Superannuation Scheme.

The combined budget increase of \$446,000 for superannuation is based on trending the 2025/26 actuals, with award increases factored in.

Oncosts recouped are increased by \$318,000, or 3%.

This item, shown as a negative expense, reflects the charging across the entire organisation of all the costs associated with employee entitlements (i.e. workers' compensation, superannuation, annual leave, long service leave and sick leave).

Forecast Employee Costs for this section, of \$1,527,000, show an increase of \$11,000, or 0.7%.

The income and expenditure budgets across 2025/26 to 2029/30 include Trainees and Apprentices funded by the State Government. There is a funding shortfall (a net difference between the income and expenditure) of approximately \$40,000 per annum.

4.11 General Fund - Long Term Financial Plan

- Commercial Property

This comprises Commercial Property Management, Flat Rock Tent Park and Quarries.

The total budgeted rental income for investment properties decreases \$13,000, or 0.7%, with a decrease of \$80,000 to the forecast income from 89 Tamar Street for 2026/27, partly offset by increases to the other rental properties.

Income for the Flat Rock Tent Park is forecast to be \$21,000, or 3.4%, higher than the 2025/26 budget.

The budgeted interest income is markedly increased, reflecting the increases in the forecast property reserve balances.

The 2025/26 and future income budgets include an estimate for the non-cash fair value adjustment, of \$960,000.

For several years there has been a consistent increase in the value of Council's investment properties, which are revalued annually in accordance with Accounting Standards.

For the 2026/27 and 2027/28 years, an estimated gain on disposal of real estate has also been included.

The estimate is based on 10% of the budgeted gross sales incomes for Russellton Industrial Estate and Wollongbar Residential land sales.

This equates to \$1,087,000 for 2026/27 and \$1,385,000 for 2027/28.

Within budgeted operating expenses, interest on property loans is nil for 2027/28, compared to \$329,000 for 2025/26, with the repayment of loans at the end of 2025/26.

- Ballina – Byron Gateway Airport (BBGA)

The long-term financial plan for the BBGA is reviewed in the Ballina-Byron Gateway – Long Term Financial Plan report, which is separate report in this agenda.

- Community Facilities

Total forecast revenue for 2026/27 is \$49,000, or 5.3%, above the current 2025/26 forecasts.

Forecast expenditure has an overall decrease of \$45,000, being a 3.4% decrease, with the largest expenditure item being employee costs having a decrease of \$76,000, or 9%.

- Richmond Tweed Regional Library Service

Council is one of four councils that form the Richmond Tweed Regional Library (RTRL) service (Ballina, Byron, Lismore, Tweed).

4.11 General Fund - Long Term Financial Plan

Under an established Deed of Agreement (Agreement'), Lismore City Council operates the library service, including the employment of staff, supported by a Senior Leadership Group (staff from across the member councils) and a Library Committee (councillors from the member councils)

The draft 2026/27 budget includes a RTRL contribution of \$2,028,000 representing an increase of \$55,000, or 2.8% from the 2025/26 budget.

- **Swimming Pools**

Revenues have been forecast to increase by 2.8%.

Expenditure, excluding interest expense and depreciation expense, has been forecast to increase by 3.4%.

- **Destination and Economy**

The 2025/26 budget included additional revenue and expenditure for the Destination Visitor Information Guide.

This publication is developed and published every two years and is not scheduled for production in 2026/27.

- **Facilities Management**

The 2025/26 budget included \$82,000 for insurance funds received and \$71,000 for flood expenditure incurred in that year.

The operating expenditure budgets for 2026/27 are inclusive of \$45,000 funded from the special rate variation.

Capital Expenditure (Attachment 2 – Part C)

The draft budget includes an extensive capital works program with the total works for the General Fund estimated at \$117.821m.

The program reflects the Community Infrastructure - Recurrent Capital Projects and Non-Recurrent Capital Projects reports earlier in this agenda.

The majority of the General Fund capital expenditure relates to the duplication of the Fishery Creek and Canal bridges (\$57m) and the Alstonville Cultural Centre refurbishment (\$15m).

Section 7.11 Contributions and Other Capital Income (Attachment 2 – Part D)

This section provides an overview of capital income movements, with many of those items helping to fund capital expenditure projects.

Loan borrowings planned for 2026/27 are \$18m for the Fishery Creek and Canal Bridges duplication, and \$1.82m for the Resource Recovery Front of House capital expenditure.

The forecast for Section 7.11 Contributions is \$3.5m, with Roads Contributions being \$2.5m of this balance.

4.11 General Fund - Long Term Financial Plan

Reserve Movements (Attachment 2 – Part E)

This section provides details on the General Fund reserves, including movements to and from those reserves, and the reserve balances.

A review of the closing balances section for Part E, provides the estimated closing balances for the General Fund reserves.

There are generally four main categories of reserve:

- Externally Restricted – This includes Domestic Waste Management, Crown Reserves and Section 7.11 contributions, as all funds held for these items must be held in reserve.
- Business Operations – The surplus funds for programs such as Cemeteries, Flat Rock, Airport, Landfill and Resource Management, Quarries and Plant are held in reserve, with Council taking dividends from some of these reserves.
- Future Planning – Reserves such as Council Elections, Leave Entitlements, Wigmore Arcade, Canal Dredging, Bypasses, Street Cleaning etc are all established to smooth out lumpy expenditure that occurs when payments are required for these services / entitlements.
- Contingency / Deferred Works – Major expenditure areas, such as roads, have funds held to assist with variations that occur in project costs, or where projects have been deferred from one year to the next.

Loan Principal and Interest Repayment Schedule (Attachment 2 – Part F)

This section outlines the loan repayments for the General Fund.

Balance Sheets (Attachment 2 – Part G)

This final section includes the balances sheets for the General, Water and Wastewater Funds, and on a consolidated basis.

Community Engagement Strategy

This report has been prepared following consultation across Council's entire operations.

Once approved, the draft LTFP, summary and budget, will be exhibited for public comment as part of the draft 2026/27 to 2029/30 Delivery Program and 2026/27 Operational Plan.

Financial / Risk Considerations

This report focuses on the General Fund budget.

The risk to Council is the recurrent operating deficit and the limited increases in funding that has been allocated to core infrastructure areas, such as Open Spaces and Roads and Bridges, particularly the maintenance areas.

4.11 General Fund - Long Term Financial Plan

Options

The purpose of this report is to provide the draft General Fund LTFP and 2026/27 budget, with options available relating to changes in the budgets allocated, particularly for 2026/27.

Once agreement is reached, Council is required to exhibit the draft documents for public comment.

The recommendation is to endorse the documents for exhibition, subject to any changes arising from this report, or other reports, elsewhere in this agenda.

Council still needs to be looking for savings in the recurrent budget to improve our working capital results for the General Fund in future years.

The draft LTFP highlights the difficulties for Council to achieve a balanced budget based on current income and expenditure levels.

To achieve the forecast working capital deficit of \$739,000 has been difficult, with many operating expenditure budgets decreased, or retained at current levels, which reflects a reduction in real purchasing power, based on forecast inflationary pressures.

Savings need to continue to be made, as it is essential that Council steadily works towards a more balanced operating result, rather than significant operating deficits.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council approves the exhibition of the draft Long Term Financial Plan, as per Attachments 1 and 2 to this report.

Attachment(s)

1. 2026/27 to 2035/36 - General Fund - Long Term Financial Plan - Summary (Draft) (Under separate cover) [↔](#)
2. 2026/27 to 2035/36 - General Fund - Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP) - Budget (Draft) (Under separate cover) [↔](#)

4.12 Delivery Program and Operational Plan - 2026/27 to 2029/30

4.12 Delivery Program and Operational Plan - 2026/27 to 2029/30

Section Governance

Objective To approve the exhibition of the draft 2026/27 to 2029/30 Delivery Program and 2026/27 Operational Plan.

Background

The Office of Local Government's (OLG's) Integrated Planning and Reporting (IPR) Framework require councils to regularly review the Delivery Program and prepare a new Operational Plan each financial year.

The purpose of this report is to obtain Council approval to exhibit the documents for public comment.

Key Issues

- Ensuring the documents reflect the key actions and outcomes of Council.

Discussion

The OLG's IPR Framework specifies a range of information that must be included in the Delivery Program and the Operational Plan. A summary of the major elements for each document is as follows.

Delivery Program (four-year focus)

- A council must have a Delivery Program, which identifies major projects and services it will undertake to achieve the objectives established in the Community Strategic Plan, within the resources available under the Resourcing Strategy.
- A council must prepare a new Delivery Program after each ordinary election of councillors to cover the activities of the council for the four-year period commencing on 1 July following the election.
- The General Manager must ensure that progress reports are provided to the council, with respect to the activities detailed in the Delivery Program, at least every six months. Council receives quarterly updates.
- A council must review its Delivery Program each year when preparing the Operational Plan.

Operational Plan (one year focus)

- Council must have an annual Operational Plan, adopted before the beginning of each financial year, outlining the activities to be undertaken that year, as part of the Delivery Program. The Operational Plan focuses on actions and activities to be delivered during the current year.

4.12 Delivery Program and Operational Plan - 2026/27 to 2029/30

- The draft Operational Plan must be publicly exhibited for at least 28 days, and public submissions can be made to Council during the period.
- Council must consider any submissions made on the draft Operational Plan before adopting the Operational Plan.
- A copy of the adopted Operational Plan must be placed on the Council website, within 28 days after the Plan is adopted

Council has been producing a combined Delivery Program and Operational Plan (DPOP) to avoid unnecessary documentation and duplication. A combined document is once again submitted for 2026/27 to 2029/30, as per Attachment 1 to this report.

A key part of the attached document is the section titled *Heading in the Right Direction*, as this section outlines the various activities (or tasks) that are planned for 2026/27, along with activities planned for later years.

Council has received feedback on the directions and outcomes that underpin this document from a community engagement process in 2024/25 that was used to develop the Community Strategic Plan 2035 (CSP) in 2025.

Based on the engagement results, the draft DPOP includes reordered directions to align with community priorities, revised direction statements, and adjustments to outcomes and action wording.

Some of the key actions listed for 2026/27, reflecting Council resolutions, or previously adopted priorities, management plans, or master plans, include:

- Implement Overland Flood Studies in Urban Areas (page 11)
- Eliminate Single Use Plastic Packaging and Materials across Council operations, Council supported events, and events on Council Land (page 13)
- Review Roads Developer Contributions Plan (page 15)
- Prepare Management Plan for Serpentine/Pioneer Park/Shaws Bay (page 16)
- Prepare Management Plan for Lumley Park (page 16)
- Prepare Master Plan for Geoff Watt Oval, Alstonville (include consideration of skate park (page 16)
- Assess accessible entrance options for Seven Mile Beach (page 22)
- Implement Aboriginal Partnership Agreement(s) (page 23)
- Develop an Arts and Culture Strategy (page 23)
- Conduct Youth Forum (page 23)
- Implement Cawarra Park Master Plan (page 25)

4.12 Delivery Program and Operational Plan - 2026/27 to 2029/30

- Progress Pathway from Lennox Head to Byron Bay Road (page 25)
- Develop an Integrated Transport Network Plan (page 25)
- Progress Development of Lennox Head Residential Land Holding (page 26)
- Investigate Affordable Housing Contributions Scheme (page 26)
- Investigate Ferngrove Reserve and Council land adjacent to Airport Boulevard for Organised Sports (page 27)
- Evaluate the Potential for Land adjoining the Russellton Industrial Estate to enable Industrial Development (page 29)

It is important that Councillors have their priorities included in the *Heading in the Right Direction* section of the document, as the actions direct staff resources throughout the year.

Ensuring this section accurately reflects the goals of Council, assists in allocating resources to implement the actions in the document.

An accurate document also reduces the need for ad hoc notices of motion during the year, which can redirect staff resources and impact negatively on the delivery of adopted priorities for the year.

The Operational Plan should be the document that reflects the Council's goals, and through its public exhibition and adoption, the community is informed on what is planned for the year and is able to measure how Council is performing against those goals.

The balance of the document reflects the capital works outlined in earlier reports in this agenda, along with reports to the 9 March 2026 Finance and Facilities Committee meeting.

Financial information and the rates and charges to be levied are also included.

Community Engagement Strategy

The Delivery Program and Operational Plan, including LTFP and Workforce Management Strategy and Strategic Asset Management Plan, will be exhibited for public comment, subject to approval at the 23 April 2026 Ordinary meeting.

The exhibition will occur during May and June 2026, with the outcomes from the exhibition period reported to the 25 June 2026 Ordinary meeting.

Community engagement activities include:

- Online video presentation accessible at any time
- Online engagement platform invites questions from the community to [YourSayBallina.com.au](https://www.yoursayballina.com.au)
- Engagement with members of Council's Ward Committees through direct correspondence and updates at the Ward Committees.

Financial / Risk Considerations

The draft 2026/27 to 2029/30 Delivery Program and 2026/27 Operational Plan provide details on Council's overall financial position.

Council will satisfy its compliance obligations by preparing and adopting the Delivery Program and Operational Plan.

Options

The recommendation is to exhibit the draft Delivery Program and Operational Plan, subject to any changes arising from this meeting.

It is important that Council add any actions or indicators that Councillors would like to see implemented, or measured, into the draft document as the Delivery Program and Operational Plan underpin the allocation of Council's resources each year.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council approves the exhibition of the draft Delivery Program and Operational Plan for 2026/27 to 2029/30, as per Attachment 1 to this report, inclusive of any changes arising from this meeting.

Attachment(s)

1. 2026/27 to 2029/30 Delivery Program and 2026/27 Operational Plan - Draft (Under separate cover)