

ANNUAL BUSINESS PLAN AND BUDGET 2025/26



TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY	3
LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT	4
CITY OF CHARLES STURT MEANS THE WORLD	5
STRATEGIC CONTEXT	6
STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND MEASUREMENT OF PERFORMANCE	8
FINANCIAL STRATEGY - LONG TERM FINANCIAL PLAN	20
SIGNIFICANT INFLUENCES ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE BUDGET FOR 2025/26	24
BUDGET SNAPSHOT 2025/26	25
WHAT WE DELIVER TO OUR COMMUNITY	26
ANNUAL OPERATING PROJECTS	28
CAPITAL PROJECTS	32
HOW WILL WE FUND OUR PROGRAM?	39
COUNCIL'S OPERATING EXPENDITURE	41
WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR RATES?	43
SUMMARY	46
APPENDICES	47
APPENDIX A – LONG TERM FINANCIAL PLAN (LTFP)	48
APPENDIX B – BUDGETED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR 2025/26	58
APPENDIX C – CAPITAL RENEWAL PROJECTS	65
APPENDIX D – RATING POLICY	67
APPENDIX E – ESCOSA REPORT (SEPARATE ATTACHMENT TO COUNCIL REPORT)	79



ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY

The City of Charles Sturt acknowledges and pays respect to the traditional custodians of the land, the Kaurna people of the Adelaide plains. We acknowledge Elders past and present. We respect their spiritual beliefs and connections to land which are of continuing importance to the Kaurna people of today. We acknowledge the contributions and important role that Aboriginal people continue to play within our community in Charles Sturt. We also respect the cultures of Aboriginal people visiting from other areas of South Australia and Australia.

LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

Under Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1999 (SA), councils must adopt an Annual Business Plan and Budget each financial year. This must align with the Council's Strategic Management Plans and be adopted after 31 May but before 31 August.

The Annual Business Plan;

- Summarises the Council's long-term objectives.
- Outlines the objectives, planned activities, and performance measures for the financial year.
- Assess the financial requirements, providing a summary of operating expenditure, capital expenditure, and revenue sources.
- Details the rating structure and Policies and assess their impact on the community.
- Aligns the Long-Term Financial Plan and infrastructure needs.

Community Consultation

In accordance with legislative requirements, the Draft Annual Business Plan 2025/26 was made available for community consultation:

- **Opened:** Tuesday, 15 April 2025
- **Closed:** Thursday, 8 May 2025, 5:00 PM

Feedback opportunities included:

- **Online:** via Your Say Charles Sturt
- **In person:** at a community drop-in session on Tuesday, 6 May 2025
- **Council deputation:** verbal submissions at the Council Meeting on Monday, 28 April 2025

The Draft Annual Business Plan was also available for public review at the Civic Centre.

Final Adoption

Following consideration of feedback received during consultation, the final 2025/26 Annual Business Plan and Budget will be adopted by Council on the 23 July and the Act requires that it be adopted before 31 August 2025. A summary will be included with the first rates notice, and the full plan will be available online and at the Civic Centre.



CITY OF CHARLES STURT MEANS THE WORLD

The City of Charles Sturt is one of the largest metropolitan Council areas in South Australia. Covering 5,500 hectares and home to 130,000 diverse residents, our City combines cultural richness, opportunity, healthy living and recreation within the reach of beautiful beaches, the Adelaide CBD and essential facilities including the airport.

Our City stands at the forefront of Adelaide's sporting and entertainment sectors, featuring national sporting facilities, multiple golf courses, and the River Torrens Linear Park among many other attractions. It's a beautiful place which offers a wide range of educational, healthcare, and community amenities to ensure a rich and inclusive experience for everyone.

Our population has a greater proportion of ageing residents, and fewer children aged 14 and under. While many households are family-occupied, we also have a relatively high proportion of people living alone. Our community is proudly diverse, with residents representing more than 105 cultures and speaking over 130 languages other than English.

Our City is also evolving, driven by steady population growth, continued housing construction, major transport infrastructure upgrades and the goals of the 30-Year Plan for Greater Adelaide, which forecasts continuing population growth, particularly along key transport corridors.



STRATEGIC CONTEXT

The Annual Business Plan 2025/26 for the City of Charles Sturt has been developed within an integrated planning framework, ensuring our strategic direction is translated into actionable, measurable outcomes for the year and years ahead.

As part of this process, we've considered feedback from our community alongside insights from the Essential Services Commission of South Australia (ESCOSA) - an independent body that provides advice regarding each council's financial sustainability across the state.

In its latest report, ESCOSA acknowledged that the City of Charles Sturt is in a sustainable financial position, with a successful track record of operating surpluses and careful budgeting. Importantly, our service levels have remained consistent as we continue to invest in renewing infrastructure as it ages and the delivery of relevant new initiatives for our community.

ESCOSA also recognised something we're proud of: we listen. They highlighted our commitment to engaging with residents to better understand what matters most, whether that's safe streets, upgraded parks, connection services, or focusing on the environment and sustainability.

While our rates remain broadly in line with other metropolitan councils, we know many households are feeling the pressure of rising costs. That's why we're proud to be in a position to deliver meaningful projects and services while maintaining financial stability. It's a balance

we don't take for granted, and it continues to guide the decisions behind this Annual Business Plan.

Our Community Vision

The Community Vision provides the long-term direction for the City of Charles Sturt and is shaped by extensive community consultation. It reflects the aspirations of our residents and focuses on five key themes and four underpinning foundations:



To ensure we meet the strategic focus of our Community Vision, our Organisational Plan brings together the outcomes to be delivered by the organisation to meet this vision. Our Organisational Plan defines our objectives for the next 5 years where we will measure performance, prioritise initiatives and actions to sustainably progress the Community Vision.

Financial Sustainability & Long-Term Planning

Our 10-Year Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP) ensures we deliver on our Vision while remaining financially sustainable. It enables us to:

- Plan for future investment without disruption.
- Provide financial capacity to respond to emerging opportunities.
- Spread the cost of infrastructure and services fairly across generations.
- Make sound decisions about rates, services, and growth, informed by the community.

Strategic Review & Consultation

As required under the Local Government Act 1999, Council's Strategic Management Plans are reviewed within two years of a Council election. The Community Vision 2040 was endorsed by Council following an extensive consultation process in May 2024.



STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND MEASUREMENT OF PERFORMANCE

Community Vision – Themes, Outcomes and Commitments

The Community Vision outlines our community's collective aspirations for our City, and our Organisational Plan details the program of work for the next 5 years to support our Community Vision, which will be reviewed on an annual basis with the aim to maintain or improve performance reflecting our continuous improvement approach.

Measurement of Performance

We have a comprehensive set of outcomes, objectives and associated measures to ensure the organisation is progressing against the Community Vision outcomes, delivering on its commitments, and meeting broader obligations as a local government organisation in a sustainable way.

Our role as Council is vast with more than 300 measurable functions. A range of key metrics related to the Community Vision outcomes are outlined below.

In addition, an annual Community Survey is undertaken to ensure the outcomes achieved by the organisation are meeting the needs of the community in an evolving world and commenced in March 2025.

Strategic Priorities 2025/26

The Community Vision outlines 4 key strategic priorities, our flagship initiatives, and are designed to address our community's focus on addressing climate risk, building community

connection, and wellbeing within neighbourhoods, and maintaining quality of life as our population increases, and urban infill continues.

The flagship initiatives of:

- **Tree Canopy,**
- **Local Centre Revitalisation,**
- **Your Neighbourhood Plan and**
- **Community Renewables**

are key projects that were initiated in 2024/25 and actions continue to be delivered on in 2025/26 as outlined below.

Other key priorities for 2025/26 reflected in the Annual Business Plan and Budget include:

- Development of the **City Plan** which will involve structured, dynamic and highly integrated analysis of climate risk, housing, population impacts and equitable distribution of services across the City with a forward outlook of 30years.
- Addressing shortfalls in quality **open space in Hindmarsh and Beverley** to meet the needs of these changing communities.
- Development of design guidelines for the private and public realm to ensure that development undertaken by and/or within the City supports the needs of the community as set out in our Community Vision in relation to climate, inclusion, connection and community-led design. **The Urban Design and Infrastructure Guideline** will supersede our previous Infrastructure Guidelines.
- Investigating **Mobility as a Service (MaaS)** - a tech-driven solution that integrates public transport, carpooling, rideshare, and other transport options into one digital platform to let users plan, book, and pay for trips in one place to begin to reduce car reliance, ease parking pressures while remaining connected.

Key actions for 2025/2026 reflecting the Community Vision, outcomes and commitments and key measures by which we will assess our performance are outlined in the following pages.

Local Neighbourhoods

Improving neighbourhood facilities, amenities, and public spaces so residents have easy access to services, feel connected, and take pride in their local areas.

Outcomes	Key Measures
Our families, friends and neighbours create memories together	• Number of participants in community events and programs • Community survey: Sense of belonging
Our local businesses know your name	• Number of businesses supported through grants and advisory services • Community survey: Place of opportunity for businesses
Our neighbourhoods enable us to walk or ride to get what we need	• Residents within walking or cycling distance of key services • Improvements to walking and cycling paths and accessibility • Community survey: Local roads, footpaths, shared paths

Our places appreciate and reflect their local history and culture	• Number of placemaking initiatives delivered • Community survey: Culturally rich
We create local connection within and between neighbourhoods	• Delivery of key infrastructure and streetscape upgrades • Community survey: Satisfaction with council services and programs

Commitments	2025/26 Focus
Revitalise our local centres	Design of the revitalisation of Tapleys Hill Road at Royal Park and Hendon has progressed in 2024/25 with construction to commence in 2025/26.
Support community to connect, gather and build relationships	We will continue to build connection in the community via programs offered through our Ngutungka Hubs, community centres and libraries. We will support our community to hold events through; Street Meets program, Events and Festivals Sponsorship, and Arts and Culture Grants programs. We will undertake improvements at Sinclair Reserve at Grange, Bowden Village and investigate a BMX track in Grange.
Assist business to adapt, innovate and grow through capacity building and grants	We will support businesses to activate their local areas through our Shop Local – Façade Improvement Grant program. We will support businesses to grow and adapt through the Business Support Program and Business Advisory Services.
Foster and celebrate diverse community activities	We will provide grant funding programs for community events and Street Meets.
Connect people to their local neighbourhoods with improved infrastructure and streetscapes	Significant streetscape projects will be undertaken in Gibson Street and Hawker Street in Brompton and Bowden. Undergrounding of powerlines in Chief Street will continue ahead of future streetscape upgrades. We will further improve the usability and connectivity of our walking and cycling network through the New Path Program, Sustainable Transport Infrastructure Program and the Grange Lakes Shared Use Path Upgrade Program.
Celebrate our unique history and neighbourhoods	Geotagging and wayfinding solutions will be explored along with a review of Community Transport to better connect our community across our City.

Valuing Nature

Enhancing our natural environment, reducing our ecological footprint, and creating a greener, more sustainable City for future generations.

Outcomes	Key Measures
Our City is cool and green and filled with life	• Open space per capita across the City (households within 300m of usable open space) • Number of trees planted • Percentage of tree canopy coverage (Private and Public Land) • Number of significant and regulated trees • Carbon emissions associated with Council operations • Percentage of households with solar/renewable energy • Participation in environmental and climate-related programs
Our beaches, open spaces and waterways invite reflection and wellbeing	• Community survey: Community satisfaction ratings on parks, beaches, and open spaces • Increase in biodiversity • Community survey: Perceptions of coastal and biodiversity health
We work together with our community to protect the environment	• Engagement and participation in community renewable energy programs • Uptake of environmentally focused community grants (eg. Treebate, Verges Alive) • Percentage of waste diverted from landfill • Community survey: Council and community work together to protect the environment

Commitments	2025/26 Focus
Retain and expand the tree canopy on both private and public land	The tree canopy program commenced in 2024/25 and will continue into 2025/26.
Increase the availability and equitable distribution of usable space across the City	Pursue the purchase of open space at William Street Beverley via the State Government (DIT). Develop Wallman Reserve in Hindmarsh. Work with the developers (C&G) and the community to improve access and develop open space at Football Park and its surrounds. Review the distribution of open space and active participation rates across the City through the analysis and development of the City Plan. Progress a range of alternative water projects to increase water farming and water security across the City.

Deliver a community renewable energy program	Continue Community Renewals Program and VPP to offer community as well as sporting and community club access to affordable solar and battery solutions. Increase Council's solar and battery panel fleet on community buildings, reducing cost and increasing the availability of renewable energy to the community.
Protect our environment by being a leader in nature based design	Improve tools and practices to support nature-based design and incorporate it into Council's Urban Design and Infrastructure Guidelines. Additional raingardens will be constructed in the Tracey Avenue Catchment area to support water and flood management.
Empower our community to reduce emissions and the impact of climate change on our environment	Undertake a range of community led programs to support education on environmental management in the community. Grants and support programs like Treebate and Verges Alive will support community-enabled greening of the City. We will support climate readiness initiatives for the community through our AdaptWest partnership with the Cities of Port Adelaide Enfield and West Torrens.
Develop on councils emissions reduction performance	We will create the systems to align with Australian Sustainability Reporting Standard (ASRS) achieving 100% compliance by 2030.
Improve our biodiversity by maximising the opportunities for the creation of wild and green spaces	Undertake phase two of City-wide Biodiversity monitoring with the community and develop tools to capture biodiversity markers throughout the City. Biodiversity improvements and dune stability initiatives to enhance our coastal biodiversity.
Advocate and work with the State Government to keep our beaches and waterways healthy	Advocate with State Government and neighbouring councils to protect and enhance our coastline. Partner with State Government to undertake Stage 2 of Coast Park. Work with State Government on the River Torrens Linear Park management strategy.
Work together to reduce waste to landfill and promote a circular economy	Advocate for a sustainable State Government policy to support City-wide roll out of FOGO. Provide education to businesses on sustainable waste practices through our Business Support Program.
Advocate to the State Government for stronger sustainability focus in planning policy	Advocate for more significant penalties for non-compliance with sustainable building requirements and climate friendly planning policy.

Vibrant Places

Creating lively, attractive spaces that encourage community interaction, celebrate our diversity, and foster economic activity and cultural expression.

Outcomes	Key Measures
Our spaces are unique, creative, interesting and engaging	• Number of public art assets across the City • Number and percentage of initiatives incorporating community-led design • Attendance numbers at community arts, culture, events, and festivals • Number of outdoor dining seats • Woodville Town Hall events numbers and attendance • Grants engagement: Events and Festivals Sponsorship, Arts and Cultural Grants, Shop Local Improvement Grants • Community survey: The City of Charles Sturt is culturally rich and offers diverse experiences
Our City is recognised as a centre for sport, events and for bringing people together	• Number of major events and festivals held • Community survey: There's always a lot to do in my community
Our businesses contribute to the vibe of the destination	• Number of shopfronts improved through grants • Uptake of outdoor dining by businesses • Business participation in local activations

Commitments	2025/26 Focus
Embrace community led design	Extending the involvement of community and community groups in initiative design stages of consultation.
Activate and enhance public spaces in partnership with local traders and the creative sector	Commence a structured placemaking and activation program. Enhance Woodville Town Hall including improved lighting and ongoing support of the Fringe and Community Events programs.
Attract and partner with major event organisers to ensure their success	Events and Festivals Sponsorship Policy and Program supports partners to conduct events in the City. Support / create materials for event holders that improves accessibility and inclusion.
Support arts and cultural groups to help shape our City	Our Arts and Culture Grants Program will support artists and performers. Develop a plan of cultural events and celebrations across Community Centres and Libraries.
Encourage and support shop owners and traders to enhance customer and visitor experience	Shop Local Grants will support businesses to improve the streetscape, their façade and surrounds as well as customer experience offerings.

Improve support available and reduce red tape to local businesses to take up outdoor dining in key precincts.

Our Transforming City

Investing in essential infrastructure and innovative projects that shape the future of our City, driving growth, connectivity, and accessibility.

Outcomes	Key Measures
We respect our heritage as we transform	- Number and value of heritage grants issued - Dwelling density and growth in dwelling numbers - Housing diversity mix (freestanding, terrace, unit, multi-storey) - Affordable housing stock percentage - Community survey: Advocating for the interests of the local area to the wider community
We support diverse housing and infrastructure for our evolving communities	- Investment in climate mitigation initiatives - Climate risk mitigation actions undertaken - Vehicles per household/resident - Public transport patronage growth - Number and percentage of dwellings using non-car ways for journeys to work - Increase in property values relative to Greater Adelaide averages
Our City is resilient to the impacts of climate change	- Percentage of employment/unemployment rates - Percentage of local employed people working locally - Local business success (growth in number of business, new/closure rates) - Engagements with local business - Community survey: The City of Charles Sturt is a place of opportunity for businesses
Our City is prosperous, diverse and supported by innovative businesses with a variety of employment opportunities	

Commitments	2025/26 Focus
Develop a plan to improve liveability for the anticipated growth within the central precinct of our City	Your Neighbourhood Plans guide future initiatives through the City Planning process. Development of River Park Reserve, Wallman Reserve and the continued investigation of open space options in West Hindmarsh. Partner with the State Government to undertake a structure plan for the key Hindmarsh employment precinct.
Advocate for a mixture of density and housing types to	Partner with State Government on a code amendment to address housing diversity.

achieve housing affordability and liveability	Review Council land and building initiatives in the context of the housing crisis including assessing options arising from the imminent renewal of the Beverley Depot.
Advocate for improved and expanded public transport services	Work with the State Government to increase public transport services throughout the City alongside reviewing our approach to Community Transport and traffic management.
Work to reduce the environmental impact of movement through the City	Improve transport connectivity and minimise the impacts of urban infill on parking and traffic congestion.
Protect, maintain and repurpose heritage buildings and structures	Continue to work with the State Government on the Planning Heritage overlay.
Ensure our Asset Management Plans anticipate and respond to growth and climate change	Support City resilience including Flood Mitigation activities; Trimmer Parade and Florence Street and the Gleneagles Reserve detention basin. As part of regular Asset Management Plan reviews, factor in climate change impact mitigations.
Work with State Government and Developers to deliver high quality and sustainable development	Work with developers and the State Government on major housing developments to address housing crisis and enhance sustainability. Harmonise Urban Design and Infrastructure Guidelines and Engineering Guidelines as they apply to Private Realm developments.
Protect and create new job opportunities and assist people to prepare for meaningful jobs of the future	Action the Invest in the West Strategy and engage with industry to promote investment.
Advocate for a diverse and adequate mix of education and training opportunities	Develop employment pathways including engagement with schools and the Findon Technical College, conduct the annual Skills Expo in partnership with neighbouring councils and create opportunities for employment in local government.

Connecting & Belonging

Supporting inclusive initiatives that build stronger community connections, enhance well-being, and ensure everyone feels welcome, safe, and valued.

Outcomes	Key Measures
Our communities have a voice and feel respected and valued	- Community facing projects where consultation is undertaken - Households that have access to key services within defined distances - Projects delivered that adopt universal design principles - Volunteer numbers and hours

	Community survey: I feel that I can have a say in my local community
Our community has access to spaces, services and support when needed	- Number of and engagement with ageing well programs - Attendance numbers at libraries and community centres - Sporting and community facilities offering open access and inclusion discounts - Sporting and community club membership numbers - Residents living within 1,000m of community facilities - Community survey: The City of Charles Sturt offers services and support when I need it
We create opportunities for communities to collaborate, engage and connect	- Engagement with programs and events supporting active living, health and wellbeing - Community survey: The City of Charles Sturt is an inclusive and safe place for all people
Our City is a place where everyone can be healthy and safe	- Delivery of Disability, Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) outcomes - Cultural diversity reflected in community activities - Crime rates in our City - Dog attacks per 1000 residents - Street lighting coverage across the City - Community survey: Community feels safe in their home, neighbourhood, and public places

Commitments	2025/26 Focus
Involve, encourage and listen to diverse perspectives of community	Further enhancing consultation techniques to support engagement in council initiatives. Facilitating community education programs, events and activities in response to community need and trends.
Be equitable with our decision making and resource allocation	Develop the City Plan to support equitable distribution of resources and services across our diverse community
Bring people together and accommodate their diverse needs through universal design	Apply universal design and nature-based design principles to our project planning and design. Develop an inclusive and accessible viewing platform at Mirani Court Semaphore Park in conjunction with Stage 2 development of Coast Park.
Connect and support communities, community groups and sporting clubs to actively support their communities	Continue upgrade program for sporting clubs including major upgrades of Woodville South Sports Club Changerooms, Sam Johnson Reserve Clubrooms and a Masterplan of the St Clair precinct including, community facility and development of additional parking. Social inclusion discounts to sporting and community clubs who support open access.

	Ancillary Sporting and Infrastructure Fund for clubs to support them to maintain and improve their facilities. Implement Community Connections Infrastructure Strategic Review actions.
Promote opportunity and build capaCity for volunteering	Review volunteering opportunities within council and community to increase capacity for connection.
Advocate for and deliver equitable services and infrastructure that keep our diverse community healthy and safe	Public Lighting and Traffic Control Device programs support an improved sense of safety in the community. Deliver programs focused on active living, health and wellbeing across our community centres and libraries. Installation of shade structures where appropriate at playgrounds and reserves.
Fulfil our commitments under the Public Health Act and Dog and Cat Management Act	Provision of dog safety education programs and community events including; Responsible Pet Owner information sessions, dog safety in schools and Doggy Days. Provide Pet Desexing and microchipping programs. Provision of immunisation programs, food safety and environmental health programs.
Actively deliver, review and refresh our Disability, Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP)	Undertake DAIP Disability Access & Inclusion Plan review. Establish a DAIP reference group. Develop programs for the community and staff based on sharing stories of lived experience with disability. Include inclusive and accessible design in the Urban Design and Infrastructure guidelines. Design Inlet Reserve Inclusive Playspace in readiness for delivery in 2027.
Ensure our older population is provided with care support and assistance	AVOID Frailty Project undertaken. Dementia Friendly Design Principles built into council building programs and projects. Dementia Friendly Communities created through community centre and library-based activities, outreach services programs and information sessions. Inter-generational activities and programs offered across our City.
Celebrate and share the diverse cultures and backgrounds of our people	Cultural themes are woven into programs, events and festivals held across the City of Charles Sturt including offering a cultural awareness program to foster respect and understanding of diverse communities. Community-led programs such as multi-cultural Story Time delivered from libraries, hubs and community centres.

Underpinning Theme - First Nations

Commitments	2025/26 Focus	Measures
We will acknowledge and embrace our Kurna and First Nations history and communities working towards reconciliation	In 2025/26 we will work with the First Nations Reference Group to share the stories of First Nations history, people and heritage of our City. We will provide First Nations Cultural Awareness training to employees.	Reference Group Meetings and outcomes. Level of engagement with First Nations communities. % of staff completing cultural awareness training in the past 2 years.

Underpinning Theme - Responsible Governance

Commitments	2025/26 Focus	Measures
We will manage our City in a sustainable and affordable way with responsible governance	We will manage our assets in alignment with our Asset Management Plans. We will continue good financial governance practice including managing the organisation within budget. We will deliver on our committed projects and programs. We will undertake a business improvement program including reviewing service levels and value to the community. We will undertake a major migration of our ERP to the next generation of Technology One SaaS applications. We will redesign and update our approach to records and workflow management to optimise them ahead of system replacement. We will leverage technology to increase grant funding available to the City. We will explore AI opportunities that deliver community value. We will continue to progress our performance in Environmental, Social and Governance outcomes We will continue to review and implement measures to support mitigation of risks associated with cyber security. We will review Public Interest Disclosure Act process for reporting of suspected breaches under the Act.	Asset Renewal Funding Ratio. Percentage of Asset Management Plans updated in accordance with Asset Management Policy. Operating Surplus Ratio. Interest Cover Ratio. Net Financial Liabilities Ratio. Number and % of organisational initiatives delivered within budget and timeframes. Planned and realised benefits. Report on risks outside of tolerance. Number of FOI requests. Number of Ombudsman complaints upheld, partially upheld.

Underpinning Theme - Excellence in Customer Experience and Service Provision

Commitments	2025/26 Focus	Measures
We will foster an organisational culture focussed on continuous improvement and delivering excellence in customer experience and service provision.	We will continue to develop our leaders and our employee engagement outcomes.	Employee Engagement
	We will continue to improve safety outcomes for our people and our community.	Lost Time Injury Frequency Rate
	We will seek partner/s to accelerate the organisation's ability to benefit from technological advancement in the areas of Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning.	Compliments received
		Complaints received
	We will enhance our Human Resource Information Systems capability to streamline and update our organisational people management processes.	Grade of Service
	We will develop our data management capability and data governance practices to support improved organisational performance.	First contact resolution
	We will continue to employ graduates to support diversity and development of capability in council and the sector.	% service levels met
	We will undertake a number of self-funding process improvement initiatives including implementing online timesheets, increasing automation in relation to grants management and increasing system integrations to remove repetitive workload.	Operating costs per Rate Payer (normalised for existing service levels)

Underpinning Theme - Storytelling and Connection

Commitments	2025/26 Focus	Measures
We will connect with our community, telling stories, sharing knowledge, increasing awareness, creating opportunity, strengthening partnerships and promoting achievements.	We will continue to share information, knowledge and tell stories in person when we connect with our community, via our digital communication platforms and through our written communications.	Monthly eNewsletters sent to our City of Charles Sturt database.
		Quarterly Kaleidoscope magazine delivered across our City.
		Regular information on services, projects and two-way connection opportunities are shared on our digital platforms.

FINANCIAL STRATEGY - LONG TERM FINANCIAL PLAN

The Long-Term Financial Plan (LTFP) is Council's tool for responsible budgeting and future planning. It helps us ensure that today's decisions won't come at the cost of tomorrow's services or community needs.

The LTFP outlines Council's high-level financial approach for the next 10 years. It was:

- Reviewed by the Audit and Risk Committee on 26 February 2025
- Reviewed by the Corporate Services Committee on 3 March 2025
- Workshopped and adopted by Council on 11 March 2025
- Informed by updated Asset Management Plans (AMPs) and Strategic Plans



It helps guide how we:

- Set rates
- Invest in capital works
- Manage borrowings
- Deliver services to the community

It ensures Council can meet current and future community expectations while maintaining financial stability.

How is the LTFP built?

The Long-Term Financial Plan (LTFP) is developed using forecasts based on current economic conditions, expert advice, and strategies already endorsed by Council. It is reviewed and updated every year to reflect changes.

It considers the following key factors:

- Population and development growth (rateable property growth).
- Consumer Price Index (CPI) and wage forecasts – to estimate future costs and salaries.
- Infrastructure renewal schedules – when assets like roads and footpaths need replacing.
- Enterprise Bargaining (EB) wage agreements – to account for confirmed staff cost increases.
- Service demands and cost drivers – including things like waste collection, utilities, and insurance etc.

Why it matters?

The LTFP sets out the key financial building blocks, enabling Council to maintain services, invest in essential infrastructure, and proactively respond to future community needs in a financially sustainable way and minimises rates shocks. It includes forecasts across four main areas:

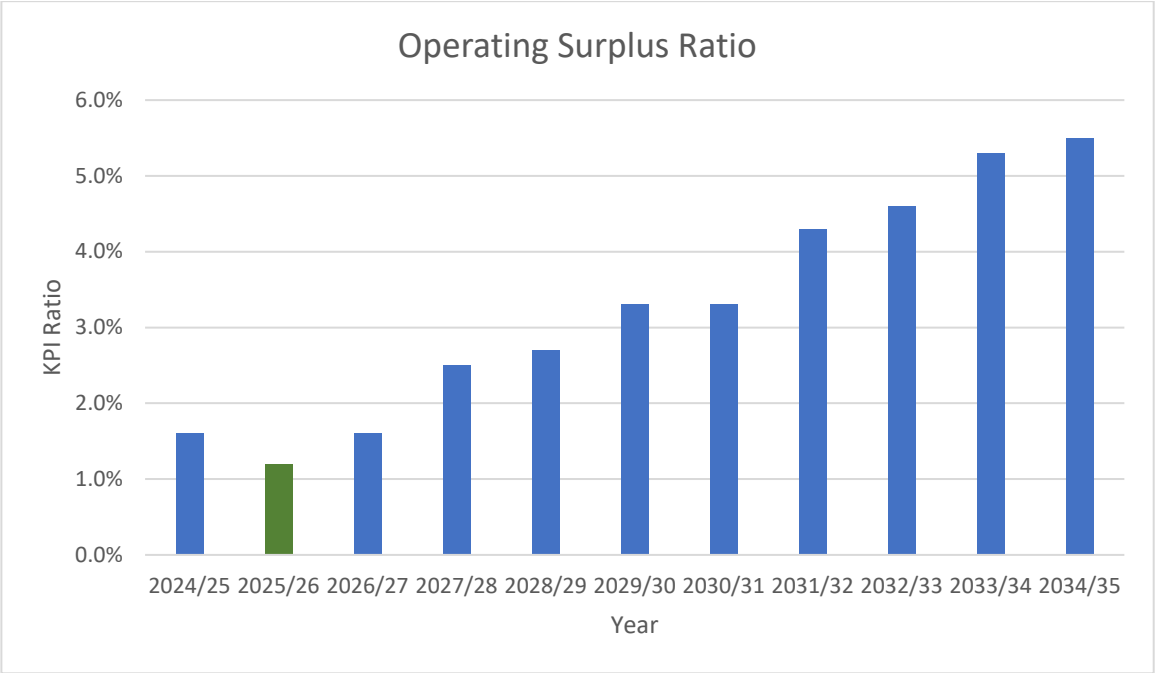
- **Operating performance** – How we manage day-to-day income and expenses.
- **Capital investment** – How we fund renewal of existing assets and deliver new infrastructure.
- **Rates and revenue** – How we raise funds to support services and strategic priorities.
- **Borrowings** – How we responsibly manage debt to spread the cost of large projects.

Financial sustainability Indicators

The LTFP helps us manage community assets responsibly, fund infrastructure, and maintain service levels without large rate increases or service cuts. To track this, we use the following financial indicators:

Ratio	Target Ranges	Endorsed LTFP 2025/26 Ratio	Comments
Operating Surplus Ratio	>0% and <10%	1.2%	Ensures intergenerational equity.
Net Financial Liabilities Ratio	<100%	51.7%	Ensures we have capacity to meet our total liabilities.
Asset Renewal Funding Ratio	>80%	100%	Ensures our Assets are being renewed cost effectively and meets service levels.
Interest Cover Ratio	<10%	1.8%	Our capacity to meet our borrowings.

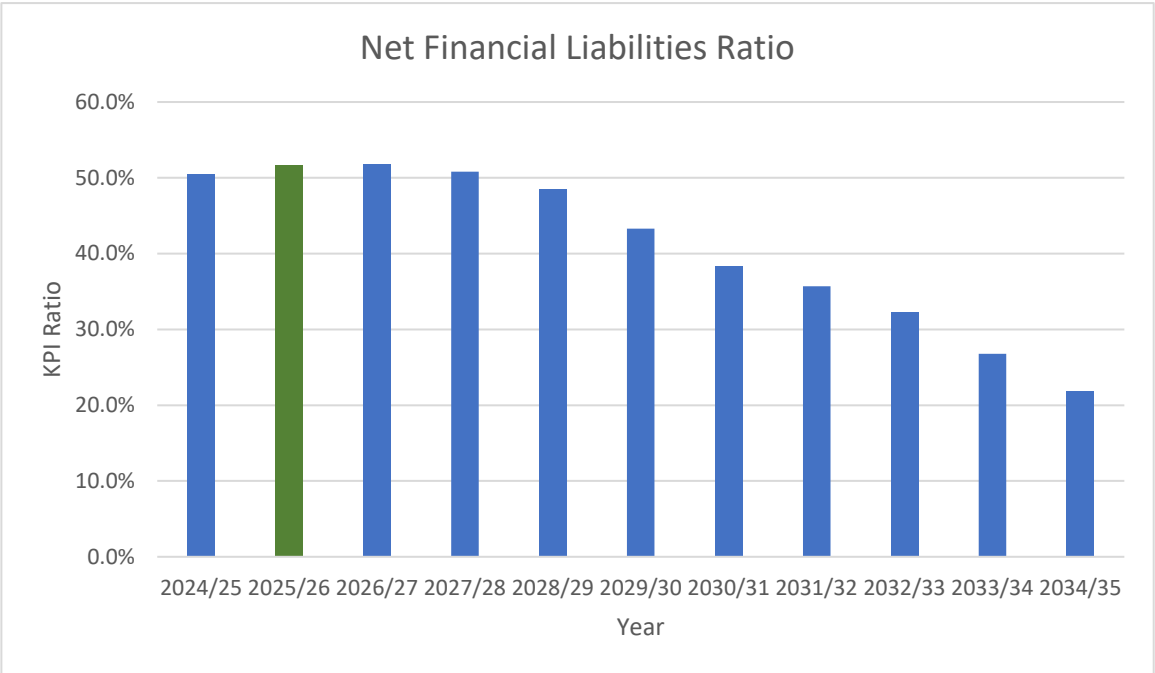
Operating Surplus Ratio



Graph 1: Operating Surplus Ratio

The LTFP projects a positive operating surplus ratio across all years of the 10-year period, averaging 3.4%. For the FY 2025/26, the plan included an operating surplus of 1.2% which is low, climbing to a peak of 5.5% in FY 2034/35. While a few years fall just below our preferred minimum target of 2.5%, Council has endorsed this financial profile in recognition of the plan’s overall strength and long-term sustainability.

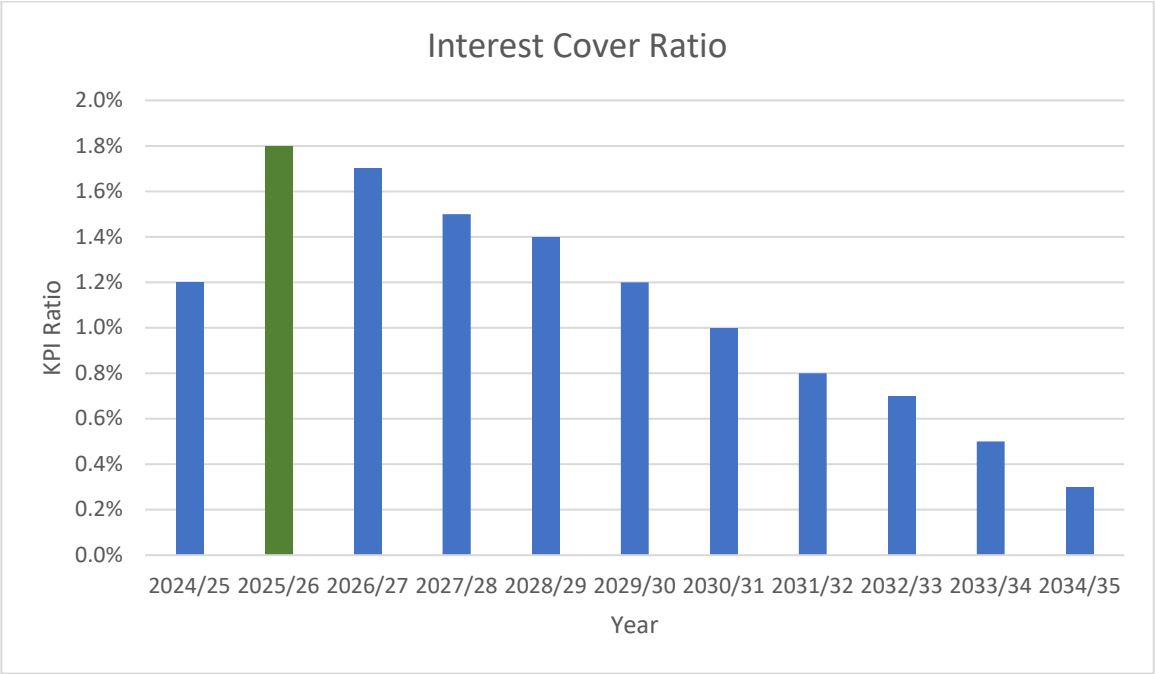
Net Financial Liabilities Ratio



Graph 2: Net Financial Liabilities Ratio

Council’s debt remains within benchmarks and is forecast to reduce to 21.8% by 2034/35. As years progress, certainty of projects and expenditure diminishes and this is reflected in the out years of graphs 2 and 3.

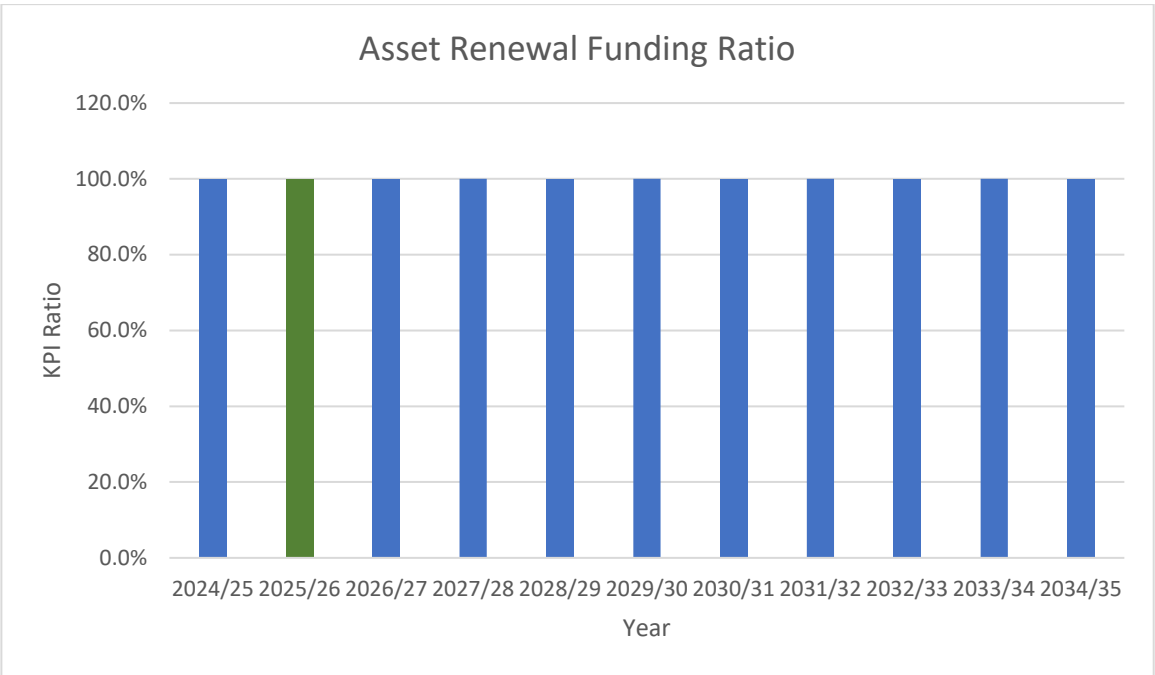
Interest Cover Ratio



Graph 3: Interest Cover Ratio

Interest costs remain manageable, staying well below the 10% benchmark and demonstrating financial capacity.

Asset Renewal Funding Ratio



Graph 4: Asset Renewal Funding Ratio

Council is meeting its asset renewal targets, maintaining infrastructure in line with adopted Asset Management Plans.

SIGNIFICANT INFLUENCES ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE BUDGET FOR 2025/26

External Influences

In preparing the 2025/26 budget a number of external influences have been taken into consideration as they are likely to impact significantly on the cost of services delivered by Council in the budget period. These include:

- The Consumer Price Index (CPI) All Groups Adelaide increase on goods and services of 2.2 % for the 12 months ending 31 March 2025
- Forecast CPI using predictive information from Access Economics for the year ended June 2026 of 2.80 %
- The impact of the economy on interest rates for the current loan portfolio and on interest earned on average cash balances
- Increase in super guarantee from 11.5% to 12.0% from 1 July 2025
- Increase in the cost of insurance including recognition of the impact of cyber fraud.
- ESCOSA audit as mandated by legislation (continuing from 2024/25)
- Impact of climate change on costs of operations
- General rising costs in the supply chain and market conditions impacted by external global factors

Internal Influences

As well as the external influences there were also a number of notable internal influences which have had an impact on the setting of the recurrent budget for 2025/26, including:

- The impact on salary and wage costs of Enterprise Bargaining Agreements (EBAs) for staff covered by the ASU and AWU
- Council's continuing strategy to maintain a sufficient operating surplus to maintain long term financial sustainability
- Continuation of the Digital Future SaaS strategy
- Additional operating expenditure approved through adopted Annual Operating Projects greater than the previous LTFP assumptions (as detailed in the draft Annual Business Plan).
- Ongoing collaboration projects with Marion and Port Adelaide Enfield councils
- Continuation of initiatives to reduce carbon emissions.
- Impacts on electricity costs following implementation of the collaborative Power Purchase Agreement (PPA)

BUDGET SNAPSHOT 2025/26

Following community consultation on the Draft Annual Business plan 2025/26 and acknowledging the endorsed Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP) which sets the high-level parameters of the budget, the final adopted budget highlights for 2025/26 are:

Key Forecast	Budget (\$'M)	Percentage (%)
Total Rates Revenue Increase (FY 25/26 vs FY 24/25 Budget)	\$9.1M	4.71% Residential plus 1.11% growth
Operating Surplus	\$2.2M	1.30%
Total Annual Operating Projects	\$2.8M	N/A
Capital Renewal Works	\$36.4M	N/A
New/Upgrade Capital	\$18.4M	N/A
Forecast Borrowings	\$52.0M	N/A

The LTFP highlights our commitment to careful financial management, balancing essential service delivery, asset renewal, and responsible investment. We understand many households are facing cost-of-living pressures and are working hard to deliver services and projects while keeping rate increases as low as possible. Regular reviews ensure our financial approach stays responsive to changing community needs.

Recently, the Essential Services Commission of South Australia (ESCOSA) independently reviewed Charles Sturt (tranche #3). ESCOSA recognised the City of Charles Sturt Council's consistent financial management and ability to maintain operating surpluses, even as community services and infrastructure demands both grow and become more costly to deliver. This confirms we are on track financially and that we continue listening carefully to our residents about what matters most.

A detailed copy of the Long-Term Financial Plan 2025–2035 and the ESCOSA report findings can be found in Appendix A & E.



WHAT WE DELIVER TO OUR COMMUNITY

All councils have basic responsibilities under the Local Government Act 1999 and other relevant legislation. These include:

- Management of basic infrastructure include roads, footpaths, parks, public open space, street lighting and stormwater drainage.
- Street cleaning and rubbish collection.
- Development planning and control including safety assessments.
- Various environmental health services.
- Maintaining the voters roll and supporting the elected Council.
- Setting rates, preparing an annual budget and determining longer term strategic management plans for the City.

In response to our local community needs we also provide further significant services including:

- Libraries
- Community centres
- Community programs
- On street parking management
- Dog and cat management

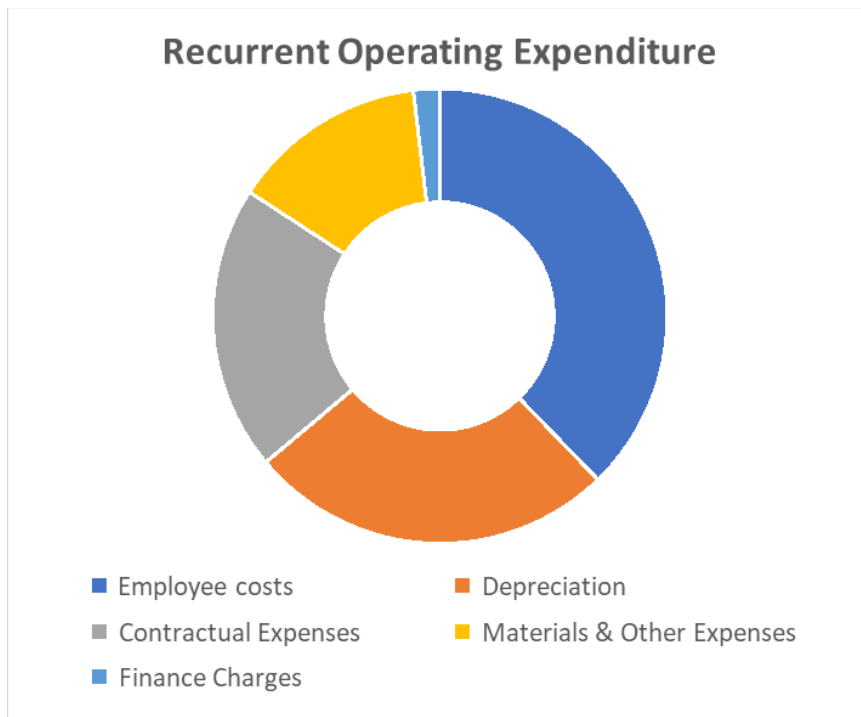
- Verge mowing

Each year, our budget managers adopt a zero-based budgeting approach, starting from scratch and building up based on actual needs. This process, informed by past trends, helps us identify savings to offset rising costs, wage increases and service improvements. It also ensures any rates increase stays in line with the financial parameters set in our LTFP.

Annual Recurrent Budget

The cost of delivering these essential and valued services is reflected in our Annual Recurrent Budget. This includes not just the day-to-day running of the City, but also the people, resources and programs that keep things moving. From waste collection and planning approvals to library programs and verge maintenance.

The graph below shows how our recurrent operating budget for 2025/26 is allocated across different service areas:



Graph 5: Recurrent Operating Expenditure



ANNUAL OPERATING PROJECTS

Our Key Projects

Each year, alongside our essential day-to-day services, we invest in projects that respond to what matters most to our community right now. These Annual Operating Projects allow us to respond to emerging needs, deliver targeted improvements, and support the delivery of long-term strategies.

In 2025/26, we will deliver a series of initiatives that reflect our shared priorities. These projects are from listening to our community and focusing on delivering meaningful outcomes across the City.



\$50,000 toward the events and festivals sponsorship fund.

\$595,000 to modernise records and workflows, improving council efficiency, responsiveness, and service delivery across all departments.



\$143,500 to support small businesses innovate, grow, and boost sustainability.

Detailed AOP Bid Descriptions

The following tables outline the full list of Annual Operating Projects for 2025/26, including budget allocations and how they align within our vision:

Valuing Nature

Name	BID ID	Net Budget	Income	Expenditure
Adapt West	00002198	50,000	100,000	150,000
City Wide Biodiversity Monitoring	00002199	35,000		35,000
Gilbert Street Ovingham – Tree Canopy and Traffic Calming	00002230	5,000		5,000

Vibrant Places

Name	BID ID	Net Budget	Income	Expenditure
Events and Festivals Sponsorship Fund	00002207	50,000		50,000
Arts and Cultural Grants Program	00002208	120,000		120,000
Community Rail Corridor Planting	00002210	20,000		20,000
Shop Local Improvement Grants	00002202	70,000		70,000
Open Space Community Projects	00002212	50,000		50,000
Community Gardening Access and Inclusion	00002213	19,000		19,000

Our Transforming City

Name	BID ID	Net Budget	Income	Expenditure
City Plan 2025	00002190	100,000		100,000
Cyber Security Roadmap Development and Delivery	00002192	387,000		387,000
Digital Capabilities Resource (Year 3 of 3)	00002152	100,000		100,000
Maintain Graduate Program Round 1	00002153	427,336		427,336
Records and Workflow Systems Modernisation	00002148	595,000		595,000
TechnologyOne CiAnywhere Migration – Finance and Supply Chain	00002147	429,489		429,489

Local Neighbourhoods

Name	BID ID	Net Budget	Income	Expenditure
Mural – Fawk Reserve Community Hall	00002080	45,000		45,000
Discretionary Ward Allowance Grants Program	00002236	176,000		176,000
Business Support Program	00002158	143,500		143,500

Connecting & Belonging

Name	BID ID	Net Budget	Income	Expenditure
Woodville West Traffic Management and Parking – Investigations and Consultation	00002237	5,000		5,000
Contribution to Refurbishment of Privately Owned Toilet – Plant 4	00002133	15,000		15,000

Total AOP Projects

Theme Alignment	Net Budget (\$)	Income (\$)	Expenditure (\$)
Valuing Nature	90,000	100,000	190,000
Vibrant Places	329,000	0	329,000
Our Transforming City	2,038,825		2,038,825
Local Neighbourhoods	364,500	0	364,500
Connecting & belonging	20,000	0	20,000
Total	2,842,325	100,000	2,942,835

	Net Budget (\$)	Income (\$)	Expenditure (\$)
LTFP total	2,515,093	0	2,515,093

For the 2025/26 financial year the LTFP includes funding of approximately \$2.5m in Annual Operating Projects.

At the Council meeting on 14 April 2025 (refer CL 14/4/25, item 2.2.1) a total of \$2.8m Annual Operating Projects were adopted by Council for inclusion in the 2025/26 Annual Business Plan.



CAPITAL PROJECTS

Council manages more than \$2.7 billion worth of community assets, from roads and footpaths to parks, stormwater systems, and community buildings. Each year, we invest in maintaining and upgrading this infrastructure, so it continues to meet the needs of our transforming City.

Our Capital Projects for 2025/26 are shaped by our Asset Management Plans, which assess the condition and lifecycle of every asset to help prioritise what needs to be renewed, and when. These plans are updated regularly and provide a basis to ensure we're making responsible, long-term decisions.

There are two main types of capital projects in our program:

- **Renewal Projects** – These focus on replacing or rehabilitating existing infrastructure based on age, condition, and performance in accordance with existing Council endorsed Asset Management Plans (AMP's). A full listing of the planned Capital Renewal projects can be found at Appendix B.
- **New and Upgrade Projects** – These involve building new assets or improving existing ones to deliver better services, respond to growth, or support strategic initiatives.

In 2025/26, our capital program totals \$54.8 million, including:

- \$36.4 million for asset renewals

- \$18.4 million for new and upgraded assets



\$2.25 million for Coast Park Stage 2, connecting Grange to Tennyson for expanded public coastal access.

\$2 million for Trimmer Parade Stormwater Upgrade, protecting local homes through flood mitigation.



\$1.4 million to delivering a full renewal of the Sam Johnson Reserve clubrooms to upgrade facilities and better serve the local community and sporting clubs.

New and Upgrade Capital Projects

These projects are informed by long-term strategies such as our Your Neighbourhood Plans. They reflect what our community values most. Below is a full list of the Capital Projects for 2025/26, including budget allocations and project categories:

Vibrant Places

Name	BID ID	Net Budget	Income	Expenditure	Work Type
Woodville South Sports Club - Stage 2 - Changeroom upgrade	00002085	1,221,600		1,221,600	Upgrade
Seaside Tennis Club – 12 Court upgrade	00002224	210,806		210,806	Upgrade
West Lakes Sports Club – Netting Project	00002103	24,000		24,000	New
Woodville West Torrens FC - Electronic Scoreboard	00002105	78,552		78,552	Upgrade
Mick Harley Reserve upgrades	00002117	170,000		170,000	New
Carnegie North Reserve - New drinking fountain	00002120	20,000		20,000	New
Community Gardening Access and Inclusion	00002214	19,000		19,000	Upgrade
Gordon Reserve dog park – consultation, design, construction	00002119	30,000		30,000	New
Rowley Park improvements	00002123	20,000		20,000	New
Smith Reserve - New drinking fountain	00002122	20,000		20,000	New
Upgrades at Ray Street Reserve, Findon	00002115	70,000		70,000	New
Woodville Town Hall WTH Lighting Upgrade	00002205	25,000		25,000	Upgrade
St Clair Oval no. 3 - New drinking fountain	00002121	20,000		20,000	New
Western Strikers FC – Sports Lighting Project	00002108	32,928		32,928	New
Flinders Park Football Club - Clubroom Concept Plan	00002110	20,000		20,000	Upgrade
Community Rail Corridor Planting	00002211	20,000		20,000	Upgrade
Fulham Cricket Club – Northern Nets Upgrade	00002101	50,000		50,000	Upgrade

Local Neighbourhoods

Name	BID ID	Net Budget	Income	Expenditure	Work Type
BMX track in Grange - Investigation	00002218	10,000		10,000	New
Chief Street Streetscape Upgrade	00002159	500,000		500,000	Upgrade
Consultation and planning for open space in Woodville West	00002127	10,000		10,000	New
Fawk Reserve Hall - New Veranda Area	00002112	98,500		98,500	New
Gibson Street Streetscape - Undergrounding of isolated stobie poles	00002160	550,000		550,000	Upgrade

Local Centre Revitalisation – Tapley's Hill Road - Royal Park & Hendon	00002156	1,000,000		1,000,000	Upgrade
Kilkenny Community Hall - Amenities Upgrade	00002111	64,900		64,900	Upgrade
New Minor Open Space Infrastructure	00002168	30,000		30,000	New
New Path Program	00002164	500,000		500,000	New
New Viewing Platform in Mirani Court	00002165	400,000		400,000	New
Pedestrian Crossing - Seaview Road West Beach	00002124	20,000		20,000	New
Wallman Reserve upgrade - design & consultation	00002226	20,000		20,000	Upgrade
Structured placemaking and activation program	00002155	75,000		75,000	New
Woodville Oval – design and consultation for a new playground	00002118	20,000		20,000	New
Bowden Open Space Improvements	00002231	40,000		40,000	New

Connecting & Belonging

Name	BID ID	Net Budget	Income	Expenditure	Work Type
Adelaide Lions Cricket Club - Cricket Nets Upgrade	00002102	71,414		71,414	Upgrade
Devonshire Reserve - New playground shade structure	00002116	50,000		50,000	New
Grange Lakes Shared Use Path Upgrade Program	00002138	500,000	400,000	900,000	New
Mitton Avenue, Henley Beach - Pedestrian and Traffic Improvements	00002129	15,000		15,000	Upgrade
Point Malcolm Reserve - Changing Places and DDA Amenities	00002239	529,000		529,000	New
West Lakes Bowling Club - New Green Keepers Shed & Workshop	00002104	116,000		116,000	Upgrade
Woodville South Cricket Club – Cricket Nets Project	00002109	112,000		112,000	New

Valuing Nature

Name	BID ID	Net Budget	Income	Expenditure	Work Type
Playground shade structures - 2025/26	00002130	100,000		100,000	New
Football Park - Capital Improvements	00002196	800,000		800,000	New
Cable Station Reserve Improvements	00002233	80,000		80,000	Upgrade
Sinclair Reserve improvements	00002126	60,000		60,000	New
Open-Space Acquisition William Street Beverley	00002194	1,500,000		1,500,000	New
West Hindmarsh Open Space Investigation and Design	00002170	50,000		50,000	New
Florence Tce. GPT – Design and Construct – Contribution to PAE	00002178	200,000		200,000	Upgrade
Irrigation Design Insource	00002193	50,000		50,000	New

Grange Rail Corridor landscape improvements design and consultation	00002232	20,000		20,000	New
Water Sensitive Urban Design Initiatives	00002180	118,600		118,600	Upgrade
Sustainable Transport Infrastructure Program	00002139	100,000		100,000	New
West Lakes SMP – Upgrade Gleneagles Reserve	00002173	550,000		550,000	Upgrade
Parkway Reserve irrigation	00002234	90,000		90,000	New
Tracey Ave Catchment Raingardens	00002179	118,600		118,600	New
Alternative Water New/Upgrade Capacity and Efficiency	00002228	150,000		150,000	Upgrade
Tree Canopy Additional Planting Trailer 25/26	00002220	30,000		30,000	New
Bulahdelah Reserve Design and Consultation for a biodiversity reserve	00002125	15,000		15,000	New
Alternative Water New/Upgrade Capital Works and Development Support	00002183	400,000		400,000	Upgrade

Our Transforming City

Name	BID ID	Net Budget	Income	Expenditure	Work Type
New Traffic Control Devices 2025/26	00002140	550,000		550,000	New
New Public Lighting 2025/26	00002137	310,000		310,000	New
Relocatable Speed Capture Devices	00002235	35,000		35,000	New
Local Area Flood Mitigation Management	00002227	107,500		107,500	Upgrade
Trimmer Parade Stormwater Upgrade Stage 1	00002176	2,000,000		2,000,000	Upgrade
St Clair Precinct Car Parking	00002169	725,000		725,000	New
Coast Park Stage 2	00002195	2,250,000		2,250,000	Upgrade
Parkway Reserve - Perimeter post and rails	00002090	40,000		40,000	New
River Park Reserve Upgrade (developer funded)	00002172		314,940	314,940	Upgrade
Water Conveyance Assets New and Upgrade	00002174	1,200,000	0	1,200,000	Upgrade

Total Capital Projects

Theme Alignment	Net Budget (\$)	Income (\$)	Expenditure (\$)
Valuing Nature	4,432,200		4,432,200
Vibrant Places	2,051,886		2,051,886
Our Transforming City	7,217,500	314,940	7,532,440
Local Neighbourhoods	3,338,400		3,338,400

Connecting & belonging	1,393,414	400,000	1,793,414
Total	18,433,400	714,940	19,148,340

	Net Budget (\$)	Income (\$)	Expenditure (\$)
LTFP total	17,552,000	0	17,552,000

For the 2025/26 financial year the LTFP includes funding of approximately \$17.5 million in Capital New and Upgrade Projects, with a total Capital Program of \$53.9 million.

At the Council meeting on 14 April 2025 (refer CL 14/4/25, item 2.2.1) a total net expenditure of \$18.4 million Capital New and Upgrade Projects were adopted by Council for delivery in 2025/26. This list is greater than the adopted LTFP framework by \$900,000. However net expenditure has allowed this to be achieved with retention of the target residential rate increase.



HOW WILL WE FUND OUR PROGRAM?

Council generates revenue through several different sources to fund essential community services, projects, and infrastructure improvements. These include:

Primary Source of Revenue

Rates is a tax levied on ratepayers and provides the primary source of income for Council to fund its operations and infrastructure requirements.

Other sources of revenue include:

- **Statutory Charges:** Fees and fines set by legislation, like parking fines, animal registrations, and development fees.
- **User Charges:** Fees collected directly from users of Council facilities and services, such as hall hire, library services, and waste management.
- **Grants:** Funds provided by State and Federal Governments to support specific Council projects and services.
- **Investment Income:** Investment income includes interest on investments.
- **Reimbursements:** This includes income from recouping specific costs of Council activities and private works.
- **Other Income:** Relates to a range of unclassified items that do not fit within the main income categories.

- **Amounts received specifically for new and upgraded assets:** These amounts include grants from State, Federal and community sources for the specific purpose of funding new or upgraded assets.
- **Sale of replaced assets:** This is income generated from the replacement of plant and equipment.

Borrowings

Borrowings are used to finance our capital works and infrastructure programs especially for significant major new or upgrade projects.

Council uses cash advance debenture (CAD) facilities as per its adopted Borrowings Policy and effective treasury management strategy to fund temporary cash requirements due to delays in the timing of cash inflows.

The CAD facility allows Council to have access to funds when required and which they can repay in part or in full at any time as Council's cash position allows. No charges are incurred on this facility if the funds are not drawn. As at June 2024 Council has access to \$66.5 million in CAD facilities which can be drawn and repaid as required.

The table below illustrates how Council responsibly manages its finances across diverse sources of income, with Rates as the core stable income stream.

	Operating income (recurrent) \$'M	NET Borrowings (CADS) \$'M	TOTAL \$'M	% of total funding
Rates	147.87		147.87	83.7%
Statutory Charges	5.93		5.93	3.4%
User Charges	4.97		4.97	2.8%
Grants, Subsidies and Contributions	10.54		10.54	6.0%
Investment Income	0.10		0.10	0.1%
Reimbursements	0.39		0.39	0.2%
Other Income	0.07		0.07	0.0%
Borrowings (net)		6.88	6.88	3.9%
Total	169.86	6.88	176.74	100.0%

Table 1: Source of Funds

COUNCIL'S OPERATING EXPENDITURE

Categories of operating expenditure are described below:

Employee expenses

Employee expenses include all labour related expenditure such as wages and salaries and on-costs such as allowances, leave entitlements, employee superannuation, rostered days off etc. Wages and salaries costs are based on the endorsed base establishment of FTE.

Increases to the base establishment of staff occur through endorsed annual operating and/or capital projects or council endorsed resolutions.

Material, Contractual Services and Other

This category of expenditure includes expenditure on Materials, Contractual services and other expenditure classifications.

"Materials" includes items such as electricity, water, fuel, library books and printing and stationary costs.

"Contractual Services" relates mainly to the provision of Council services by external providers and include items such as agency costs, waste collection, contractors, rents, leases and repairs and maintenance.

"Other Expenses" relate to a range of unclassified items including contributions to community groups, advertising, insurances, motor vehicle registrations, payment of the Regional Landscape levy and other miscellaneous expenditure.

Finance Costs

Finance costs relate to interest charged by financial institutions on borrowed funds. In accordance with endorsed Borrowings Policy, Council borrows funds through the Local Government Finance Authority (LGFA) in the first instance unless Council deems it appropriate to go to tender via a Council Resolution. Council effectively uses Cash Advance Debentures (CADs) which allow Council to have access to funds when required and which they can repay in part or in full at any time as Council's cash position allows. No charges are incurred on these Cash Advance facilities if the funds are not drawn.

Depreciation

Depreciation recognises the usage of Council's property, plant and equipment including infrastructure assets such as roads and drains, over the life of the assets, noting Council has responsibility for in excess of \$2 billion in infrastructure. Depreciation accounts for approximately 26% of its operating costs.

A summary of Council's budgeted expenditure for 2025/26 in each of the above categories is presented in the following table.

Operating Expenditure	Operating expense (recurrent)	Operating expense Annual Operating Projects	TOTAL	% of Operating Costs
Employee expenses	62,246	1,312	63,558	37.9%
Materials, Contractual Services, Other	56,426	1,531	57,956	34.6%
Finance Costs	3,094	-	3,094	1.8%
Depreciation	43,050	-	43,050	25.7%
Total	164,815	2,842	167,658	100.0%

Table 2: Budgeted Expenditure

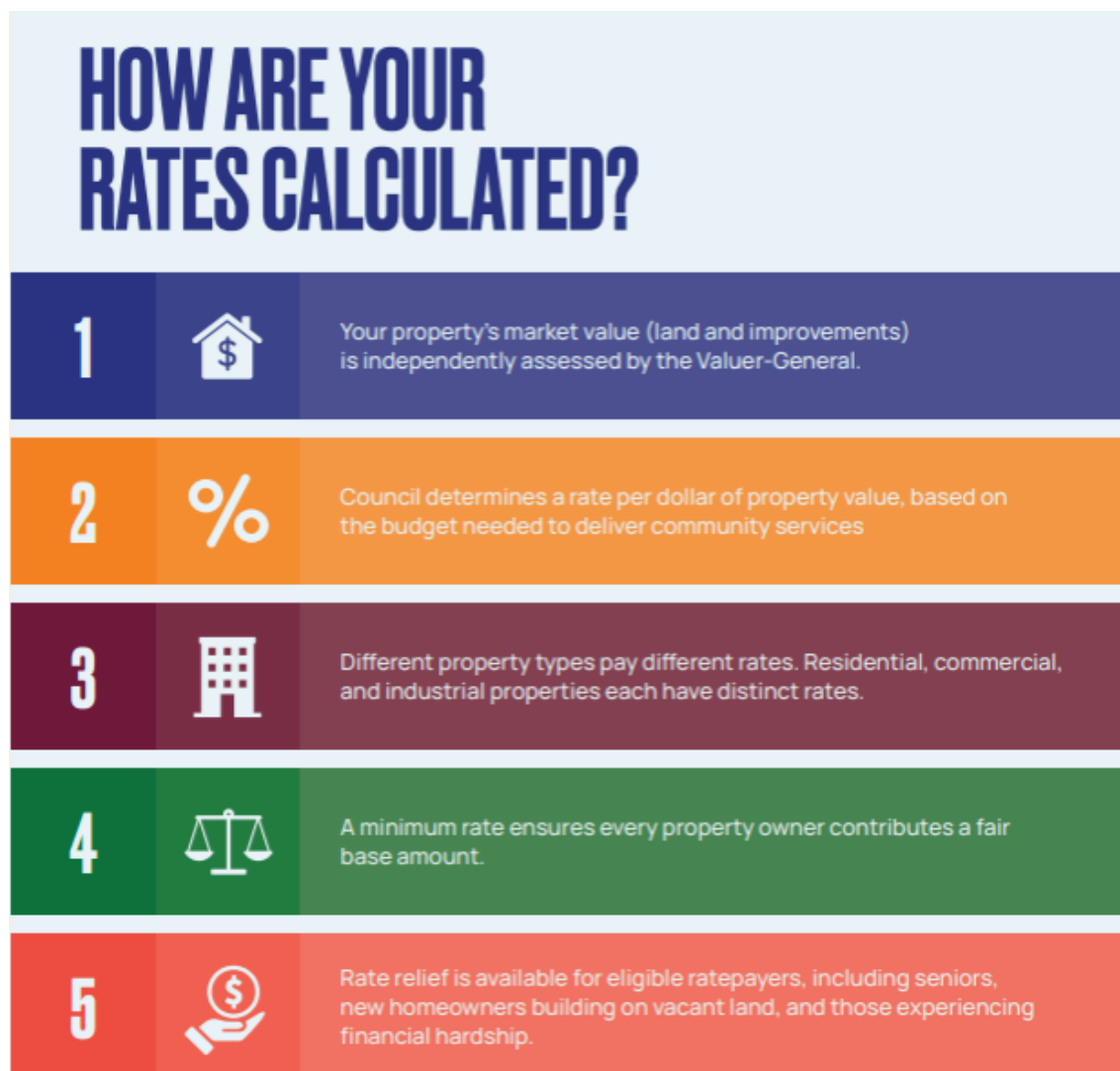
WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR RATES?

Rates and Your Property

Rates are the main way Council funds essential local services and maintains important infrastructure; like roads, parks, libraries, and waste collection.

Because rates are a form of property tax, each property contributes based on its value. Generally, the higher the value of your property, the more you pay in rates. This helps ensure everyone contributes fairly, in line with their capacity.

How Rates are Calculated



Under the *Local Government Act 1999*, councils can choose from different ways to apply rates. At the City of Charles Sturt, we use:

- A **differential rate**: this means properties used for different purposes (like residential or commercial) are charged different rates.
- A **minimum rate**: this ensures that all properties contribute at least a base level toward services and facilities.

If you think your property valuation is too high, you can lodge an objection with the Valuer-General within 60 days of receiving your notice.

Why This System?

Using property values provides a fair way to distribute the cost of services. It also reflects general principles of taxation, like fairness, simplicity, and ability to pay.

But we know property values don't always tell the full story. That's why we have a range of rate relief options for those who may need support.

Rates Relief

We're committed to supporting residents, especially during times of financial pressure. This year's rates relief options include:

Rate Capping

If your rates have increased by more than **12.5%** compared to last year, you may be eligible for a cap in order to keep your increase within this limit.

This doesn't apply if:

- Your property value increased due to major improvements (over \$20,000)
- The land use changed
- The property changed ownership since July 2024
- You're receiving another rebate under Sections 159–166 of the Act

Residential Construction Rebate

Building a new home on vacant land? You could get:

- 100% rebate if footings are poured by 31 December 2025
- 50% rebate if poured after that and before the 30 June 2026

You must live in the home for at least one year. This offer is not available for investment properties.

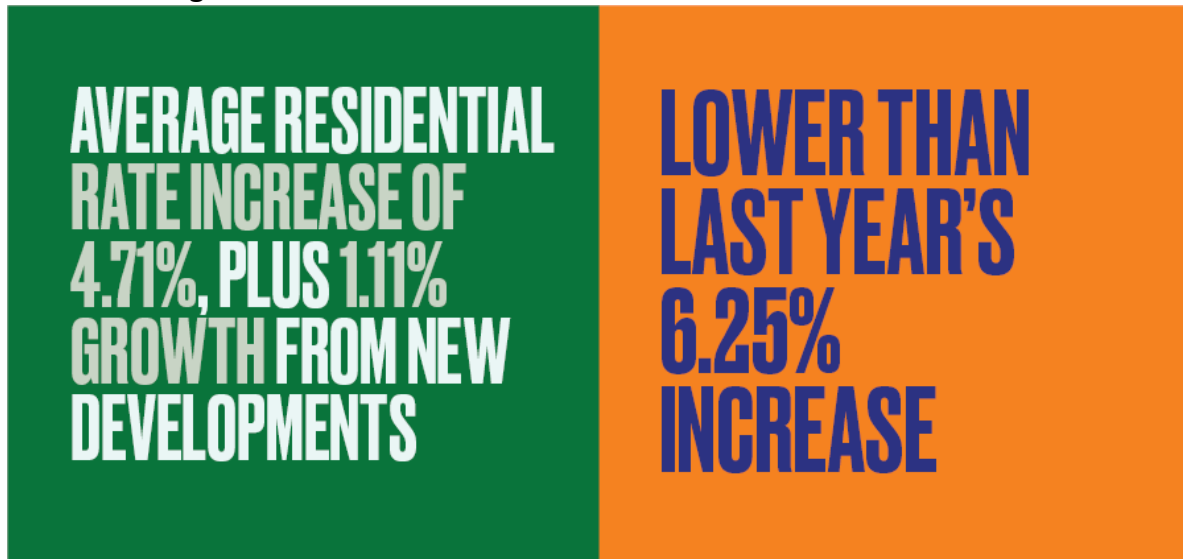
Postponing Rates for Seniors

If you hold a Seniors Card, you can postpone part of your rates above \$500 per year. Interest will apply to the postponed amount, but this option can help with cash flow.

Hardship Support

If you're facing financial hardship, you can speak with us confidentially about a tailored payment plan. We're here to help.

Understanding This Year's Rate Increase



We understand many in our community are feeling the pressure of rising living costs, and we've taken that into account when setting the proposed rates for 2025/26.

This year, in accordance with our Long Term Financial Plan, the proposed average residential rate increase is 4.71%, with an additional 1.11% growth expected from new properties and developments. This is lower than last year's increase of 6.25% (+growth).

Council has worked diligently to keep this increase as modest as possible, while still funding the services, infrastructure, and programs our community depends on.

Our Long Term Financial Plan plays a key role in managing costs over time. It helps us reduce pressure on future rates by planning responsibly now. We aim to strike a sustainable balance in delivering what's needed today while safeguarding our financial standing for tomorrow.

Rating Structure 2025/26

Rate Type	2024/25 Cents in \$	2024/25 Ave Rate (\$)	No of rateable properties	Rate Revenue 2024/25 (\$)	2025/26 Cents in \$	2025/26 Ave Rate (\$)	2025/26 Ave % Increase	No of Rateable Props	No on Min Rate 2025/26	Rate Revenue 2025/26 (\$)
Residential	0.19946449	1,688.00	57,394	96,881,217	0.181141064	1,767.51	4.71%	57,850	21,336	102,250,433
Commercial	0.66177884	9,020.35	3,344	30,164,055	0.655693955	9,467.28	4.95%	3,459	218	32,747,315
Industrial	0.72737147	12,419.69	468	5,812,415	0.672458381	13,033.88	4.95%	455	3	5,930,415
Primary Production	0.34629412	2,943.50	2	5,887	0.334850945	3,089.00	4.94%	2	0	6,178
Vacant Land	0.58948221	4,204.55	850	3,573,870	0.527839727	4,412.74	4.95%	907	140	4,002,357
Other	0.26685875	7,680.11	242	1,858,587	0.340143867	8,060.45	4.95%	320	77	2,579,345
Total		2,219.84	62,300	138,296,031		2,341.78		62,993	21,774	147,516,043

	2024/25	2025/26	% Change
Minimum Rate	\$1,285	\$1,350	5.06%
% on Minimum	34.8%	34.6%	

SUMMARY

A Message From the CEO

At the City of Charles Sturt, we have a strong focus on our Community Vision: to create a place to call home, a place where we belong. We value nature, strengthen local neighbourhoods, build vibrant places, foster connection and belonging, and shape an evolving and transforming City.

This Annual Business Plan and Budget reflects this vision. It's our commitment to deliver the services, infrastructure and projects our community relies on now and into the future, whilst keeping rates at a sustainable level.

We understand the cost-of-living pressures many households are facing across our City. We've worked to minimise the financial impact on our community to deliver a proposed average residential rate increase of 4.71%. While this is lower than last year's increase, it still enables Council to continue to provide the services and amenities that you expect.

Behind the scenes, this takes long-term planning, considered financial management, and collaboration across the organisation. Our approach is guided by a sound Long Term Financial Plan, supported by updated Asset Management Plans. The approach is endorsed by our Audit and Risk Committee. It's also been independently reviewed by ESCOSA, who confirmed the strength of our financial management and our ability to sustain services over time.

This plan focuses on delivering the essentials, supporting growth, and investing in our future, without placing an unfair burden on ratepayers.

We value your input. I encourage you to share your feedback on this plan and help shape the future of our City.

We remain committed to building a strong, sustainable and inclusive City and that starts with listening to you – our community.



Paul Sutton
Chief Executive Officer



APPENDICES

The contents of the Appendices are summarised below.

Appendix	Nature of Information
A	Commentary and detail of Long-Term Financial Plan, including: <u>Schedule A</u> – Assumptions for LTFP <u>Schedule B</u> – Forecast Financial Statements over planning period
B	Budgeted Financial Statements for 2025/26 1. Statement of Comprehensive Income 2. Statement of Cash Flows 3. Statement of Financial Position 4. Statement of Changes in Equity 5. Summary of operating and capital investment activities – Uniform Presentation of Finances 6. Key Financial Indicators
C	Listing of Projects – Capital Renewals
D	Rating Policy
E	ESCOSA report 2025 (separate attachment in Council Report)

Appendix A – Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP)

Executive Summary

This document details the City of Charles Sturt's current financial position and outlook for 2025 to 2035 as at March 2025 and was developed to guide the development of the annual budget.

The key issues arising from these Long Term Financial Plan estimates are:

- A strong alignment with Council's Community Vision and Corporate Plan.
- Achievement of an ongoing sustainable operating surplus position.
- An ongoing commitment to asset rehabilitation and replacement to ensure the proper management of the community's infrastructure assets.
- A commitment to the long term financial sustainability of Council operations by ensuring all key financial indicator benchmarks are met for key ratios such as operating surplus, net financial liabilities and asset sustainability ratio.
- The use of debt as a means of funding new asset and upgrade works, within the constraints of ensuring Council's net financial liabilities are less than 100% of Council's total operating revenue and/or council's net interest expense is less than 10% of council's total operating revenue.

A number of assumptions have been made in constructing the LTFP estimates and these are detailed in **Schedule A**.

This Long Term Financial Plan and the associated assumptions were endorsed by Council on 11 March 2025 (CL 3/3/ 2025, item 4.04).

The Long-Term Financial Plan estimates are presented as a series of reports comprising the following:

- Estimated Statement of Comprehensive Income
- Estimated Statement of Financial Position
- Estimated Statement of Cashflows
- Estimated Statement of Changes in Equity
- Estimated Uniform Presentation of Finances

These are detailed in **Schedule B**.

Schedule A – Long Term Financial Plan Assumptions

Long Term Financial Plan – Assumptions 2025/26

The Long Term Financial Plan is the financial forecast information, which includes a set of best estimate assumptions as to future events which Council expects are likely to take place. These assumptions include the percentage of rateable properties, salaries and wages increases, CPI and interest changes to name a few. This document describes these assumptions and associated risks derived with information known as at February 2025.

Assumptions:

Rateable properties:

Rates income to Council is a product of price and quantity. The number of rateable properties has risen by an average of 1.55% over the past 7 financial years. Rather than use 1.0% growth as done in previous years, this has been increased to 1.30%. Table 1 shows the Rateable Property growth rate over the past 7 years.

Table 1 – Rateable Property Growth Rate

Year	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Rateable properties	56,035	56,852	57,861	58,746	59,048	60,287	61,545
Increase %	1.39%	1.46%	1.77%	1.53%	0.51%	2.10%	2.09%

1.55% 7 Year Average

*This data was sourced from the ESCOSA Report.



Salaries and wages:

The Salary and Wages forecasts for the next 10 years are based on an Enterprise Bargaining Agreement (EBA) where it exists, and a Wages Price Increase (WPI) based on Deloitte Access Economics SA average weekly earnings growth projections where it doesn't. The current EBA extends for 3 years (2025/26 is the second of three years) and has been included based on these signed agreements.

The Salaries and Wages are based on the current base establishment of staff.

Superannuation increases from 9.5% to 12.0% in 0.5% increments over a 5-year period commencing 2021/22 as per Federal Legislation. In 2025/26 superannuation will be 12.0%.

Cost Price Index (CPI):

Cost Price Index (CPI) Forecasts used are the South Australian CPI projections. These indices are purchased from Deloitte Access Economics (DAE), experts in the field, providing a scale of increments that this LTFP model is based on.

CPI has been volatile and high in previous years (of magnitude 7-8%) but has been corrected by the Reserve Bank of Australia's Monetary Policy which has been to increase interest rates thus arresting the increasing CPI.

A table of all uplift indices used in the LTFP is provided below for costs which are forecast to increase other than by the CPI forecast from DAE of 2.80%.

Unique Indices	2025/ 26	2026/ 27	2027/ 28	2028/ 29	2029/ 30	2030/ 31	2031/ 32	2032/ 33	2033/ 34	2034/ 35
CPI Deloitte Access Economics	2.80%	2.52%	2.59%	2.43%	2.34%	2.38%	2.74%	2.78%	2.76%	2.75%
Wages EB/WPI	3.20%	3.20%	3.24%	3.43%	3.32%	3.37%	3.37%	3.36%	3.30%	3.39%
Maintenance	4.80%	4.52%	4.59%	4.43%	4.34%	4.38%	4.74%	4.78%	4.76%	4.75%
Waste	4.85%	4.57%	4.64%	4.48%	4.39%	4.43%	4.79%	4.83%	4.81%	4.80%
Insurance	4.30%	4.02%	4.09%	3.93%	3.84%	3.88%	4.24%	4.28%	4.26%	4.25%

Where knowledge exists of a change in price or quantity of either a revenue or expense that Council incurs in the provision of services to the community, that change is factored into the LTFP.

Interest:

Interest is calculated on the outstanding balance of the loans. Council has one \$10m loan at fixed interest rate of 3.85% and the remainder of funding is achieved via "overdraft" arrangements. The Local Government Financing Authority (LGFA) provide Cash Advance Debentures (CAD) which are at a competitive variable interest rate. Council's variable funding rate is the Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA) cash rate plus a modest margin which has been forecast at 5.50% for 2025/26 and decreasing over time. This is compared to 6.15% for 2024/25.

Annual Operating Projects (AOP):

Annual Operating Projects (AOP) of \$2.25m are planned for 2025/26. This budgeted allocation is increased by forecast CPI each year of the plan. Last year's projects (2024/25) undertaken by council has been factored into the budget with \$366k of recurrent expenditure arising from those initiatives.

Depreciation:

Depreciation increases as new infrastructure is completed and as existing infrastructure is revalued to contemporary replacement costs. Depreciation is a non-cash-flow item that represents an allocation of historical costs over the useful lives of the assets. Depreciation isn't a proxy for future asset replacement costs, however the endorsed Asset Management Plans indicate future funding requirements.

Asset sales:

Council's Budget Principles and Policy do not support the reliance on gains made from asset sales to fund core services.

Operating Cash Surplus:

Operating cash surpluses are used to fund Capital Expenditure on Renewal, New and Upgraded Assets. The balance of available surplus funds is used to pay down debt or offset the use of new debt.

Capital Expenditure:

Capital expenditure for asset renewal is determined by Council's adopted Asset Management Plan's (AMP's). The AMP's are reviewed every four years and presented to Council for review and endorsement.

All AMPs will be reviewed within 2 years of the Local Government Elections as per LG Act 1999. These reviews will include a more comprehensive response and updated projections to the delivery of Council's Climate Change Response Strategy.

New and Upgrade forecasts are based on current Strategic Management Plans and Council in principle adopted projects via a Council resolution.

Capital Renewal, New and Upgrade expenditure over the 10-year duration has increased by \$72.2m since the last iteration of the LTFP. This increase is due to additional New and Upgrade projects identified, which is supported by the Capital Renewal program remaining relatively constant.

Loans outstanding are due to the increased level of new and upgrade capital expenditure. Borrowings increase as significant projects are undertaken. As with previous years' experience on project delivery a consistent amount of Works In Progress (WIP) is assumed (20%) and reflected in level of borrowings forecast.

Capital Write Backs:

An annual exercise of identifying costs that are unable to be capitalised so expensed into operating expenditure. Reasons for this could be that the project did not go ahead, or the costs are not capable of being capitalised under AASB 116 *Property, Plant and Equipment* (para 19) such as advertising, promotional, training, administration and general overhead costs, including consultation.

An amount of \$1.2m in 2025/26 (and indexed by CPI annually) has been included in the LTFP to represent those amounts anticipated to be recorded as capital but written off to the Profit and Loss Statement.

Risks relating to Assumptions**Interest Rate Risk:**

The Interest Rate Risk would be significant with Total Financial Liabilities of approximately \$85.0m (10-year average) such that a 1.0% interest rate rise would require approximately an additional 0.39% increase in rate revenue.

Wage Growth Index Forecast Risk:

With employee costs comprising approximately 37% (10-year average) of total operating expenditure a 1.0% error in anticipated wage growth can result in a \$0.62m misstatement in the 2025/26 operating result and up to a \$0.85m misstatement in the 2034/35 year.

CPI forecast risk:

The 2025/26 Operating Surplus is sensitive to the level of CPI rate used during the year.

A 1.0% increase in CPI, after Rates have been struck, will have a \$0.682m unfavourable impact on the Operating Surplus.

Schedule B: Long Term Financial Plan

City of Charles Sturt

10 Year Financial Plan for the Years ending 30 June 2035

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME - GENERAL FUND

	Actuals 2023/24 \$'000	Current Year 2024/25 \$'000	2025/26 \$'000	2026/27 \$'000	2027/28 \$'000	2028/29 \$'000	Projected Years					
							2029/30 \$'000	2030/31 \$'000	2031/32 \$'000	2032/33 \$'000	2033/34 \$'000	2034/35 \$'000
Income												
Rates	129,829	138,762	147,483	153,772	160,441	166,372	172,362	178,649	185,806	193,319	201,111	209,199
Statutory Charges	5,865	5,186	6,024	6,169	6,091	6,239	6,385	6,537	6,716	6,903	7,094	7,289
User Charges	4,729	4,286	5,246	5,369	5,128	5,253	5,375	5,504	5,654	5,811	5,972	6,137
Grants, Subsidies and Contributions - operating	5,729	9,629	9,849	10,129	9,967	10,153	10,390	10,638	10,929	11,233	11,544	11,862
Grants, Subsidies and Contributions - capital	2,704	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Investment Income	659	182	97	100	102	105	107	110	113	116	119	122
Reimbursements	3,349	497	367	376	386	395	405	414	426	437	449	462
Other Income	74	70	72	74	76	78	79	81	83	86	88	91
Net gain - equity accounted Council businesses	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Income	152,938	158,612	169,138	175,989	182,191	188,595	195,103	201,933	209,728	217,905	226,376	235,161
Expenses												
Employee Costs	53,423	59,510	62,132	64,428	66,509	69,059	71,335	74,015	76,497	79,343	81,948	84,992
Materials, Contracts & Other Expenses	57,640	56,113	59,509	61,726	63,004	65,041	66,887	69,777	71,407	74,015	76,441	79,848
Depreciation, Amortisation & Impairment	35,035	36,950	42,360	43,605	44,973	46,306	47,630	48,995	50,626	52,367	54,157	55,978
Finance Costs	2,068	2,156	3,092	3,043	2,814	2,761	2,387	2,028	1,781	1,573	1,200	775
Net loss - Equity Accounted Council Businesses	1,872	1,309	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Expenses	150,038	156,038	167,093	172,803	177,299	183,167	188,239	194,816	200,310	207,298	213,746	221,593
Operating Surplus / (Deficit)	2,900	2,574	2,045	3,186	4,892	5,428	6,864	7,117	9,418	10,607	12,630	13,567
Asset Disposal & Fair Value Adjustments	(11,935)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Amounts Received Specifically for New or Upgraded Assets	1,416	3,335	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Physical Resources Received Free of Charge	12,645	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200
Operating Result from Discontinued Operations	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Net Surplus / (Deficit)	5,026	6,109	2,345	3,486	5,192	5,728	7,164	7,417	9,718	10,907	12,930	13,867
Other Comprehensive Income												
Amounts which will not be reclassified subsequently to operating result												
Changes in Revaluation Surplus - I,PP&E	1,123,642	6,108	16,107	9,348	14,160	8,967	7,987	11,492	8,448	8,659	10,440	30,542
Share of Other Comprehensive Income - Equity Accounted Council Businesses	4,718	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Other Comprehensive Income	1,128,360	6,108	16,107	9,348	14,160	8,967	7,987	11,492	8,448	8,659	10,440	30,542
Total Comprehensive Income	1,133,386	12,217	18,452	12,835	19,352	14,695	15,152	18,909	18,166	19,566	23,370	44,409

City of Charles Sturt
10 Year Financial Plan for the Years ending 30 June 2035
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION - GENERAL FUND



	Actuals 2023/24 \$'000	Current Year 2024/25 \$'000	2025/26 \$'000	2026/27 \$'000	2027/28 \$'000	2028/29 \$'000	Projected Years					
							2029/30 \$'000	2030/31 \$'000	2031/32 \$'000	2032/33 \$'000	2033/34 \$'000	2034/35 \$'000
ASSETS												
Current Assets												
Cash & Cash Equivalents	3,940	315	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500
Trade & Other Receivables	8,259	4,785	4,989	5,170	5,269	5,437	5,606	5,794	5,991	6,208	6,429	6,667
Other Financial Assets	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Inventories	189	204	216	224	229	236	243	253	259	269	278	290
Other Current Assets	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Non-current assets classified as "Held for Sale"	10,790	10,790	10,790	10,790	10,790	10,790	10,790	10,790	10,790	10,790	10,790	10,790
Total Current Assets	23,178	16,093	16,495	16,684	16,788	16,963	17,139	17,337	17,541	17,767	17,996	18,247
Non-Current Assets												
Financial Assets	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Equity Accounted Investments in Council Businesses	4,133	2,584	2,584	2,584	2,584	2,584	2,584	2,584	2,584	2,584	2,584	2,584
Investment Property	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Infrastructure, Property, Plant & Equipment	2,717,094	2,742,538	2,768,182	2,784,358	2,804,627	2,817,928	2,825,662	2,836,830	2,852,106	2,866,398	2,879,699	2,914,017
Intangible Assets	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Non-current assets classified as "Held for Sale"	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other Non-Current Assets	18,441	18,441	18,441	18,441	18,441	18,441	18,441	18,441	18,441	18,441	18,441	18,441
Total Non-Current Assets	2,739,668	2,763,563	2,789,207	2,805,383	2,825,652	2,838,953	2,846,687	2,857,855	2,873,131	2,887,423	2,900,724	2,935,042
TOTAL ASSETS	2,762,846	2,779,657	2,805,702	2,822,067	2,842,440	2,855,916	2,863,826	2,875,192	2,890,671	2,905,189	2,918,720	2,953,289
LIABILITIES												
Current Liabilities												
Cash Advance Debenture	36,285	45,070	51,949	54,569	54,821	52,747	44,683	36,105	32,543	26,413	15,506	4,395
Trade & Other Payables	28,281	21,863	23,173	24,083	24,852	25,708	26,529	27,565	28,441	29,523	30,590	31,860
Borrowings	2,513	596	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Provisions	10,826	10,519	10,519	10,519	10,519	10,519	10,519	10,519	10,519	10,519	10,519	10,519
Other Current Liabilities	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Liabilities relating to Non-Current Assets classified as "Held for Sale"	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Current Liabilities	77,905	78,047	85,640	89,171	90,192	88,973	81,731	74,189	71,502	66,454	56,614	46,774
Non-Current Liabilities												
Cash Advance Debenture	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Trade & Other Payables	-	5,572	5,572	5,572	5,572	5,572	5,572	5,572	5,572	5,572	5,572	5,572
Borrowings	1,428	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Provisions	1,286	1,593	1,593	1,593	1,593	1,593	1,593	1,593	1,593	1,593	1,593	1,593
Liability - Equity Accounted Council Businesses	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other Non-Current Liabilities	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Liabilities relating to Non-Current Assets classified as "Held for Sale"	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Non-Current Liabilities	2,714	7,165	7,165	7,165	7,165	7,165	7,165	7,165	7,165	7,165	7,165	7,165
TOTAL LIABILITIES	80,619	85,212	92,806	96,336	97,357	96,139	88,896	81,354	78,668	73,619	63,779	53,940
Net Assets	2,682,227	2,694,444	2,712,896	2,725,731	2,745,083	2,759,778	2,774,929	2,793,838	2,812,004	2,831,570	2,854,940	2,899,349
EQUITY												
Accumulated Surplus	536,787	542,896	545,241	548,727	553,919	559,647	566,812	574,228	583,946	594,853	607,783	621,651
Asset Revaluation Reserves	2,145,440	2,151,548	2,167,655	2,177,003	2,191,164	2,200,130	2,208,118	2,219,610	2,228,058	2,236,717	2,247,157	2,277,699
Available for Sale Financial Assets	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other Reserves	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Equity	2,682,227	2,694,444	2,712,896	2,725,731	2,745,083	2,759,778	2,774,929	2,793,838	2,812,004	2,831,570	2,854,940	2,899,349
	-	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

City of Charles Sturt
10 Year Financial Plan for the Years ending 30 June 2035
STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS - GENERAL FUND



	Actuals 2023/24 \$'000	Current Year 2024/25 \$'000	2025/26 \$'000	2026/27 \$'000	2027/28 \$'000	2028/29 \$'000	Projected Years 2029/30 \$'000	2030/31 \$'000	2031/32 \$'000	2032/33 \$'000	2033/34 \$'000	2034/35 \$'000
Cash Flows from Operating Activities												
Receipts:												
Rates Receipts	-	136,615	147,987	154,135	160,827	166,715	172,708	179,012	186,220	193,753	201,561	209,666
Statutory Charges	-	6,060	5,944	6,156	6,099	6,225	6,371	6,523	6,699	6,885	7,075	7,270
User Charges	-	4,981	5,154	5,357	5,151	5,241	5,364	5,491	5,640	5,796	5,957	6,121
Grants, Subsidies and Contributions (operating purpose)	-	10,162	9,838	10,115	9,975	10,144	10,378	10,625	10,915	11,217	11,528	11,845
Investment Receipts	659	264	99	99	102	105	107	110	113	116	119	122
Reimbursements	-	1,084	376	376	385	395	404	414	425	437	449	461
Other	151,635	53	58	74	76	77	79	81	83	86	88	90
Payments:												
Payments to Employees	-	(59,580)	(62,088)	(64,390)	(66,474)	(69,017)	(71,297)	(73,970)	(76,456)	(79,295)	(81,904)	(84,941)
Payments for Materials, Contracts & Other Expenses	(114,946)	(54,632)	(58,957)	(61,365)	(62,796)	(64,710)	(66,587)	(69,308)	(71,142)	(73,591)	(76,047)	(79,294)
Finance Payments	(2,068)	(2,156)	(3,082)	(3,043)	(2,814)	(2,761)	(2,387)	(2,028)	(1,781)	(1,573)	(1,200)	(775)
Net Cash provided (or used in) Operating Activities	35,280	42,852	45,320	47,512	50,531	52,414	55,139	56,949	60,716	63,830	67,624	70,566
Cash Flows from Investing Activities												
Receipts:												
Amounts Received Specifically for New/Upgraded Assets	517	3,418	279	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Grants utilised for capital purposes	2,704	512	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sale of Replaced Assets	1,122	-	1,547	1,920	1,920	2,020	1,686	1,423	1,787	2,376	1,074	1,707
Sale of Surplus Assets	-	656	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sale of Investment Property	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sale of Non Current Assets "Held for Sale"	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Net Disposal of Investment Securities	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sale of Real Estate Developments	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sale of Intangible Assets	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Repayments of Loans by Community Groups	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sale of Interests in Joint Ventures & Associates	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Distributions Received from Equity Accounted Council Businesses	-	240	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other Investing Activity Receipts	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Payments:												
Expenditure on Renewal/Replacement of Assets	(30,224)	(42,693)	(32,251)	(28,733)	(29,507)	(29,999)	(31,629)	(29,502)	(33,483)	(33,938)	(32,762)	(32,424)
Expenditure on New/Upgraded Assets	(18,052)	(14,050)	(20,994)	(23,421)	(23,295)	(22,460)	(17,233)	(20,392)	(25,557)	(26,238)	(25,129)	(28,839)
Purchase of Investment Property	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Net Purchase of Investment Securities	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Development of Real Estate for Sale	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Expenditure on Intangible Assets	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Loans Made to Community Groups	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Purchase of Interests in Equity Accounted Council Businesses	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Capital Contributed to Equity Accounted Council Businesses	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other Investing Activity Payments	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Net Cash provided (or used in) Investing Activities	(43,933)	(51,916)	(51,418)	(50,133)	(50,782)	(50,340)	(47,076)	(48,371)	(57,154)	(57,699)	(56,717)	(59,455)
Cash Flows from Financing Activities												
Receipts:												
Proceeds from CAD	-	8,784	6,879	2,620	251	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Proceeds from Borrowings	5,963	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Receipt of Funds from Leases	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Proceeds from Aged Care Facility Deposits	437	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Proceeds from Bonds & Deposits	239	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Receipts from Other Financing Activities	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Payments:												
Repayments of CAD	-	-	-	-	-	(2,074)	(8,064)	(8,578)	(3,562)	(6,130)	(10,907)	(11,110)
Repayments of Borrowings	-	(1,158)	(596)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Repayment of Principal Portion of Lease Liabilities	(819)	(2,187)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Repayment of Aged Care Facility Deposits	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Repayment of Bonds & Deposits	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Payments of Other Financing Activities	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Net Cash Flow provided (used in) Financing Activities	5,820	5,439	6,284	2,620	251	(2,074)	(8,064)	(8,578)	(3,562)	(6,130)	(10,907)	(11,110)
Net Increase/(Decrease) in Cash & Cash Equivalents	(2,833)	(3,625)	185	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
plus: Cash & Cash Equivalents - beginning of year	6,773	3,940	315	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500
Cash & Cash Equivalents - end of the year	3,940	315	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500
Cash & Cash Equivalents - end of the year	3,940	315	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500
Investments - end of the year	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Cash, Cash Equivalents & Investments - end of the year	3,940	315	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500

City of Charles Sturt

10 Year Financial Plan for the Years ending 30 June 2035

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY - GENERAL FUND

	Actuals 2023/24 \$'000	Current Year 2024/25 \$'000	2025/26 \$'000	2026/27 \$'000	2027/28 \$'000	2028/29 \$'000	Projected Years					
							2029/30 \$'000	2030/31 \$'000	2031/32 \$'000	2032/33 \$'000	2033/34 \$'000	2034/35 \$'000
Opening Balance	1,548,841	2,682,227	2,694,444	2,712,896	2,725,731	2,745,083	2,759,778	2,774,929	2,793,838	2,812,004	2,831,570	2,854,940
Net Surplus / (Deficit) for Year	5,026	6,109	2,345	3,486	5,192	5,728	7,164	7,417	9,718	10,907	12,930	13,867
Other Comprehensive Income												
- Gain (Loss) on Revaluation of I,PP&E	1,123,642	6,108	16,107	9,348	14,160	8,967	7,987	11,492	8,448	8,659	10,440	30,542
- Available for Sale Financial Instruments: change in fair value	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
- Impairment (loss) reversal relating to I,PP&E	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
- Transfer to Accumulated Surplus on Sale of I,PP&E	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
- Transfer to Acc. Surplus on Sale of AFS Financial Instruments	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
- Share of OCI - Equity Accounted Council Businesses	4,718	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
- Other Equity Adjustments - Equity Accounted Council Businesses	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
- Other Movements	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other Comprehensive Income	1,128,360	6,108	16,107	9,348	14,160	8,967	7,987	11,492	8,448	8,659	10,440	30,542
Total Comprehensive Income	1,133,386	12,217	18,452	12,835	19,352	14,695	15,152	18,909	18,166	19,566	23,370	44,409
Transfers between Equity	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Equity - Balance at end of the reporting period	2,682,227	2,694,444	2,712,896	2,725,731	2,745,083	2,759,778	2,774,929	2,793,838	2,812,004	2,831,570	2,854,940	2,899,349

City of Charles Sturt
10 Year Financial Plan for the Years ending 30 June 2035
UNIFORM PRESENTATION OF FINANCES - GENERAL FUND



	Actuals 2023/24 \$'000	Current Year 2024/25 \$'000	2025/26 \$'000	2026/27 \$'000	2027/28 \$'000	2028/29 \$'000	Projected Years					
							2029/30 \$'000	2030/31 \$'000	2031/32 \$'000	2032/33 \$'000	2033/34 \$'000	2034/35 \$'000
Income												
Rates	129,829	138,762	147,483	153,772	160,441	166,372	172,362	178,649	185,806	193,319	201,111	209,199
Statutory Charges	5,865	5,186	6,024	6,169	6,091	6,239	6,385	6,537	6,716	6,903	7,094	7,289
User Charges	4,729	4,286	5,246	5,369	5,128	5,253	5,375	5,504	5,654	5,811	5,972	6,137
Grants, Subsidies and Contributions - operating	5,729	9,629	9,849	10,129	9,967	10,153	10,390	10,638	10,929	11,233	11,544	11,862
Grants, Subsidies and Contributions - capital	2,704	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Investment Income	659	182	97	100	102	105	107	110	113	116	119	122
Reimbursements	3,349	497	367	376	386	395	405	414	426	437	449	462
Other Income	74	70	72	74	76	78	79	81	83	86	88	91
Net gain - equity accounted Council businesses	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Income	152,938	158,612	169,138	175,989	182,191	188,595	195,103	201,933	209,728	217,905	226,376	235,161
Expenses												
Employee Costs	53,423	59,510	62,132	64,428	66,509	69,059	71,335	74,015	76,497	79,343	81,948	84,992
Materials, Contracts & Other Expenses	57,640	56,113	59,509	61,726	63,004	65,041	66,887	69,777	71,407	74,015	76,441	79,848
Depreciation, Amortisation & Impairment	35,035	36,950	42,360	43,605	44,973	46,306	47,630	48,995	50,626	52,367	54,157	55,978
Finance Costs	2,068	2,156	3,092	3,043	2,814	2,761	2,387	2,028	1,781	1,573	1,200	775
Net loss - Equity Accounted Council Businesses	1,872	1,309	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Expenses	150,038	156,038	167,093	172,803	177,299	183,167	188,239	194,816	200,310	207,298	213,746	221,593
Operating Surplus / (Deficit)	2,900	2,574	2,045	3,186	4,892	5,428	6,864	7,117	9,418	10,607	12,630	13,567
Timing adjustment for grant revenue	4,690	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Less: Grants, subsidies and contributions - Capital	(2,704)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Adjusted Operating Surplus / (Deficit)	4,886	2,574	2,045	3,186	4,892	5,428	6,864	7,117	9,418	10,607	12,630	13,567
Net Outlays on Existing Assets												
Capital Expenditure on Renewal and Replacement of Existing Assets	(30,224)	(42,693)	(32,251)	(28,733)	(29,507)	(29,999)	(31,629)	(29,502)	(33,483)	(33,938)	(32,762)	(32,424)
Finance Lease payments for Right of Use Assets	-	(2,413)	(203)	(183)	(165)	(148)	-	-	-	-	-	-
add back: Depreciation, Amortisation and Impairment	35,035	36,950	42,360	43,605	44,973	46,306	47,630	48,995	50,626	52,367	54,157	55,978
add back: Grants, subsidies and contributions - Capital Renewal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
add back: Proceeds from Sale of Replaced Assets	1,122	-	1,547	1,920	1,920	2,020	1,686	1,423	1,787	2,376	1,074	1,707
Total Net Outlays on Existing Assets	5,933	(8,156)	11,453	16,610	17,222	18,178	17,687	20,916	18,929	20,805	22,469	25,262
Net Outlays on New and Upgraded Assets												
Capital Expenditure on New and Upgraded Assets (including Investment Property & Real Estate Developments)	(18,052)	(14,050)	(20,994)	(23,421)	(23,295)	(22,460)	(17,233)	(20,392)	(25,557)	(26,238)	(25,129)	(28,839)
Finance lease payments for Right of Use Assets	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
add back: Grants, subsidies and contributions - Capital New/Upgraded	2,704	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
add back: Amounts Received Specifically for New and Upgraded Assets	517	3,418	279	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
add back: Proceeds from Sale of Surplus Assets (including Investment Property, Real Estate Developments & non-current assets held for sale)	-	656	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Net Outlays on New and Upgraded Assets	(14,831)	(9,975)	(20,715)	(23,321)	(23,195)	(22,360)	(17,133)	(20,292)	(25,457)	(26,138)	(25,029)	(28,739)
Annual Net Impact to Financing Activities (surplus / (deficit))	(4,012)	(15,557)	(7,216)	(3,529)	(1,082)	1,246	7,418	7,740	2,890	5,274	10,070	10,090

Appendix B – Budgeted Financial Statements for 2025/26**Schedule 1: Statement of Comprehensive Income**

	2026 \$'000	2025 \$'000
Revenue		
Rates	147,874	138,762
Statutory Charges	5,928	5,186
User Charges	4,969	4,286
Grants, Subsidies and Contributions – operating	10,338	9,629
Grants, Subsidies and Contributions – capital	200	0
Investment Income	97	182
Reimbursements	385	497
Other revenues	66	70
Net Profit Equity accounted council businesses	0	0
Total Revenues	169,857	158,612
Expenses		
Employee Costs	63,558	59,510
Material contract and other expenses	57,956	56,112
Finance Costs	3,094	2,158
Depreciation	43,049	36,950
Net Loss Equity Accounted businesses	0	1,309
Total Expenses	167,657	156,039
Operating Surplus / (Deficit)	2,200	2,573
Capital Amounts		
Physical resources received free of charge	200	200
Amounts specifically for new or upgraded assets	715	3,335
	915	3,535
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	3,115	6,108
Other Comprehensive Income		
Changes in Revaluation Surplus – I,PP&E	16,107	6,108
Total Comprehensive Income	19,222	12,217

Schedule 2: Statement of Cash Flows

	2026 \$'000 Inflows (outflows)	2025 \$'000 Inflows (outflows)
Cash Flows from Operating Activities		
Operating receipts	169,913	158,955
Investment receipts	99	264
Operating payments to suppliers and employees	(121,147)	(114,212)
Finance payments	(3,094)	(2,156)
Net Cash Flows provided by (used in) Operating Activities	45,771	42,852
Cash Flows from Financing Activities		
Receipts		
Proceeds from Borrowings	9,716	8,784
Proceeds from Aged Care Deposits		
Payments		
Repayment of Borrowings	(596)	(3,345)
Repayment of Aged Care Facility Deposits		
Net Cash provided for (used in) Financing Activities	9,120	5,439
Cash Flows from Investment Activities		
Receipts		
Sale of replaced assets	1,650	0
Grants specifically for new and upgraded assets	860	3,418
Other investing activity receipts	189	1,408
	2,699	4,826
Payments		
Expenditure on renewal/replacement of assets	(38,257)	(42,693)
Expenditure on new /upgraded assets	(19,148)	(14,050)
	(57,405)	(56,743)
Net Cash used in Investment Activities	(54,706)	(51,916)
Net Increase (Decrease) in Cash Held	185	(3,625)

Cash and cash equivalents at Beginning of Reporting Period	315	3,940
Cash and cash equivalents at End of Reporting Period	500	315

Schedule 3: Statement of Financial Position

	2026 \$'000	2025 \$'000
ASSETS		
Current Assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	500	315
Trade and other Receivables	5,011	4,785
Inventories	210	204
Total Current Assets	5,721	5,304
Non current assets		
Equity accounted invest. in Council businesses	2,584	2,584
Infrastructure, Property, Plant and Equipment	2,782,342	2,753,328
Other non current assets	18,441	18,441
Total Non Current Assets	2,803,367	2,774,353
Total Assets	2,809,088	2,779,657
LIABILITIES		
Current Liabilities		
Trade and other Payables	28,523	27,435
Provisions	10,519	10,519
Borrowings	0	596
Total Current Liabilities	39,042	38,550
Non Current Liabilities		
Long Term Borrowings	54,786	45,070
Long Term Provisions	1,593	1,593
Liability Equity accounted businesses		

Total Non-Current Liabilities	56,379	46,663
Total Liabilities	95,421	85,213
NET ASSETS	2,713,667	2,694,444
	2026	2025
	\$'000	\$'000
EQUITY		
Accumulated Surplus	546,012	542,896
Reserves	2,167,655	2,151,548
TOTAL EQUITY	2,713,667	2,694,444

Schedule 4: Statement of Changes in Equity

	2026 \$'000	2025 \$'000
Opening Balance	2,694,444	2,682,227
Net Surplus / (Deficit) for year	3,115	6,109
Gain (Loss) on Revaluation of I,PPE	16,107	6,108
Other Comprehensive income	0	0
Equity – Balance at end of the reporting period	2,713,667	2,694,444

Schedule 5: Summary of Operating and Capital Investment Activities – Uniform Presentation of Finances

	2026	2025
	\$'000	\$'000
Income		
Rates	147,874	138,762
Statutory Charges	5,928	5,186
User Charges	4,969	4,286
Grants, subsidies and contributions – operating	10,338	9,629
Grants, subsidies and contributions – capital	200	0
Investment Income	97	182
Reimbursements	385	497
Other income	66	70
Net gain – equity accounted council businesses	169,857	158,612
Expenses		
Employee costs	63,558	59,510
Material, Contracts, Other	57,956	56,112
Depreciation, Amortisation and Impairment	43,049	36,950
Finance costs	3,094	2,158
Net loss – equity accounted council businesses	0	1,309
	167,657	156,038
Operating Surplus/Deficit	2,200	2,574
Less Grants, subsidies and contributions – capital	(200)	0
Adjusted Operating surplus	2,000	2,574
Less		
Net Outlays on Existing Assets		
Capital expenditure on renewal and replacement of existing assets	38,257	42,693
Finance Lease payments for Right of Use Assets	203	2,413
Less Depreciation, Amortisation and Impairment	(43,049)	(36,950)
Less Grants subsidies and contributions – renewal	(200)	0
Less proceeds from sale of Replaced Assets	(1,650)	0
	(6,439)	8,156
Less		
Net Outlays on new and Upgraded Assets		
Capital expenditure on New and Upgraded assets	19,148	14,050
Less amounts received specifically for New and Upgraded assets	(860)	(3,418)
Less proceeds from Sale of Surplus Assets	0	(657)
	18,288	9,975
Equals		
Annual Net Impact to Financing activities	(9,849)	(15,557)

Schedule 6: Statement of Financial Indicators

	2026	2025
Operating surplus/deficit - \$'000	2,200	2,574
Operating surplus ratio	1.3%	1.6%
Adjusted Operating surplus ratio	1.2%	1.6%
Net Financial Liabilities ratio	52.9%	50.5%
Interest cover ratio	1.7%	1.2%
Asset Renewal funding ratio (AMP)	100%	100%

Appendix C – Capital Renewal Projects

Budget Bid	Budget Bid Name	Net Budget	Income	Expenditure
PBB-00002072	Desktop and Laptop Fleet Replacement	515,000	0	515,000
PBB-00002073	Replacement of Mobile Work Devices for Field Staff	352,000	0	352,000
PBB-00002074	Replacement of the Sign Shop Printer	25,000	0	25,000
PBB-00002075	Replacement of Community Safety Mobile Infringement Devices	27,100	0	27,100
PBB-00002077	Traffic Control Renewals 25/26	60,000	0	60,000
PBB-00002078	Bus Stop Renewals 25/26	100,000	0	100,000
PBB-00002081	Bridge Renewal - Seaview Road Underpass RTLP	1,030,000	0	1,030,000
PBB-00002082	Road Rehabilitation Program of Works 2025/26	5,000,000	0	5,000,000
PBB-00002084	Road Reconstruction Program of Works 2025/26	6,100,000	0	6,100,000
PBB-00002086	Sam Johnson Reserve Clubrooms - Whole of building renewal	3,563,000	0	3,563,000
PBB-00002087	Path and Access Ramp Renewal Program 2025/26	4,700,000	0	4,700,000
PBB-00002088	Public Lighting Renewal Program 2025/26	660,000	0	660,000
PBB-00002089	Hawker St Road Reconstruction & Streetscape	1,900,000	0	1,900,000
PBB-00002091	Heavy Fleet Replacement Program 25/26 Financial Year	2,519,750	855,250	3,375,000
PBB-00002092	Stormwater Drain Renewal Program 25/26	1,443,750	0	1,443,750
PBB-00002093	2025/26 AMP Council Building Renewals	2,018,555	0	2,018,555
PBB-00002094	Light Fleet Replacement Program 25/26 Financial Year	1,038,500	761,500	1,800,000
PBB-00002095	Minor Plant Replacement Program 25/26 Financial year	293,530	33,670	327,200
PBB-00002096	AMP Playground Renewals - 2025/26	906,022	0	906,022

PBB-00002097	AMP Sports Accessories Renewals - 2025/26	487,220	0	487,220
PBB-00002098	AMP Fences, Walls and Bollard Renewals - 2025/26	329,824	0	329,824
PBB-00002099	AMP Reserve Furniture Renewals - 2025/26	163,777	0	163,777
PBB-00002100	AMP Irrigation Renewals - 2025/26	989,077	0	989,077
PBB-00002107	Kerb and Gutter and Path Major Defect Rectification 2025-26	1,000,000	0	1,000,000
PBB-00002113	Asset Breakdown - Contingency Fund 2025/26	203,600	0	203,600
PBB-00002114	Office Fit Out and Modifications	45,810	0	45,810
PBB-00002132	Inlet Reserve - Design & Consultation for renewal of public toilet, playground and fitness equipment	60,000	0	60,000
PBB-00002171	River Park Reserve Playground Renewal	215,000	0	215,000
PBB-00002177	Alternative Water - Renewal - Irrigation Well and Pump	300,000	0	300,000
PBB-00002181	Alternative Water - Renewal - Pumps & Motors	30,000	0	30,000
PBB-00002186	Faith Montessori Roof Restoration	200,000	0	200,000
PBB-00002229	New Engineering Survey Total Station	80,000	0	80,000
PBB-00002238	Beach Access Staircase Renewal - 171 Esplanade Henley Beach	50,000	200,000	250,000
TOTAL		36,406,515	1,850,420	38,256,935



Appendix D – Rating Policy

Rating Policy

Reference Number:	4.24
Type:	Council
Category:	Finance Policy
Relevant Community Vision Outcome:	Responsible Governance
Responsible Officer(s):	Manager Financial Services
First Issued/Approved:	June 2001
Minutes Reference:	CI 23/06/2025 Item 6.43
Last Reviewed:	June 2025
Next Review Due:	June 2026
Applicable Legislation:	Local Government Act 1999 Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 2011
Related Policies:	Nil
Related Procedures:	Nil

1. Purpose

This document sets out the Policy of the City of Charles Sturt for setting and collecting rates from its community. The Policy covers the following areas:

• the method used to value land	• payment of rates
• adoption of valuations	• rebate of rates
• business impact statement	• rate capping
• Council's revenue raising powers	• remission of rates
• differential general rates	• postponement of rates
• minimum rate	• late payment of rates
• Regional Landscape levy (the Council's collection role)	• sale of land for non-payment of rates
• pensioner concessions	• changes to assessment record
• self-funded retirees concession	• disclaimer

2. Scope

Strategic Focus

In setting its rates for the 2025/26 financial year Council has considered the following:

- its Community Vision 2040 – A Place to call home, A place where we belong.
- its Long-Term Financial Plan Estimates 2025-2035.
- its budget development principles.
- the current economic climate.
- the specific issues faced by our community.
- the Annual Business Plan and Budget for the 2025/2026 financial year.
- the impact of rates on the community.
- the impact of rates on businesses.
- the relationship between Council objectives and rating strategy.
- Council's debt strategy.
- required funding for future asset replacement.
- the impact of differential changes in property valuations across the City.
- as may be relevant, issues of consistency and comparability across Council areas in the imposition of rates on sectors of the community such as business; and
- issues of equity arising from circumstances where ratepayers provide or maintain infrastructure that might otherwise be provided or maintained by Council and whether discretionary rebates will be granted.

Copies of Council's Community Vision and Annual Business Plan and Budget are available for inspection at the Charles Sturt Civic Centre, 72 Woodville Road, Woodville or on our website at www.charlessturt.sa.gov.au.

3. Policy Statement

3.1 Communication of the Policy

Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1999 requires a Council to prepare an Annual Business Plan and Budget. As per Section 123 (2) (d) the annual plan must set out the rates structure and policies for the financial year. A summary of the Annual Business Plan must be included with the first rates notice.

3.2 Method Used to Value Land

Councils may adopt one of three valuation methodologies to value the properties in their areas. They are:

- *Capital Value* – the value of the land and all the improvements on the land.
- *Site Value* – the value of the land and any improvements which permanently affect the amenity of use of the land, such as drainage works, but **excluding** the value of buildings and other improvements.
- *Annual Value* – a valuation of the rental potential of the property.

The City of Charles Sturt has decided to continue to use Capital Value as the basis for valuing land within the Council area. The Council considers that this method of valuing land provides the fairest method of distributing the rate burden across all ratepayers because property value is considered a reasonable indicator of income and capital value, which closely approximates the market value of a property and provides the best indicator of overall property value.

3.3 Adoption of Valuations

A Council may employ or engage a valuer to value the land in the area or it may use the valuations provided by the Valuer-General, or it may use a combination of both subject to certain restrictions. The Valuer-General is a statutory officer appointed by the Governor.

The City of Charles Sturt has adopted the most recent valuations made by the Valuer-General. If a ratepayer is dissatisfied with the valuation made by the Valuer-General then the ratepayer may object to the Valuer-General in writing, within 60 days of receiving the notice of the valuation, explaining the basis for the objection, provided they have not:

- (a) previously received a notice of this valuation under the Local Government Act, in which case the objection period is 60 days from the receipt of the first notice; or
- (b) previously had an objection to the valuation considered by the Valuer-General.

It is to be noted, however that regardless of the 60-day limitation period before lodging an objection to the valuation the Valuer-General may, for good reason, determine to accept an objection lodged outside this time period.

3.4 Objection to Valuation

A person may object to a valuation of the Valuer-General by notice in writing, setting out the reasons for the objections, and the Valuer-General must consider the objection. If the person then remains dissatisfied with the valuation the person has a right to a review. Applications must be made within 21 days of receipt of the notice of the decision (in relation to the objection) from the Valuer-General. A payment of the prescribed fee for the review to be undertaken together with the review application must be lodged with the office of the Valuer-General, who will then refer the matter to an independent Valuer. If the person remains dissatisfied with the valuation, then they have a right of appeal to the South Australian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (Section 24, 25A, 25B & 25C of the Valuation of Land Act 1971).

The address of the Office of the Valuer General is 101 Grenfell Street, Adelaide SA 5000 (GPO Box 1354, Adelaide SA 5001) and the telephone number is 1300 653 346 (general enquiries).

Note: Council has no role in the process of considering an objection to a valuation.

It is also important to note that the lodgement of an objection does not change the due date for the payment of rates.

3.5 Notional Values

Certain properties may be eligible for a notional value, where the property is the principal place of residence of a ratepayer, under the Valuation of Land Act 1971. This relates to some primary production land or where there is State/Local heritage recognition.

Any owner that believes that they are entitled to a 'notional value' must apply in writing to the office of the Valuer General.

3.6 Business Impact Statement

The Council has considered the impact of rates on businesses in the Council area, including primary production. In considering the impact, Council assessed the following matters:

- those elements of the Council's strategic management plans relating to business development.
- the current and forecast economic climate as identified in Council's environmental scan.
- operating and capital projects for the coming year that will principally benefit industry and business development within the City.
- movement in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) and other relevant indices such as the Local Government Price Index (LGPI).
- valuation changes in commercial and industrial properties across the City as compared with valuation changes in residential properties across the City.

3.7 Council's Revenue Raising Powers

All land within a Council area, except for land specifically exempt (eg Crown land, Council occupied land and other land prescribed in the Local Government Act – refer Section 147 of the Act), is rateable. The Local Government Act provides for a Council to raise revenue for the broad purposes of the Council through a general rate, which applies to all rateable properties, or through differential general rates, which apply to classes of properties. In addition, Council can raise separate rates, for specific areas of the Council or service rates or charges for specific services. The Council also raises revenue through fees and charges, which are set giving consideration to the cost of the service provided and any equity issues. The list of applicable fees and charges is available at the Charles Sturt Civic Centre, 72 Woodville Road, Woodville or on our website at www.charlessturt.sa.gov.au. A Goods and Services Tax at a rate determined under the Goods and Services Tax Act 1999 will be charged on those fees not given exemption under the Act.

3.8 Differential General Rates

At its meeting on 23 June 2025 Council decided to raise rate revenue of \$147,874,221 in a total operating revenue budget of \$169,857,528.

The Council has set the following differential general rates.

- (a) 0.181141064 cents in the dollar on rateable land of category Residential.
- (b) 0.655693955 cents in the dollar on rateable land of categories Commercial – shop, Commercial - Office and Commercial – other use.
- (c) 0.672458381 cents in the dollar on rateable land of categories Industry – Light and Industry – other.
- (d) 0.334850945 cents in the dollar on rateable land of category Primary Production.
- (e) 0.527839727 cents in the dollar on rateable land of category Vacant Land.
- (f) 0.340143867 cents in the dollar on rateable land of category Other.

Land use is a factor to levy differential rates. If a ratepayer believes that a particular property has been wrongly classified by the Council as to its land use, then the ratepayer may object to that land use (to the Council) within 60 days of being notified. The objection must set out the basis for the objection and details of the land use that, in the opinion of the ratepayer, should be attributed to that property. The Council may then decide the objection as it sees fit and notify the ratepayer. A ratepayer also has the right to appeal against the Council's decision to the South Australian Civil and Administrative Tribunal.

Objections to Council's land use decision may be lodged with the City of Charles Sturt, 72 Woodville Road, Woodville. A ratepayer may discuss the matter with one of Council's Customer Contact Officers on phone number 8408 1111 in the first instance. The Council will provide, on request, a copy of Section 156 of the Local Government Act 1999 which sets out the rights and obligations of ratepayers in respect of objections to a land use.

Note: Lodgement of an objection does not change the due date for the payment of rates.

3.9 Minimum Rate

A Council may impose a minimum amount payable by way of rates, provided that it has not imposed a fixed charge. Where two or more adjoining properties have the same owner **and** are occupied by the same occupier, only one minimum rate is payable by the ratepayer. Where a Council imposes a minimum rate it must not apply to more than 35% of properties in the Council area.

The Council has decided to impose a minimum rate of \$1,350. The reason for imposing a minimum rate is to ensure that all residents contribute towards the provision of basic services at a reasonable level.

3.10 Regional Landscape Levy

The City of Charles Sturt is within the area covered by the Green Adelaide Board and is required under the Landscape South Australia Act 2019 to fund the operations of the Board. It does so by imposing a separate rate against rateable properties within its area of 0.00620500 cents in the dollar, based on the Capital Value of rateable land within the City.

The City of Charles Sturt is operating as a revenue collector for the Green Adelaide Board in this regard. Revenue from this levy is not retained by the Council, nor does the Council determine how the revenue is spent.

3.11 Pensioner Concessions

If you are an eligible pensioner, you may be entitled to a cost of living concession. This concession is paid directly into the individual's bank account and can be used towards either electricity, gas, water bills or council rates.

Application forms are available by contacting the Concession Hotline on 1800 307 758 or at www.sa.gov.au/concessions.

Applications are administered by the State Government. Payment of rates must not be withheld pending assessment of an application by the State Government as penalties apply to unpaid rates.

3.12 Concessions for Self-Funded Retirees

The State Government has determined that self-funded retirees meeting certain conditions may also be entitled to cost of living concession. This concession is paid directly into the individual's bank account and can be used towards either electricity, gas, water bills or council rates.

Application forms are available by contacting the Concession Hotline on 1800 307 758 or at www.sa.gov.au/concessions.

Payment of rates must not be withheld pending assessment of an application by the State Government as penalties apply to unpaid rates.

3.13 Payment of Rates

As required by Section 181 (1) of the Local Government Act 1999, ratepayers may pay their rates in four approximately equal instalments, payable in the months of September, December, March and June of the financial year for which the rates are declared.

In cases where the initial account requiring payment of rates is not sent at least 30 days prior to this date, or an amended account is required to be sent, the Chief Executive Officer has the authority to fix the date by which rates must be paid for these assessments.

The Chief Executive Officer also has the authority to enter into agreements with principal ratepayers relating to the payment of rates in any case where he considers it necessary or desirable to do so.

Rates may be paid in person by cash, EFTPOS or credit card (except Diners Card and American Express), at the following Council Service Centres:

- Charles Sturt Civic Centre, 72 Woodville Road, Woodville
- Ngutungka West Lakes, 9 Charles Street West Lakes*
- Hindmarsh Library, 149 Port Road, Hindmarsh*
- Findon Library, Cnr Grange and Findon Roads*

or at

- any **Australia Post** outlet

* **Note:** For security reasons cash payments are only accepted at the Charles Sturt Civic Centre and Australia Post outlets.

By telephone using:

- BPay and Bpay view through your participating bank
- Phone NAB 1300 609 653

By mail:

- Addressed to City of Charles Sturt, PO Box 1 Woodville SA 5011

By internet:

- Through Council's website at www.charlessturt.sa.gov.au
- or Australia Post at www.postbillpay.com.au

By Direct Debit:

- Quarterly
- Fortnightly

Any ratepayer who may, or is likely to, experience difficulty with meeting the standard payment arrangements is invited to contact Council's Rate Enquiries on 8408 1111 to discuss alternative payment arrangements. Such enquiries are treated confidentially by the Council.

Note: Late payment fines and interest may still apply.

3.14 Late Payment of Rates / Debt Recovery

The Local Government Act provides that Councils impose a penalty of 2% on any payment for rates, whether instalment or otherwise, that is received late. A payment that continues to be late is then charged an interest rate, set each year according to a formula in the Act, for each month it continues to be late. Interest charged on late payments is charged on both the amount of the rate arrears and any interest that has previously been imposed. The purpose of this penalty is to act as a genuine deterrent to ratepayers who might otherwise fail to pay their rates on time, to allow Councils to recover the administrative cost of following up unpaid rates and to cover any interest cost the Council may incur because it has not received the rates on time.

The prescribed interest rate for the 2025/26 financial year has not yet been declared. When the interest rate is declared the Council will publish the rate on its public website.

The City of Charles Sturt imposes late payment penalties strictly in accordance with the Local Government Act. The ability to remit penalties in whole or part is a power vested in Council. At the City of Charles Sturt each case will be considered on its merit based on the information provided.

3.15 Debt Recovery

The Council will apply prudent debt collection practices in the recovery of outstanding rates in compliance with the Local Government Act 1999 and following an ongoing assessment of arrears and systematic approach to debt recovery.

Rates which are not paid by the due date as specified on the council rates notice will be subject to the following recovery procedure:

1. fines and interest as provided by the Act will be added.
2. an overdue notice will be forwarded within 7 days of the imposition of a late payment penalty.
3. the debt will be placed in the hands of a debt collector if payment or arrangement for payment is not made within 10 days. A notice of intention to issue a claim will be forwarded by the debt collector; and
4. court proceedings will be instigated if the payment is still overdue after 21 days.

All fees and court costs are recoverable from the ratepayer.

When Council receives a payment in respect of overdue rates the Council applies the money received as follows:

- firstly – to satisfy any costs awarded in connection with court proceedings.
- secondly – to satisfy any interest costs.
- thirdly – in payment of any fines imposed; and
- fourthly – in payment of rates, in date order of their imposition (starting with the oldest account first).

3.16 Rebate of Rates

3.16.1 Under the Act

The Local Government Act requires Council to rebate the rates payable on some land. Specific provisions are made for land used for health services, community services, religious purposes, public cemeteries, the Royal Zoological Society and educational institutions. These rebates vary from 25% to 100% and will be applied upon application and or verification of existing status.

3.16.2 Discretionary

Discretionary rebates of up to 100% may be applied by the Council under Section 166 of the Act. However as per Council's rate rebate policy it is recognised that Council has a requirement to balance the benefits of supporting community organisations, with the impact that such rebates have on our overall rating income. To promote the transparency of this process, Council has adopted a Rate Rebate Policy. A copy of this policy is available at the Charles Sturt Civic Centre or on Council's website at www.charlessturt.sa.gov.au.

These rebates will be applied upon application.

3.16.3 Residential Construction

Under Section 166 (1) (a) of the Act, and for the purpose of securing the proper development of the area, a rebate of general rates for the 2025/26 financial year will be granted in respect of an Assessment classed as vacant land in the Council's Assessment Book where the land is in a Residential Zone or a Residential Historic (Conservation) Zone in the Development Plan, or any replacement zone created by the authorisation of a Plan Amendment Report applicable to the Council's area:

- a) if the Principal Ratepayer of the Assessment applies to the Council for the rebate prior to 30 June 2026; and
- b) a dwelling has been substantially commenced on the property by 30 June 2026, and
- c) the Council is satisfied that the intention of the Principal Ratepayer is to reside in that dwelling upon completion for at least 1 year.

The amount of the rebate is determined based on the timing of the pouring of the footings. If the footings are poured prior to 31 December 2025 a full rebate will be given but if the footings are poured after 31 December 2025 a 50% rebate will be given with the rebate being the difference in monetary terms between the rates that would have been paid in respect of the Assessment if it had been used at the date of declaration of the rates for residential purposes and the actual amount paid after deducting any other rebate granted within the rating period.

It is the intention of this rebate to only apply to one dwelling and to the ratepayer who will reside in Charles Sturt and consequently where multiple dwellings are proposed on Land (with

or without division of the land occurring) the rate rebate will apply to only one of the dwellings, on a pro-rata basis. For example, if four dwellings are being constructed on the Land, provided the above criteria is met, the owner will be entitled to 25% of the applicable rebate (being the rebate determined according to when the footings are poured).

If the principal ratepayer is a body corporate the rebate will only be applied if one of the directors or office holders will reside in the dwelling for at least 1 year.

3.16.4 Rate Capping

To provide relief against what would otherwise amount to a substantial change in rates payable by a ratepayer due to rapid changes in valuation, a rebate of general rates for the 2025/26 financial year will be granted to the Principal Ratepayer of an Assessment under Section 166 (1) (I) of the Act, either by the Council of its own initiative where the Council is in possession of sufficient information to determine the entitlement to the rebate or otherwise on application to the Council, where the amount of any increase in rates in respect of that Assessment in monetary terms between the amount of general rates payable for the 2024/25 financial year (after any rebate was applied) and the amount of general rates imposed for the 2025/26 financial year, is greater than 12.5%. The amount of the rebate will be the difference between the amount of general rates in monetary terms imposed for the 2025/26 financial year and the amount of general rates in monetary terms payable for the 2024/25 financial year (after any rebate was applied but prior to deducting any concessions) plus 12.5% of that amount.

The rebate will not apply where:

- a) any such increase is due in whole or part to an increase in valuation of the land in the Assessment because of improvements made to it worth more than \$20,000, or
- b) any such increase is applicable to the use of land being the categories of commercial, industrial, primary production, vacant land and other.
- c) any such increase is due in full or part to the use of the land being different for rating purposes on the date the Council declared its general rates for the 2025/26 financial year than on the date the Council declared its general rates for the 2024/25 financial year, or
- d) the ownership of the rateable property has changed since 1 July 2024.

3.16.5 Postponement of Rates for Seniors

Under Section 182A of the Act a postponement of rates may be granted to persons meeting the requirements of Section 182A (1). A 'senior' for these purposes is a person who holds a current State Seniors Card issued by the State Government or who has the qualifications to hold such and has applied for the card but is yet to be issued with it. A postponement is available to a 'senior' (or the spouse of a senior) in respect of all rates payable on the principal place of residence that is owned only by the senior or the senior and his/her spouse. A postponement for these purposes must be applied for (to the Council) and where the above criteria are met will result in all rates over \$500 being postponed. The postponed amount will incur interest.

3.16.6 Applications

All applications for rebates, remissions or postponements must be in writing, addressed to the Chief Executive Officer, City of Charles Sturt, 72 Woodville Road, Woodville SA 5011 and include sufficient details to identify the relevant property and support the application.

Application forms are available from council's website at www.charlessturt.sa.gov.au.

Further information on rebates is available from a Customer Contact Officer at the Council Offices, 72 Woodville Road, Woodville or on telephone (08) 8408 1111.

3.17 Sale of Land for Non-Payment of Rates

The Local Government Act provides that a Council may sell any property where the rates have been in arrears for three years or more. The Council is required to provide the principal ratepayer and the owner (if not the same person) with details of the outstanding amounts and advise the owner of its intention to sell the land if payment of the outstanding amount is not received within one month. The City of Charles Sturt enforces the sale of land for non-payment of rates after 3 years or more in accordance with the provisions of the Act.

Land which is exempted for non-payment of rates as per Section 185 of the Local Government Act 1999 Charles Sturt enforces its application as part of its policy.

3.18 Changes to Assessment Records

All changes to postal address or name of a ratepayer/owner and changes of ownership of a property must be notified promptly to Council in writing, letter, or email.

3.19 Disclaimer

A rate cannot be challenged on the basis of non-compliance with this policy and must be paid in accordance with the required payment provisions.

Where a ratepayer believes that the Council has failed to properly apply this policy it should raise the matter with the Council. In the first instance contact a Customer Contact Officer at the Council Offices or on telephone 8408 1111 to discuss the matter. If, after this initial contact, a ratepayer is still dissatisfied they should write to the Chief Executive Officer, City of Charles Sturt, 72 Woodville Road, Woodville SA 5011 (email: council@charlessturt.sa.gov.au) explaining the nature of their concern.

4. Definitions

Nil

APPENDIX A

Summary of legal position relating to the setting and collection of rates

Local Government Act 1999

A Council may impose general rates, separate rates, service rates and service charges on land in its area (Section 146). Generally, all land within a Council area is rateable unless it is specifically exempt by section 147 of the Act. Such exemptions include crown land, land used for public educational purposes and Council occupied land. A Council must adopt an annual business plan each year which amongst other things sets out the Council's objectives for the year and the broad rates structure and policy framework within which the Council rates its area. A summary of the Annual Business Plan must accompany the first rates notice.

A rate is to be based on the value of the land multiplied by a 'rate in the dollar' set each year by the Council. The basis of valuation is to be capital value, site value or annual value (Section 151). Land must be valued by either the Valuer-General or a valuer engaged or employed by the Council (Section 167). Objections may be lodged against a valuation made by a valuer engaged or employed by the Council (Section 169) or by the Valuer-General (Valuation of Land Act). Differential general rates can be declared for land according to the location or the specific use (eg residential) of the land.

As part of the general rate a fixed charge may apply which means that the same amount is payable irrespective of the value, use or location of the property. The fixed charge may only be imposed against the whole of an allotment and only one fixed charge may be imposed against two or more pieces of contiguous land owned by the same owner and occupied by the same occupier or a single farm enterprise (Sections 148 & 152).

A Council may fix a minimum amount payable by way of rates or it may alter the amount to be paid by properties within a specific range of values but may not do so if it has imposed a fixed charge. The minimum rate may only be imposed against the whole of an allotment (which can include land under a separate lease or licence) and only one minimum rate is payable by two or more pieces of contiguous land owned by the same owner and occupied by the same occupier. The minimum rate must not be applied to supported accommodation or independent living units within the same group or complex of units. The minimum rate and altered rates must not apply to more than 35% of the properties in a Council area (Section 158).

A Council may declare either a general rate or differential general rates based on the use of the land, the locality of the land, the locality and the use of the land or (where particular circumstances apply) some other basis determined by the Council (Sections 153 & 156). A Council may declare a separate rate (or differential separate rates) on rateable land where a specific project is being undertaken to benefit the land or the occupiers of the land, which can be only a portion of the land in a Council area (Section 154). A Council may impose service rates and/or charges against land for any prescribed service it provides or makes available to the land.

A service charge is also payable in relation to non-rateable land. Prescribed services are the treatment or provision of water, the collection, treatment or disposal (including by recycling) of waste and television transmission (or retransmission) services (Section 155).

Rates are a charge against the land (Section 177). The owner of the land (unless the Council is advised otherwise) is the principal ratepayer and rates may be recovered as a debt against the principal ratepayer. In certain cases the occupier of the land may be classed as the principal ratepayer.

All ratepayers may pay rates in four quarterly instalments and a Council may grant discounts or incentives to encourage early or prompt payment of rates (Section 181). A Council may also make arrangements with ratepayers for other instalment provisions to apply (Section 181). If an instalment of rates is not paid by the due date then the Act provides for a Council to impose a fine of 2% on the unpaid instalment and, if the instalment continues to be unpaid, to charge a prescribed interest rate (set each year by a formula in the Act) on the unpaid instalment (including interest previously charged), on a monthly basis. The Council may remit such penalties in whole or in part (Section 181). Where rates become unpaid for a period of more than three years a Council may sell the land to recover the unpaid rates (Section 184).

A Council may remit or postpone the payment of rates, on the application of the ratepayer, if the payment of the rates would impose hardship on the ratepayer (Section 182).

A Council must rebate the payment of rates for land used for various purposes – health services, community services, religious purposes, public cemeteries, the Royal Zoological Society, educational institutions – as provided in Sections 159 to 165 of the Act. A Council may also provide discretionary rebates on the payment of rates (up to 100% of the rate for a period of up to ten years) on land used for a range of purposes, including for the securing the proper development of the land, for the preservation of buildings or places of historic interest, for the provision of facilities or services for children or young persons and for the provision of accommodation for the aged or disabled (Section 166).

A Council must also postpone all rates over \$500, on application by a 'senior' who satisfies the various criteria set out at Section 182A of the Act.

Note: A copy of the Local Government Act 1999 is available for inspection at the Charles Sturt Civic Centre, 72 Woodville Road, Woodville or on the SA State Government website at www.legislation.sa.gov.au