

## **FINANCIAL YEAR 2024-2025 DRAFT BUDGET ENDORSEMENT FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

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Report Author:           Manager Financial Services (CFO)

Responsible Officer:   Director Corporate Services

Ward(s) affected:       (All Wards);

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*The author(s) of this report and the Responsible Officer consider that the report complies with the overarching governance principles and supporting principles set out in the Local Government Act 2020.*

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

This item is to be considered at a Council meeting that is open to the public.

### **SUMMARY**

A draft budget 2024-25 (and subsequent three years to 2027-28) including the 2024-25 to 2033-34 Capital Expenditure Program has been prepared following the outcome of extensive internal consultation and development. These documents articulate Council's focus for the next four years and outline the financial and resource strategies to fund the activities planned to support the community through this period.

The documents have been prepared in draft form to provide an opportunity for community comment as required under the *Local Government Act 2020* and Council's Community Engagement Policy. This report seeks Council's endorsement to release the draft budget for a period of community consultation.

Submissions received from community members (written or verbal presentations) will be considered at a Hearing of Submissions Committee meeting on 28 May 2024.

It is planned that Council will consider the adoption of the final Budget (incorporating any changes following community consultation) at the Council meeting being held on 25 June 2024.

## RECOMMENDATION

*That*

- 1. The draft 2024-2025 Budget (including the draft 2024-2025 to 2033-2034 Capital Expenditure Program) prepared in accordance with section 96 of the Local Government Act 2020 be approved for the purpose of giving public notice and undertaking consultation with the community.**
- 2. The Chief Executive Officer be authorised to:**
  - (a) Give public notice in accordance with section 96 of the Local Government Act 2020 and Council's Community Engagement Policy of Council's intention to adopt the 2024-2025 budget (including the 2024-2025 to 2033-2034 Capital Expenditure Program) at the Council meeting to be held on 25 June 2024.**
  - (b) Undertake any and all administrative procedures necessary to enable Council to carry out its functions in accordance with its Community Engagement Policy.**
- 3. In accordance with Rule 12 of the Governance Rules, the Chief Executive Officer make all arrangements for a meeting of the Hearing of Submissions Committee to be held on Tuesday 28 May 2024 to consider presentations to be heard in support of written submissions received on any matter contained in the draft Budget and that the Committee subsequently provide a report on its proceedings, including a summary of hearings, to Council.**

## RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

Council is required to consider and adopt an annual budget each year.

## DISCUSSION

### *Purpose and Background*

The 2024-25 draft Budget (and the supporting Capital Expenditure Program) captures how Council proposes to fund the initiatives in the Council Plan over the next four years to achieve the strategic objectives and strategies of Council.

In a challenging environment of increasing costs and significant reductions in State and Federal Government funding, the budget has a focus on maintaining and improving existing assets, continuing several significant multi-year projects, and delivering vital community services and support, whilst also being mindful of the rising cost of living pressures to our residents.

## **FINANCIAL ANALYSIS**

Council's draft budget document provides the financial roadmap for the future sustainable operations of Council.

## **APPLICABLE PLANS AND POLICIES**

The development of the 2024-25 budget contributes to the delivery of strategic financial information on the current and future projections of Council to the community, as outlined in the strategic objective of 'High Performing Organisation' in the Council Plan.

## **RELEVANT LAW**

Council must prepare and adopt a budget for each financial year and the subsequent three financial years by 30 June each year, in accordance with section 94 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

## **SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

The draft Budget includes funding for a number of key environmental initiatives outlined in the Council Plan that enable the delivery of key goals in the Environment Strategy, the Liveable Climate Plan and the Nature Plan to improve the health and biodiversity of our natural environment. These initiatives aim to reduce resources and energy consumption through environmental best practice.

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Community feedback has been sought on an ongoing basis throughout the year through regular community pop ups, community engagement campaigns and council meetings.

In accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020*, Council is required to give public notice that it intends to adopt the Budget, including the Capital Expenditure Program. These draft documents will be made available for inspection at Council offices and on its website for a period of 26 days and invite submissions of feedback from members of the community as per the requirements of Council's Community Engagement Policy.

Submissions will be able to be made at any of our Community Links and online via Council's website from 24 April 2024 and will close at midnight on 19 May 2024.

A delegated Hearing of Submissions Committee meeting will be held on Tuesday 28 May 2024 to hear a verbal presentation from any submitters who wish to speak to their submission, and to consider all of the submissions received.

## **COLLABORATION, INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT**

Not applicable.

## **RISK ASSESSMENT**

The annual budget must be in the format outlined in the model prescribed by the Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020. Council's Community Engagement Policy 2021 sets out how Council will engage with the community for feedback and participation through the process of adopting its annual budget.

There is inherent risk in developing a budget based on assumptions that are unknown or uncertain. Further, a constrained financial environment adds additional financial risk to the operations of the organisation. These risks have been considered and the development of the draft budget and supporting documents are considered to be appropriate and responsible.

## **CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

No officers and/or delegates acting on behalf of the Council through the Instrument of Delegation and involved in the preparation and/or authorisation of this report have any general or material conflict of interest as defined within the *Local Government Act 2020*.

## **ATTACHMENTS TO THE REPORT**

1. 2024-2025 Draft Budget
2. 2024-2025 Draft Fees & Charges schedule (Appendix A)
3. 2024-2025 to 2033-34 Draft Capital Expenditure Program