



GLADSTONE
REGIONAL COUNCIL

GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

**HELD AT THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS - CIVIC CENTRE
101 GOONDOON STREET, GLADSTONE**

On Tuesday 2 December 2025

Commencing at 9.00am

**Leisa Dowling
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

Table of Contents

ITEM	PAGE
G/0.3.2. APOLOGIES AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE	3
G/0.3.3. MESSAGES OF CONDOLENCE	3
G/0.3.4. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS	4
G/1. MAYORAL STATEMENT OF CURRENT ISSUES.....	5
G/2. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES	7
G/2.1. CONFIRMATION OF GENERAL MEETING MINUTES FOR 18 NOVEMBER 2025	7
G/3. DEPUTATIONS	8
G/3.1. QUEENSLAND COMMUNITY ALLIANCE	8
G/4. OFFICERS' REPORTS	9
G/4.1. DA/34/2025 - RECONFIGURING A LOT (1 LOT INTO 18) AT 140 AWOONGA DAM ROAD, BENARABY QLD 4680	9
G/4.2. PROPOSED GLADSTONE REGIONAL COUNCIL INFRASTRUCTURE CHARGE RESOLUTION 2025	10
G/4.3. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVE POLICY	11
G/4.4. REVIEW OF COUNCILLOR CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY	12
G/4.5. QUEENSLAND AUDIT OFFICE FINAL MANAGEMENT REPORT 2024-25.....	13
G/4.6. STATUTORY DELEGATIONS OF POWER COUNCIL TO THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER.....	14
G/4.7. WAIVER OF GREEN WASTE DISPOSAL FEES	15
G/4.8. AUDIT RISK AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY FOR 1 OCTOBER 2025	16
G/4.9. LEASE RENEWAL - METEORS SPORTS CLUB	17
G/4.10. LEASE RENEWAL - GLADSTONE HARBOUR CITY BMX	18
G/4.11. LEASE RENEWAL - GLADSTONE & DISTRICT DARTS ASSOCIATION	19
G/4.12. LEASE AGREEMENT - VALLEYS JUNIOR RUGBY LEAGUE FOOTBALL CLUB	20
G/5. COUNCILLORS REPORT.....	21
G/6. URGENT BUSINESS.....	22
G/7. NOTICE OF MOTION	22
G/8. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS	22
ATTACHMENTS	23

Elected Members

Councillor - Mayor M Burnett
Councillor G Churchill
Councillor K Davis
Councillor M Wagner
Councillor M Holzheimer
Councillor N Muszkat
Councillor S McClintock
Councillor L Patrick
Councillor C Cameron

Officers

C Quinn (General Manager People and Strategy)
R Millett (Executive Secretary)
S Penrose (Manager Governance and Risk, Acting)
T Whalley (General Manager Finance Governance and Risk, Acting)
K Lee (General Manager Community and Lifestyle)
M Francis (General Manager Assets and Environment)
K Wilson (General Manager Customer Experience)
H Robertson (Manager Development Services)
M Kelly (Strategic Planning Specialist)
J Rossow (Financial Controller)
L Cattermole (Community Leasing Officer)

G/0.3.2. APOLOGIES AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Nil

G/0.3.3. MESSAGES OF CONDOLENCE

Nil

G/0.3.4. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Cr Patrick

Councillor Leanne Patrick advised that at the Councillor Information Session held on Tuesday 25 November 2025 she left the meeting room during the discussion of Item 2.1. SERVICE PLANNING: AQUATIC CENTRES in accordance with her prior declaration of a declarable conflict of interest relating to the Boyne Tannum Aquatic Centre. Cr Patrick advised that this conflict arises because her husband, Nathan Patrick, owns McDonald's Boyne Island, which is located in close proximity to the proposed Boyne Tannum Aquatic Centre.

Cr Patrick advised that notwithstanding this declarable conflict of interest, she believes it is in the public interest for her to participate in broader service-level discussions regarding Council's aquatic centres because:

- The likelihood that these high-level service planning discussions would result in any material benefit or detriment to my husband, Nathan Patrick, or McDonald's Boyne Island is extremely remote.
- As an elected councillor, she can contribute meaningfully to strategic discussions on the delivery and management of aquatic centre services for the benefit of the community.
- As an elected councillor by the residents of this region, her focus is on community-wide outcomes, not individual or business interests, and she will apply principles of equity and fairness to all service planning considerations.
- The nature of these discussions is strategic and high-level, with no direct operational or commercial implications for any individual business.
- She will continue to declare and manage any conflicts of interest transparently, ensuring her participation does not compromise public confidence in Council's integrity.

GM/25/5583 Council Resolution:

Moved Cr Muszkat
Seconded Cr Davis

That notwithstanding Cr Patrick's declarable conflict of interest, it is in the public interest for Cr Patrick to remain in the room and participate in the decisions relating to service planning for Council's aquatic centres without restriction.

CARRIED

G/1. MAYORAL STATEMENT OF CURRENT ISSUES

We had International Men's Day with a breakfast held by the Gladstone Rotary Club at Bob's Garage. Thank you, Councillor Chris Cameron and Councillor Simon McClintock, for attending that event on Wednesday 19 November 2025.

On Thursday 20 November was the Queensland Major Projects Pipeline Gladstone Regional Launch event. It is fantastic to see so many more major industries considering Gladstone as the play they'd like to set up and continue to develop and invest.

On Saturday 22 November 2025, we had the unveiling of the water fountain, one of our Youth Council projects, at Lions Park in Boyne Island. Well done to our Youth Council for some of their initiatives and it was fantastic to hear from them at the last Council meeting. I certainly recommend anyone who has time on their hands to go back and watch their presentation at the last Council meeting.

On Tuesday 25 November it was the 16 days of activism for Zonta in Gladstone for the elimination of violence against women and I thank the Zonta ladies for organising that event every year.

On Saturday 22 November 2025 was the official launch of Marine Rescue Queensland in Round Hill. Thank you, Councillor Glenn Churchill, for attending that on behalf of Council. Well done to Josie Meng and everyone involved in the rescuing and saving lives in that part of our region, particularly in the Agnes Water and Seventeen Seventy area, and part of the Southern Great Barrier Reef.

On Saturday 29 November 2025, the Miriam Vale Bowls Club celebrated 70 years. Congratulations and I thank Councillor Michelle Wagner and Councillor Natalia Muszkat for attending that event. The volunteers at the Miriam Vale Bowls Club are amazing and they have done so well over many years, and 70 years is a huge milestone.

We have our Christmas Lights Trail registrations still open. There might have been a bit of a glitch on the website, but you can still register. Registrations close tomorrow (Wednesday 3 December 2025) at 3.00pm. We're looking forward to publishing the map in the Gladstone Today so you can take the grandkids and kids out and go Christmas light hunting right around the Gladstone Region.

This Friday 5 December 2025 is the Santos GLNG Mayor's Carols and it's going to be a huge night at the Gladstone Ports Corporation (GPC) Marina Parkland. Starts at 4.00pm with the Merry Markets, we have the lighting of the Christmas Tree, our carols, and fireworks. Huge night at the GPC Marina Parklands and we've got special guests from Australian Idol and The Voice Australia as well.

The Ulysses Toy Run is the very next day on Saturday 6 December 2025. The Ulysses Toy Run generally starts at the Botanic Gardens and travels around town and all the toys that are collected are given to the Salvation Army and then they're delivered to kids across the Gladstone Region.

And speaking of toys for the Gladstone Region, we also launched the Mayor's Giving Tree at Big W yesterday (Monday 1 December 2025). Thank you, Cr Churchill, for joining me for the launch. And some exciting news for those who didn't watch the live stream, we had a conversation with Gladstone Centre Plaza, and they announced that Big W will be a long-term tenant for the Gladstone Region in their shopping centre at Gladstone Centre Plaza. It's a 10 plus plus year lease. While Big W was always a topic of conversation as to whether they were staying in Gladstone or leaving Gladstone, they are absolutely committed to our region, and I encourage everyone to go and buy some presents there this year rather than shopping online. Go across to Kmart and shop in the main street and everywhere else around the region as shopping local is so important. Companies like Big W could have quite easily made a decision to say, 'this is not for us anymore, thanks Gladstone for decades of support but we're moving on'. But no, they've signed up and continuing in Gladstone for at least 10 years, and probably 10 plus 10 plus 10.

GLADSTONE REGIONAL COUNCIL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES - 2 DECEMBER 2025

So hopefully we can see Big W operating for the next 30 years. I really encourage everyone to shop locally this Christmas.

On Sunday 7 December we have the Community Carols in Agnes Water and Seventeen Seventy.

The Welcome to the Region Gladstone Region Babies Edition, the very first, is happening on Wednesday 10 December 2025 and I'm very excited because I signed the certificates yesterday and the very first certificate was for my granddaughter. It was already fully booked, so we have to do another one very quickly soon afterwards because it's fantastic and everyone wants their Welcome to the Gladstone Region baby certificate. I think it says, 'I'm a Gladstone Region Baby' and signed.

On Wednesday 10 December 2025 is the Boyne Island Library Annual Christmas Tree Extravaganza. It's a fantastic day. The kids have an absolute ball in the library. That is on Wednesday 10 December 2025 from 3.30pm to 4.30pm. Doesn't matter where you are in the region, if you have some free time, take the kids to that, they'll love it.

On Saturday 13 December 2025 is the Queensland Police Service (QPS) Community and Careers Expo at the Gladstone Police Citizens Youth Club (PCYC) from 10.00am until 1.00pm.

And our New Year's Eve Party is back. It's back at the GPC Marina Parklands on Wednesday 31 December 2025. Spectacular fireworks at 8.00pm and midnight. Gates open at 5.00pm and it is free, no bookings required. There is going to be mini golf, food vendors, license bar, some pay as you go rides as well. That will be a fantastic way to bring in the new year.

And finally, I want to congratulate all the students that are graduating and completing their schooling. I know that our Year 12's have already finished and probably heading home now from schoolies week. Tonight, I head to the Clearview Christian College for their annual celebration, and I want to thank Councillors for attending all our school awards nights and celebrations over the last few weeks. It really is appropriate that Council is there to acknowledge our students that are graduating and congratulate the ones who have really excelled in an area.

G/2. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

G/2.1. CONFIRMATION OF GENERAL MEETING MINUTES FOR 18 NOVEMBER 2025

Responsible Officer: Chief Executive Officer

Prepared By: Executive Secretary

Council Meeting Date: 2 December 2025

File Ref: CM7.2

Purpose:

Confirmation of the minutes of the General Meeting held on 18 November 2025.

Officer's Recommendation:

That the minutes of the General Meeting of Council held on 18 November 2025 be confirmed.

GM/25/5584 Council Resolution:

Moved Cr Holzheimer

Seconded Cr Patrick

That the Officer's Recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED

G/3. DEPUTATIONS

G/3.1. QUEENSLAND COMMUNITY ALLIANCE

Responsible Officer: Chief Executive Officer

Prepared By: Executive Secretary

Council Meeting Date: 2 December 2025

File Ref: CM7.6

Purpose:

For Queensland Community Alliance to provide information regarding accessible change facilities for Gladstone.

Officer's Recommendation:

That the deputation from Queensland Community Alliance be received.

GM/25/5585 Council Resolution:

Moved Cr McClintock
Seconded Cr Cameron

That the Officer's Recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED

G/4. OFFICERS' REPORTS

G/4.1. DA/34/2025 - RECONFIGURING A LOT (1 LOT INTO 18) AT 140 AWOONGA DAM ROAD, BENARABY QLD 4680

Responsible Officer: General Manager Customer Experience

Prepared By: Principal Planning Lead

Council Meeting Date: 2 December 2025

File Ref: DA/34/2025

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to assess and decide Development Application DA/34/2025 seeking a Development Permit for a Reconfiguring a Lot (One into 18 Lots) made by Jankar Pty Ltd C/- Zone Planning QLD on land at 140 Awoonga Dam Road, BENARABY QLD 4680 more formally described as Lot 500 on SP252863

Officer's Recommendation

That Council approve Development Application DA/34/2025 for a Development Permit for Reconfiguring a Lot (One into 18 Lots) made by Jankar Pty Ltd C/- Zone Planning QLD on land at 140 Awoonga Dam Road, BENARABY QLD 4680 more formally described as Lot 500 on SP252863. The approval is subject to reasonable and relevant development conditions contained within Attachment 2 to the Officer's report.

GM/25/5586 Council Resolution:

Moved Cr Churchill

Seconded Cr Cameron

That the Officer's Recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED

G/4.2. PROPOSED GLADSTONE REGIONAL COUNCIL INFRASTRUCTURE CHARGE RESOLUTION 2025

Responsible Officer: General Manager Customer Experience

Prepared By: Strategic Planning Specialist

Council Meeting Date: 2 December 2025

File Ref: FM7.2

GM/25/5587 Procedural Motion:

Moved Cr Churchill
Seconded Mayor Burnett

That the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED

The meeting was adjourned for morning tea at 10.51am and reconvened at 11.18am.

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to consider the adoption of the Gladstone Regional Council Infrastructure Charges Resolution 2025 commencing 2 March 2026.

Officer's Recommendation:

That Council in accordance with s113(1) of the *Planning Act 2016* adopt the Gladstone Regional Council Infrastructure Charges Resolution 2025 as attached to the Officer's report, commencing 2 March 2026.

GM/25/5588 Council Resolution:

Moved Cr Holzheimer
Seconded Cr McClintock

That Council:

1. in accordance with s113(1) of the Planning Act 2016 adopt the Gladstone Regional Council Infrastructure Charges Resolution 2025 as attached the Officer's report, commencing 2 March 2026, subject to the following amendment:
 - a. apply producer price index from the date that the Infrastructure Charge Notice is levied; and
2. in accordance with s113(1) of the Planning Act 2016, increase the Adopted Infrastructure Charges from 1 July 2027 to:
 - a. for Charge Area 1, 100% of the maximum allowable charge:
 - b. for Charge Area 2, 75% of the maximum allowable charge; and
 - c. for Charge Area 3, 50% of the maximum allowable charge.

CARRIED

A division was called:

For the Motion: Cr Patrick, Cr McClintock, Cr Holzheimer, Cr Wagner, Cr Churchill, Mayor Burnett

Against the Motion: Cr Muszkat, Cr Davis, Cr Cameron

G/4.3. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVE POLICY

Responsible Officer: General Manager Finance Governance and Risk

Prepared By: Strategic Planning Specialist and Governance Business Partner

Council Meeting Date: 2 December 2025

File Ref: CM28.2

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to consider the adoption of a Development Incentive Policy to replace the existing Infrastructure Charges Rebate Scheme Policy to take effect from 2 March 2026.

Officer's Recommendation:

That Council:

1. Repeal the existing Infrastructure Charges Rebate Scheme Policy (P-2019-28) as of 2 March 2026; and
2. Adopt the proposed Development Incentive Policy provided as Attachment 1 to this report to commence 2 March 2026.

Moved Cr Muszkat

Seconded Cr Wagner

That Council repeal the existing Infrastructure Charges Rebate Scheme Policy (P-2019-28).

WITHDRAWN

GM/25/5589 Council Resolution:

Moved Cr Muszkat

Seconded Cr Wagner

That Council defer Item G/4.3. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVE POLICY to a General Meeting by 30 June 2026 to align with our Corporate Plan and budget.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

G/4.4. REVIEW OF COUNCILLOR CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY

Responsible Officer: General Manager Finance Governance and Risk

Prepared By: Governance Business Partner (Acting)

Council Meeting Date: 2 December 2025

File Ref: CM28.2

Purpose:

This report recommends repealing the Councillor Code of Conduct Policy and update Council's website to link directly to the Queensland Government's '*Code of Conduct for Councillors in Queensland*'.

Officer's Recommendation:

That Council:

1. Repeal the Councillor Code of Conduct Policy; and
2. Update Council's website to link directly to the Queensland Government's '*Code of Conduct for Councillors in Queensland*'.

GM/25/5590 Council Resolution:

Moved Cr Patrick

Seconded Cr Wagner

That the Officer's Recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED

The meeting was adjourned for lunch at 12.09pm and reconvened at 12.41pm.

G/4.5 QUEENSLAND AUDIT OFFICE FINAL MANAGEMENT REPORT 2024-25

Responsible Officer: General Manager Finance Governance and Risk

Prepared By: Financial Controller

Council Meeting Date: 2 December 2025

File Ref: FM4.4

Purpose:

To present a copy of the Final Management Report to ensure transparency and accountability of Council regarding audit findings.

Officer's Recommendation:

That Council note the Final Management Report (Attachment 1 to the Officer's report) provided to Council in accordance with Section 213 of the Local Government Regulation 2012.

GM/25/5591 Council Resolution:

Moved Cr Wagner

Seconded Cr Holzheimer

That the Officer's Recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED

G/4.6. STATUTORY DELEGATIONS OF POWER COUNCIL TO THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Responsible Officer: General Manager Finance Governance and Risk

Prepared By: Governance Business Partner

Council Meeting Date: 2 December 2025

File Ref: CM9.2

Purpose:

This report seeks an annual review of Council's delegation of legislative power to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to ensure that the CEO can share in the exercise of powers and sub-delegate to relevant Officers within the organisation where appropriate.

Officer's Recommendation:

That the legislative powers listed in Attachment 1 'Statutory Delegations Register – Council to CEO' excluding those identified as 'Remain with Council', be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer pursuant to Section 257 of the *Local Government Act 2009*.

GM/25/5592 Council Resolution:

Moved Cr Churchill

Seconded Cr McClintock

That the Officer's Recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED

G/4.7. WAIVER OF GREEN WASTE DISPOSAL FEES

Responsible Officer: General Manager Finance Governance and Risk

Prepared By: Manager Revenue Services

Council Meeting Date: 2 December 2025

File Ref: FM6.1 and FM7.1

Purpose:

To seek Council's retrospective endorsement of the waiver of fees for the domestic disposal of Green Waste for the period 26 November 2025 – 1 December 2025 following recent severe storm activity.

Officer's Recommendation:

That Council waive the fees and charges payable under the 2025/2026 Fees and Charges Register for the disposal of domestic uncontaminated green waste for the period 26 November 2025 to 1 December 2025 at Gladstone Transfer Station, Benaraby Landfill, and Agnes Water Transfer Station.

GM/25/5593 Council Resolution:

Moved Mayor Burnett

Seconded Cr Davis

That the Officer's Recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED

G/4.8. AUDIT RISK AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY FOR 1 OCTOBER 2025

Responsible Officer: General Manager Finance Governance and Risk

Prepared By: Principal Internal Auditor

Council Meeting Date: 2 December 2025

File Ref: CM26.2

Purpose:

To present a report about the matters presented at the Audit Risk and Improvement Committee meeting held 1 October 2025, pursuant to section 211 of the *Local Government Regulation 2012*.

Officer's Recommendation:

The Council receive the written report of the Audit Risk and Improvement Committee Meeting that was held on 1 October 2025.

GM/25/5594 Council Resolution:

Moved Cr Patrick

Seconded Cr Cameron

That the Officer's Recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED

G/4.9. LEASE RENEWAL - METEORS SPORTS CLUB

Responsible Officer: General Manager Community and Lifestyle

Prepared By: Community Leasing Officer

Council Meeting Date: 2 December 2025

File Ref: CP8.2

Purpose:

To allow Council to consider the renewal of the lease to Meteors Sports Club Ltd over Lot 2 RP 614829, situated at 673 Glenlyon Road, Gladstone, with Council as owner of the land.

Officer's Recommendation:

That Council:

1. Resolves that 236(1)(b)(ii) of the Local Government Regulation 2012 applies to the proposed lease of Lot 2 RP 614829, situated at 673 Glenlyon Road, Gladstone to Meteors Sports Club; and
2. Enters into a Lease with the Meteors Sports Club for a period of 10 years at a rental of \$1.00 per annum payable on demand.

GM/25/5595 Council Resolution:

Moved Cr Holzheimer
Seconded Cr Churchill

That the Officer's Recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED

G/4.10. LEASE RENEWAL - GLADSTONE HARBOUR CITY BMX

Responsible Officer: General Manager Community and Lifestyle

Prepared By: Community Leasing Officer

Council Meeting Date: 2 December 2025

File Ref: CP8.2

Purpose:

To allow Council to consider the renewal of the lease to Gladstone Harbour City BMX Club Inc over Lease E on SP 271503, situated at Mercury Street, Gladstone, with Council as Trustee of the reserve land.

Officer's Recommendation:

That Council:

1. Resolves that 236(1)(b)(ii) of the Local Government Regulation 2012 applies to the proposed lease of Mercury Street, Gladstone (Lease E on SP 271503) to Gladstone Harbour City BMX Club; and
2. Enters into a Lease with the Gladstone Harbour City BMX Club for a period of 10 years at a rental of \$1.00 per annum payable on demand.

GM/25/5596 Council Resolution:

Moved Cr Muszkat

Seconded Cr Cameron

That the Officer's Recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED

G/4.11. LEASE RENEWAL - GLADSTONE & DISTRICT DARTS ASSOCIATION

Responsible Officer: General Manager Community and Lifestyle

Prepared By: Community Leasing Officer

Council Meeting Date: 2 December 2025

File Ref: CP8.2

Purpose:

To allow Council to consider the renewal of the lease to Gladstone & District Darts Association over Lots 11 RP 609798 and Lot 123 SP 182714, situated at 10-12 Moura Crescent, Barney Point, with Council as owner of the land.

Officer's Recommendation:

That Council:

1. Resolves that 236(1)(b)(ii) of the Local Government Regulation 2012 applies to the proposed lease of Lots 11 RP 609798 and Lot 123 SP 182714, situated at 10-12 Moura Crescent, Barney Point to Gladstone & District Darts Association; and
2. Enters into a Lease with the Gladstone & District Darts Association for a period of 10 years at a rental of \$1.00 per annum payable on demand.

GM/25/5597 Council Resolution:

Moved Cr McClintock

Seconded Cr Holzheimer

That the Officer's Recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED

G/4.12. LEASE AGREEMENT - VALLEYS JUNIOR RUGBY LEAGUE FOOTBALL CLUB

Responsible Officer: General Manager Community and Lifestyle

Prepared By: Community Leasing Officer

Council Meeting Date: 2 December 2025

File Ref: CP8.2

Purpose:

To allow Council to consider a new lease to Valleys Junior Rugby League Football Club Inc over part of land Lease A on SP 291316 (within Lot 206 SP 111013), situated at 100 Aerodrome Road, Clinton, with Council as Trustee of the reserve land.

Officer's Recommendation:

That Council:

1. Resolves that 236(1)(b)(ii) of the Local Government Regulation 2012 applies to the proposed lease of Lease A on SP 291316 (within Lot 206 SP 111013) at 100 Aerodrome Road, Clinton to Valleys Junior Rugby League Football Club; and
2. Enters into a Lease with the Valleys Junior Rugby League Football Club for a period of 2 years at a rental of \$1.00 per annum payable on demand.

GM/25/5598 Council Resolution:

Moved Cr Churchill

Seconded Cr Davis

That the Officer's Recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED

G/5. COUNCILLORS REPORT

Councillor Simon McClintock tabled a report regarding the 2025 National Local Roads, Transport, and Infrastructure Congress – Bendigo (refer Addendum 1). Cr McClintock provided highlights from the report including the following:

- There were 220 local government leaders, industry experts and stakeholders attending the congress.
- The consistent message at the congress was that local governments are carrying an overwhelming burden of the road network, particularly unsealed and ageing rural roads. Funding hasn't kept pace with the growth of the network, and a strong unified call was made to restore financial assistance grants to 1%, helping with some of those infrastructure costs.
- A shift from reactive maintenance to long term planning and safer road design instead of short-term fixes like reducing speed limits.
- Some potential national reforms likely regarding road user charging and ability to recoup some of those costs of heavy vehicles on our local roads.
- New expectations around sustainability and resilience and how to integrate data driven road safety.
- National recognition of the Gladstone Port and the long-term opportunities tied to inland rail. It was emphasised that future northern connection to Gladstone is both realistic and nationally valuable particularly as city-bound ports struggle to navigate freight movements and capacity restrictions.

Cr McClintock highlighted that Gladstone is in a unique position where there is a lot of capacity and opportunity to proactively strengthen freight corridors, plan for long-term capacity and expand active transport options aligning with Gladstone's advocacy with national priorities.

Councillor Glenn Churchill enquired regarding the commitment made to reduce the road fatalities by 50% by 2030 highlighting that the target appears ambitious given road fatalities have increased by 4.3% over the past 12 months. Cr McClintock noted that it is recognised as an infrastructure problem with more people on the roads and the reduction of speed limits is acknowledged as a short term solution.

Cr Churchill enquired regarding Council's endeavours to host the National Local Roads, Transport and Infrastructure Congress in Gladstone. Cr McClintock advised that the congress is scheduled to be held in Cairns next year (2026) and as it is held in a different state each year, there is potential for Gladstone to host the congress in 7 years' time.

Councillor Mellissa Holzheimer mentioned there was a need for a future discussion to develop a plan forward with a strategic focus on road safety and advocacy on the future of roads including consideration on how Council would setup the community to assist in the increase in active transport.

GM/25/5599 Council Resolution:

Moved Cr Churchill
Seconded Cr Patrick

That the report tabled from Cr McClintock be received.

CARRIED

G/6. URGENT BUSINESS

Nil

G/7. NOTICE OF MOTION

Nil

G/8. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

Nil

There being no further business the Mayor formally closed the meeting.

THE MEETING CLOSED AT 1.24pm.

ATTACHMENTS

Addendum 1

Councillor Report: 2025 National Local Roads, Transport, and Infrastructure Congress – Bendigo

The Roads Congress brought together local governments, national transport agencies, infrastructure experts, and policymakers to explore the future of Australia's transport networks. Key themes included road safety, freight movement, funding reform, active transport, and the increasing pressure on regional road networks.

These insights are highly relevant to the Gladstone Region, given our role as an industrial and freight hub and the scale of road assets managed across our rural and coastal communities. Stronger, safer and more efficient roads directly affect travel times, industry productivity, economic viability, emergency access and the everyday safety of families across the region.

Over 220 local government leaders, industry experts and stakeholders attended, with formal acknowledgement of the traditional custodians of the Dja Dja Wurrung and Taungurung people.

This year's Congress centred on **Driving National Productivity**, emphasising the national importance of local roads funding, maintenance and infrastructure as drivers of economic performance. For our community, national productivity discussions ultimately translate to local job creation, improved freight efficiency and more resilient regional infrastructure.

A major call from the Congress was the continuing unified advocacy position to restore Financial Assistance Grants to 1% — reiterated strongly by all State and Territory Local Government Association Presidents throughout the Congress. This message was put directly to representatives of both Government and Opposition.

Restoring these grants is critical for regions like Gladstone, because it means more funding for local roads, footpaths, drainage and community infrastructure without increasing the burden on ratepayers.

The Hon. Catherine King, Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government, and Senator Matt O'Sullivan, Shadow Assistant Minister for Infrastructure, addressed delegates with updates on national infrastructure direction and priorities.

Minister King also confirmed the reinstatement of the Inquiry into Local Government Financial Sustainability, with earlier submissions to be reused and only updated information required by early February 2026. A financially sustainable local government sector ensures communities receive consistent service levels and better long-term infrastructure planning placing downward pressure on rates and fees.

Key Challenges in Road Infrastructure

Road Maintenance Crisis

Australia's road networks are facing escalating costs and deteriorating performance due to:

- Heavy reliance on reactive maintenance
- Ageing and under-designed rural networks
- Freight and vehicle growth outpacing road capacity
- Increased vehicle capacities and loads

Queensland's road network illustrates the scale of the challenge:

- Queensland has about 184,000 km of public roads.
- Local governments manage around 150,000 km, of which only 33% are sealed (~50,000 km) and 67% remain unsealed (~100,000 km).
- State-controlled roads total approximately 33,000 km—significantly less than local government networks though a majority of the funding opportunities are at a State level.

Because councils manage the overwhelming majority of Queensland's roads—and two-thirds of these are unsealed—a key challenge for local governments is the financial and operational capacity to manage and maintain, particularly in regional and remote areas as increasing financial and operational pressure continues to apply.

Relevance to Gladstone Region:

The Gladstone Region's combination of rural road networks, industry corridors, and dispersed communities places increasing pressure on our unsealed routes. Freight growth, population shifts, and regional tourism continue to intensify demand on these networks. Better-maintained roads mean fewer vehicle repairs, safer travel for families, reliable school and emergency access, and stronger support for agriculture, freight, tourism and industry.

Strategic Recommendations Identified at the Congress

Move Beyond Short-Term Road Safety Fixes

While certain sectors advocate lowering speed limits are a solution to the increasing road toll other speakers strongly criticised the common reliance on lowering speed limits as a default safety response. Evidence presented showed that meaningful long-term improvements come from:

- Proactive road design
- Network-wide safety treatments
- Consistent, long-term investment

Key Insight:

Safer road design—not slower roads—has the strongest correlation with long-term safety improvements. Lowering speeds may get short term results but better investment in infrastructure is mandatory.

Holistic Road Network Planning

Presenters encouraged delegates to adopt integrated planning approaches that combine:

- Asset lifecycle modelling
- Freight and logistics planning
- Growth-area transport modelling
- Active transport infrastructure

This aligns with Gladstone's strategic needs across rural roads, freight movements, and future industrial expansion.

Funding and Investment Insights

Understanding the Funding Gap

Australia's transport funding challenges continue to widen:

- Local road infrastructure is valued at approximately \$1.5 billion, with an annual depreciation rate of 1.5% while supportive funding remains stagnant in many areas.
- Remote and regional areas receive significantly less maintenance funding (\$772/km) compared with major cities (\$2,600/km).
- Queensland councils carry one of the largest unsealed networks in Australia—around 100,000 km of unsealed local roads alone.

This imbalance underscores the need for stronger and more equitable regional advocacy, particularly for industrial LGAs like Gladstone whose road networks service nationally significant economic activity.

Future Funding Models and National Reform

The Congress highlighted several emerging national funding directions:

- Digital vehicle registration
- Road-user charging reform
- Freight-weighted maintenance funding
- National road safety funding linked to design-based improvements

These reforms may reshape how councils plan and fund road networks over the coming decade. Current funding systems (rates and grant funding) is only going to see the gap continue to grow.

Future Vision for Road Safety and Network Capacity

Australia has committed to reducing road fatalities by 50% by 2030. Achieving this target requires:

- Investment in safer road infrastructure
- Improved data insights
- Better coordination between all levels of government
- To achieve long term sustainability, **we must address long-term planning that shifts from “managing decline” to rebuilding network capacity.**

Key Insight:

The Congress emphasised that to see meaningful change in road safety, objectives must be tied to infrastructure design, not short-term measures.

Infrastructure, Active Transport and Freight Insights

National Infrastructure Commitments –

Day two opened with an address from Hon Catherine King MP — *Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government*

The Federal Government has committed \$36.3 billion to 354 regional infrastructure projects, with increased support to local governments through:

- Roads to Recovery
- Safe Local Roads and Streets for All

The emphasis is on productivity, sustainability, and resilience—particularly in regional hubs.

Active Transport

With 41% of Australian adults not meeting physical activity guidelines, active transport is now seen as a community health priority.

Evidence presented showed that:

- Well-designed cycling and pedestrian infrastructure increases uptake
- Safe active transport corridors reduce injuries
- Reallocation of road space (as shown in Paris) promotes healthier communities and also improves emissions outcomes

Behavioural change research was presented also, highlighting how design influences mode-shift outcomes. Improved transport options, safer walking and cycling routes, and efficient freight networks all support a healthier, safer and more connected region.

Urban Logistics and Freight

Population growth and consumer demand increasingly strain freight systems. Key recommendations included:

- Strategic industrial land-use planning
- Zero-emission logistics zones
- Purpose-built heavy-vehicle routes

These insights are highly relevant to Gladstone’s growing freight task, especially around port connectivity and heavy-industry corridors.

Gladstone Port Development

The Gladstone Port’s future expansion was highlighted nationally as a critical freight and economic opportunity:

- Fully automated container port capability
- Deep-water access
- Potential Inland Rail connections
- Strategic proximity to Asian markets

This positions Gladstone as a major long-term logistics and export hub. Something that is quickly moving from a good idea to a necessity to overcome the challenges particularly around major cities with Ports.

Inland Rail Opportunities and Implications for the Gladstone Region

The Congress highlighted major freight projects such as Inland Rail as catalysts for unlocking national productivity. While much of the discussion focused on the southern and eastern sections currently under development, the strategic implications for Gladstone were referenced in several freight-corridor sessions.

For the Gladstone Region, Inland Rail presents several significant long-term opportunities:

- A future northern connection into the Gladstone Port would create a more direct freight pathway linking the Surat Basin, the eastern seaboard and export markets.
- Gladstone's deep-water port, heavy-industry profile and emerging renewable energy precincts position the region as a realistic future terminus for Inland Rail freight logistics.
- Such a connection would relieve pressure from congested metropolitan ports, providing national efficiency gains aligned with the Congress theme of "Driving Productivity."
- Intermodal hubs and logistics precincts associated with an Inland Rail extension would strengthen supply chains, stimulate local industry and support new employment opportunities.
- The Congress reinforced the need for early planning by councils likely to be part of future freight expansions — including corridor protection, industrial land-use alignment and ensuring road and rail networks are capable of handling increased freight task.

Key Insight:

For Gladstone, this strengthens the case for protecting strategic transport corridors, progressing the Port Access Road and continuing advocacy to State and Federal Governments to ensure Gladstone remains positioned as a future northern freight gateway. An Inland Rail connection would deliver jobs, safer roads through heavy-vehicle diversion, and stronger export pathways—supporting long-term growth and local prosperity.

Regional Case Study – Bendigo's Integrated Transport Strategy

Bendigo is targeting a reduction in car dependency from 86% to 30%, using:

- EV charging expansion
- Public transport integration
- Active transport corridors
- Land-use planning that supports compact, connected communities

Though different in scale, the principles offer valuable guidance for Gladstone's future mobility planning. Ensuring we have a strategic approach to the transport ecosystem will ensure we can negate major issues before we fell them.

Government Grant Applications

The Congress provided practical guidance on strengthening council advocacy and improving grant success.

Government Funding Fundamentals

- The Commonwealth funds its own policy outcomes, not ours.
- Grant applications must show clear alignment with federal priorities above all else.
- Self-interest alignment—demonstrating how the project supports government objectives—is crucial.

Timing is Critical

- Federal budgets are shaped in October–November.
- Advocacy efforts in May are generally too late to influence allocation.

Storytelling and Impact

Successful applications prioritise:

- A compelling narrative
- Clear community impact
- Human-centred explanation of who benefits and why

Key Insight:

Before drafting any advocacy, document or grant submission, always ask:
“How does this align with the current Federal Policy Position?”

Takeaways for Gladstone Regional Council

Based on the Congress insights, the key takeaways are that Council:

1. Continue to advocate for fairer regional road funding, noncompetitive funding, reflecting our significant freight and rural road responsibilities.
2. Continue to shift toward proactive, planned maintenance to improve safety and reduce long-term costs.
3. Prioritise freight efficiency through strategic corridor planning, including the Port Access Road and key rural networks.
4. Embed holistic road safety design into capital works programs.
5. Expand active transport networks in line with national health evidence and best practice.
6. Ensure alignment of grant advocacy to federal budgeting cycles, ensuring timing reflects October–November decision windows.
7. Demonstrate federal policy alignment in all major funding proposals.
8. Integrate long-term road network capacity planning into regional development, industry expansion, and growth-area strategies.
9. Continue advocating for the return of Financial Assistance Grants to 1%, consistent with the national position reinforced at the Congress.

Based on these insights, our Council should consider the following questions:

1. Are we incorporating freight modelling and rural-road pressures into our Planning Scheme and long-term transport planning?
2. How will active transport corridors be embedded in our future mobility plans?
3. What steps are being taken to prepare for potential road-user charging and freight-weighted funding reform?
4. Are our advocacy and grant submissions aligned with the October–November federal budgeting process?