GLADSTONE REGIONAL COUNCIL

GENERAL MEETING NOTICE AND AGENDA

TO BE HELD AT THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS – CIVIC CENTRE
101 GOONDOON STREET, GLADSTONE

On Tuesday 1 September 2026

Commencing at 9.00am

Leisa Dowling
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

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G/1. MAYORAL STATEMENT OF CURRENT ISSUES

G/2. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

G/2.1. CONFIRMATION OF GENERAL MEETING MINUTES FOR 4 AUGUST 2026

Responsible Officer: Chief Executive Officer

Prepared By: Executive Secretary

Council Meeting Date: 1 September 2026

File Ref: CM7.2

Purpose:

Confirmation of the minutes of the General Meeting held on 4 August 2026.

Officer's Recommendation:

That the minutes of the General Meeting of Council held on 4 August 2026 be confirmed.

Attachments:

1. Minutes of the General Meeting of Council held on 4 August 2026.

G/3. DEPUTATIONS

G/4. OFFICERS' REPORTS
G/4.1. OPERATIONAL PLAN 2025/26 QUARTER FOUR PERFORMANCE REPORT

Responsible Officer: General Manager People and Strategy

Prepared By: Manager Strategy and Improvement

Council Meeting Date: 1 September 2026

File Ref: CM14.2

Purpose:

To present Council with the fourth and final quarterly performance report for the 2025/26 Operational Plan.

Officer's Recommendation:

That Council endorse the 2025/26 Operational Plan Quarter Four Performance Report, closing out the 2025/26 Operational Plan.

Summary:

Quarter Four closes out delivery of Council's 2025/26 Operational Plan.

During the year, Council completed its first full year of the Improving Customer Experience Program while continuing to deliver core services across the region. Significant progress was made in strengthening how Council plans, delivers and measures its services, including introducing a central maintenance management system, establishing an evidence-based approach to service planning, and implementing new systems to improve capital project delivery.

Council successfully completed all deliverables committed to in the 2025/26 Operational Plan. While implementation activities are complete, it is estimated that approximately 80% of the intended organisational benefits have been realised to date, with the remaining benefits expected to be achieved as new systems and practices mature and become business as usual during 2026/27.

Link to Corporate Plan:

This report supports Council's vision of a region where decisions are trusted by demonstrating accountability, transparency and follow through on the commitments made through the 2025/26 Operational Plan. It provides Council and the community with a clear assessment of progress made throughout the year, highlights the outcomes delivered, and identifies work that will continue into 2026/27.

By openly reporting on achievements, challenges and lessons learned, Council strengthens community confidence that decisions are informed, commitments are being delivered and progress towards the Corporate Plan remains visible and measurable. The report strongly aligns with the Trust and Confidence ambition of delivering clear and consistent decisions and reporting progress so people can see what is being achieved.

Background:

The 2025/26 Operational Plan, adopted on 3 July 2025, outlined the actions Council would undertake during the financial year to deliver the Corporate Plan.

This report provides Council's fourth quarterly assessment and completes reporting against the 2025/26 Operational Plan, as required under the Local Government Regulation 2021.

Throughout the year, Council focused on two strategic priorities:

- Progressing the Strategic Planning Scheme amendment program; and
- Improving the customer experience through the Improving Customer Experience Program, made up of six projects.

The 2025/26 Operational Plan has now been completed. Of the year's major improvement initiatives, Council delivered substantial progress across all six strategic capability areas while continuing to deliver everyday services to the Gladstone Region.

The attached Quarter Four Performance Snapshot summarises what Council committed to achieve, what was delivered during the year, and the work that will continue into 2026/27.

Risk Management Summary:

Council is committed to continuously improving services for the community, and this requires an appropriate and measured level of risk. With growth comes challenges and Council are managing these proactively.

- **Delivery Risk Reducing:** The transition of maintenance work management into a single maintenance management system has significantly reduced the risks associated with fragmented processes and manual work tracking. One remaining service area is scheduled to commence using the system during July 2026.
- **Business Continuity:** During the quarter, Council activated elements of its Business Continuity Framework to assess potential impacts arising from the conflict in the Middle East. Fuel supply was identified as the primary risk to critical service delivery, resulting in a review of supplier arrangements, fuel availability and operational contingency measures.
- **Remaining on Target:** Overall delivery risk remained low throughout the year. Where initiatives require further implementation or organisational adoption, these activities have transitioned into Council's 2026/27 Operational Plan.

Options and Opportunity Analysis:

This quarter closed out two of Council's major priorities for 2025/26.

Strategic Planning Scheme – Completed in Q3

The three-year Strategic Planning Scheme amendment priorities were completed during Quarter Three, providing a clear roadmap for future planning work.

Improving Customer Experience (ICX) – First Year Complete

The ICX Program completed its first full year, moving from design into delivery across all six improvement areas.

- **Accountable Leadership:** Council strengthened the foundations for consistent leadership by introducing clearer performance expectations, improving insight into workplace culture, and building better visibility of leadership performance.
- **Asset & Service Performance:** Council now has a consistent, evidence-based approach to understanding the services it provides, allowing investment and service decisions to be based on data rather than assumptions. This approach has already informed decisions on parks, aquatic centres, footpaths, tourism and unsealed road sealing as well as the 2026/27 budget.
- **Customer Journey:** Because of improvement to Council's website and online services, customers are increasingly choosing to self-serve online, reducing customer contact by an average of 2,600 enquiries each month and making it quicker and easier for our community to access Council services.
- **Embedding Work Management:** Most core service delivery teams now plan and manage maintenance through a single system, improving visibility of work, reducing manual processes, and creating a stronger foundation for planned maintenance.
- **Project Lifecycle Management:** Council has established a consistent approach to managing capital projects, with a new software system ready to support improved planning, governance and delivery as it is embedded across the organisation.

What's next: Focus for 2026/27

The work completed during 2025/26 established the foundations for lasting improvement. The focus now shifts from implementing new initiatives to embedding them into the way Council works every day.

Key ongoing priorities for 2026/27 include:

- completing implementation of the maintenance management system across all service delivery teams;
- training employees and embedding the new capital project management software system;
- progressing Service Plans into practical tools that guide how services are planned, delivered and improved;
- continuing to strengthen Council's business continuity capability; and
- using service planning evidence to support better decision-making and resource allocation.

The year has delivered meaningful progress, even though not every initiative reached full maturity within the original timeframe, all deliverables were met. Some work, including full cost-to-serve modelling and embedding new ways of working across every team, will continue into 2026/27 as part of Council's ongoing improvement journey.

Importantly, the community is already seeing the benefits. More residents are choosing to self-serve online, reducing the need to contact Council directly. Service decisions are increasingly informed by evidence rather than assumption, and improvements to maintenance and project delivery are creating stronger foundations for the services our community relies on every day.

These outcomes are not the finish line, they are the platform for what's next. As Council moves into 2026/27, the focus will be on embedding these improvements, continuing to lift performance and delivering lasting value for the Gladstone Region.

Stakeholder Engagement:

Progress is monitored with leaders across the organisation to support accountability and delivery against Council commitments. Subject to Council endorsement, the Quarter Four Performance Report will be shared via Council's website and social media channels to keep the community informed about how Council is contributing to the region's success. The outcomes of this quarter will shape input into Council's Annual Report, which will be developed with Council employees and released later in 2026.

Legal and Regulatory Implications:

Section 174(3) Local Government Regulation 2021 (Preparation and adoption of annual operational plan) states that: *The Chief Executive Officer is required to present a written assessment of the local government's progress towards implementing the annual operational plan at meetings of the local government held at regular intervals of not more than three months*.

Financial and Resource Implications:

Operational Plan initiative spend was well within the set Operational Plan budget of $875,094. Some costs were lower than expected, some work was delivered through existing business operations, and some activities were deferred to balance priorities and capacity, while still ensuring the set outcomes were achieved. Overall, $745,911 was spent, representing 85% of the budget.

Unspent Operational Plan activity funds remained within Council's overall operational budget and were available to support other service delivery and operational requirements during 2025/26.

Anticipated Resolution Completion Date:

8 September 2026

Attachments:

1. 2025/26 Operational Plan – Quarter Four Performance Snapshot

G/4.2. BYELLEE BATTERY ENERGY STORAGE SYSTEM (BESS) - COMMUNITY BENEFIT AGREEMENT

Responsible Officer: General Manager People and Strategy

Prepared By: Principal Industry Specialist

Council Meeting Date: 1 September 2026

File Ref: ED2.2

Purpose:

That Council considers entering into a Community Benefit Agreement for the proposed Byellee Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) located at Byellee Road, Byellee and Hanson Road, Callemondah.

Officer's Recommendation:

That Council authorise the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to finalise and execute a Community Benefit Agreement for the Byellee Battery Energy Storage System (Byellee BESS).

Summary:

A Community Benefit Agreement (CBA) has been negotiated between Council and the proponent of the Byellee Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) project (the project), and Council's approval to enter into the agreement is sought. The community benefits included in the CBA are considered to align with Council's *Renewable Energy Community Benefits Sharing Policy*. A summary of the benefits and their alignment to Council's Policy is outlined below:

Benefits Required per Council's Policy	Benefits Offered by Proponent	Policy Met
$150/MWh annual contribution	$150/MWh	Yes
Annual 5% Operating Contribution	5%	Yes
Proponent funded and administered Community Benefit Sharing Program	$15/MWh per annum ‘Legacy Community Grants and Social Resilience’ initiative *Post –commercial operations*	Yes
Proponent funded and administered Community Benefit Sharing Program	$25/MWh per annum ‘Legacy Education, Workforce and Regional Skills Development’ initiative *Post –commercial operations*	Yes
Additional Benefits Offered *(once-off, pre-commercial operations):* • $200,000.00 ‘Gladstone Community Grants and Social Resilience’ grant initiative • $500,000.00 ‘Local Education and Workforce Pathways’ sponsorship or partnership. • $50,000.00 ‘Local Procurement and Regional Collaboration’ initiative. • $150,000.00 ‘Safety, Environment and Community Confidence’ initiative. These additional benefits were secured through negotiations and were not part of the Proponent’s original offer.		

Link to Corporate Plan:

This proposal aligns with Council's Corporate Plan ambitions of Economy – Responsible Growth, and Trust and Confidence – Clear and Consistent Decisions, by supporting well-planned development, securing community benefits for the Gladstone Region, and providing a transparent, evidence-based framework for Council's consideration of renewable energy projects.

Background:

Under the *Planning (Social Impact and Community Benefit) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2025,* prescribed renewable energy projects are required to carry out a Social Impact Assessment (SIA) and negotiate a CBA.

Consistent with the SIA framework under the *Planning Act 2016* and the State Development Assessment Provisions (SDAP) for prescribed renewable energy developments, community benefit initiatives proposed through a CBA should demonstrate consideration of the findings identified through the SIA and related stakeholder engagement processes.

Council’s role is limited to considering the SIA and negotiating a CBA, with the State Assessment and Referral Agency (SARA) responsible for assessing and determining the associated development application.

<u>Social Impact Findings</u>
Atria Energy and Eku Energy, the owners (the Proponent) of the Project, provided the final version of the SIA Report in July 2026. The SIA identified eleven social impact categories informed by baseline analysis, stakeholder engagement, and impact assessment processes documented within the SIA report attached. The SIA adopted a local study area focused on the communities, receptors and land uses surrounding the Project, including Clinton, the Gladstone urban area and areas adjoining the Calliope River. Existing residences within Clinton are located approximately 1.5 km from the Project site, and an approved future residential development is 1.2km from the Project site.

The SIA Report identifies a range of potential positive socio-economic outcomes associated with the Project, including:

- local employment opportunities during construction;
- increased local procurement and business participation;
- construction worker expenditure within the regional economy;
- skills development, training and youth pathway opportunities;
- First Nations employment and procurement opportunities; and
- community benefit funding and value-sharing outcomes.

The SIA Report concluded that residual adverse social impacts would be reduced to Low or Negligible following implementation of proposed mitigation measures, with the exception of workforce demand and labour competition, which was assessed as Moderate and temporary in duration.

The Project's social impacts are proposed to be managed through the Social Impact Management Plan (SIMP) contained within the SIA Report, which outlines mitigation, monitoring and management measures for the construction and operational phases of the Project. The inclusion and refinement of the SIMP formed part of the feedback provided by Council Officers (Officers) during the review process.

<u>SIA Engagement and Further Neighbourhood Engagement</u>
The Proponent undertook stakeholder engagement to inform preparation of the SIA, including engagement with nearby residents, local businesses, service providers, education and training stakeholders, and the broader community. While much of the engagement occurred prior to the current legislative framework and supporting SIA Guideline, the final SIA report is considered to broadly align with the State Government's expectations.

Officers reviewed multiple versions of the SIA Report and draft CBA and provided coordinated feedback on stakeholder engagement, assessment methodology, social impact management, monitoring arrangements, community sentiment and local benefit opportunities. Internal consultation was undertaken with relevant Council subject matter experts.

Following Officer feedback, the Proponent undertook additional stakeholder engagement in early August 2026 and provided supplementary engagement information to Council. Officers considered both the original engagement program and supplementary engagement outcomes when reviewing the SIA Report.

The engagement activities identified a range of positive, neutral and negative views consistent with the findings in the SIA Report and supplementary information. No organised community opposition was reported through the engagement activities undertaken by the Proponent.

Risk Management Summary:

Council has a Measured appetite for reputational and regulatory risks and an Open appetite for opportunities that deliver community outcomes where risks can be effectively managed.

The primary risk for Council is potential community perception that Council's decision to enter into a CBA is endorsement of the Project itself.

Council's role under legislation is limited to reviewing the SIA and negotiating community benefits. SARA remains responsible for the assessment and determination of the development application. Any future development application will remain subject to a public notification process, during which additional community views may be expressed through formal submissions, with eligible submitters retaining appeal rights.

Officers consider the benefits secured through the proposed CBA to outweigh the identified risks. Further, Officers hold that those risks can be appropriately mitigated through governance, monitoring, reporting, and the Proponent's ongoing stakeholder engagement commitments.

Options and Opportunity Analysis:

<u>Option 1 – Endorse the Community Benefit Agreement Offered (Officer's Recommendation)</u>
The proposed CBA meets Council's Renewable Energy Community Benefits Sharing Policy requirements and provides additional pre-construction and operational community benefit initiatives for the Gladstone Region.

The CBA secures annual monetary contributions consistent with Council policy, a 5% operating contribution, pre-construction community benefit initiatives, workforce development and education initiatives, local procurement initiatives, and community confidence and safety initiatives.

While Officers identified opportunities for improvement within the SIA process, these matters do not constitute a material impediment to entering into a CBA. This option secures community benefits for the Gladstone Region should the Project proceed and is considered to represent the lowest overall risk to Council.

Option 2 – Refer the CBA Back to Officers for Further Negotiation
This option would allow Council to seek further amendments or commitments from the Proponent. However, it would delay completion of the CBA and there is no assurance that materially different outcomes would be achieved given the extensive negotiations already undertaken.

Option 3 – Decline the CBA and Cease Negotiations
Council may elect not to enter into the proposed agreement. While this may prevent the development application proceeding in its current form, the Proponent may seek approval to progress without a CBA. In that circumstance, community benefits may not be secured for the Gladstone Region. This is considered the highest-risk option.

Legal and Regulatory Implications:

The CBA is a legally binding agreement between Council and the Project Proponent and is a requirement under the *Planning (Social Impact and Community Benefit) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2025* for prescribed renewable energy projects.

If executed, Council will be required to publicly report on and administer the community benefit contributions received under the agreement in accordance with legislative requirements.

Financial and Resource Implications:

Council will recover costs associated with the Social Impact Assessment and Community Benefit Agreement process through adopted Fees and Charges in accordance with the Planning Act 2016.

If the agreement is executed, Council will be responsible for administering, monitoring and reporting on community benefit contributions received under the agreement. The annual 5% operating contribution will assist in offsetting these ongoing administration and reporting costs.

Anticipated Resolution Completion Date:

Following adoption of the recommendations of this report, concluding negotiations and executing the CBA is anticipated to be completed by 30 September 2026.

Attachments:

1. Byellee BESS – Social Impact Assessment (SIA) Report
2. Byellee BESS – Draft Community Benefit Agreement (CBA)
3. Byellee BESS – Stakeholder Engagement Appendix (August 2026)

G/4.3. INFRASTRUCTURE CHARGES REBATE REQUEST - DA/9/2020 - NATURE BASED TOURISM (15 SITES) AT 2741 ROUND HILL ROAD, AGNES WATER

Responsible Officer: General Manager Customer Experience

Prepared By: Strategic Planning Officer

Council Meeting Date: 1 September 2026

File Ref: FM7.2, DA/9/2020

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to consider a request to apply for a 50% rebate under the Infrastructure Charges Rebate Scheme Policy (P-2019-28) for a Nature Based Tourism (15 sites) approval located at 2741 Round Hill Road, Agnes Water.

Officer's Recommendation:

That Council refuses the request for a reduction in the Infrastructure Charges for DA/9/2020 Nature Based Tourism (15 sites) at 2741 Round Hill Road, Agnes Water as the application does not meet all of the required criteria of Council's Infrastructure Charges Rebate Scheme Policy (P-2019-28).

Summary:

A development application for a Nature Based Tourism use (15 sites) at 2741 Round Hill Road, Agnes Water was approved on 22 September 2020. This development approval attracted an Adopted Infrastructure Charge of $44,500. A request has now been lodged seeking a 50% rebate.

Link to Corporate Plan:

The recommendation is made in accordance with an existing Policy thereby aligning with the Trust and Confidence pillar of the 2026-2031 Vision by applying clear and consistent process, so decisions are more predictable and equitable over time.

Background:

On 27 March 2020, a development application for a Material Change of Use of Premises for a Nature Based Tourism use at 2741 Round Hill Road, Agnes Water, was lodged with Council for approval. This application was lodged because of a Council Demand Letter following identification of an existing caravan park use operating unlawfully on the site without an approval.

Throughout the assessment process, the site continued to operate without development approval and as a result, Council issued a Show Cause Notice on 16 April 2020. The owner applied for a Temporary Use Licence under the Applicable Event (COVID-19) in May 2020, however, in June 2020 the Applicant withdrew that request.

On 22 September 2020 a Decision Notice was issued along with an Adopted Infrastructure Charge Notice (AICN) on 23 September 2020 in the amount of $44,500. This was calculated as follows in accordance with Adopted Infrastructure Change Resolution (No.1) – 2015 – Amendment No. 2:

CHARGE
Charge Area 6
Nature Based Tourism – 15 sites
    Accommodation (Short Term) – per 3 caravan sites
    $8,900 x 5 (15 sites) = $44,500

CREDIT - NIL

On 14 May 2024 a Customer Service Request 743870 was created with a second Show Cause Notice issued on 16 May 2024 due to an increase of cabins and campsites outside of the original approval and no evidence of the full payment of the Infrastructure Charges owing by the development. In response, on 21 April 2026, a request was made seeking confirmation of the use lawfully commencing onsite under DA/9/2020. To date, condition compliance has yet to be achieved.

A Minor Change application was lodged on 15 May 2026 and approved on 3 June 2026 for a Reconfiguring a Lot (1 into 3) being lodged (DA/33/2026). The Minor Change ensured the development under DA/9/2020 (subject of this report) is contained wholly within one lot upon the subdivision occurring.

Following the Minor Change approval, the current request to utilise Council's Infrastructure Charge Rebate Scheme Policy (P-2019-28) was received. The request is seeking a 50% rebate against the Infrastructure Charge, and if approved, would result in an Infrastructure Charge of $22,250.

<u>Rebate Request/Policy Assessment</u>

The assessment table below contains the Rebate Policy requirements and how the rebate application complies.

Policy	**Compliance Assessment**
Be completed within two years from when the Material Change of Use of Premises Development Permit starts to have effect	• The use was an unlawful use under compliance action prior to obtaining MCU approval • The MCU approval was granted on 22 September 2020 • Condition Compliance was requested in April 2026 – Full compliance yet to be achieved
If staged, the first stage be completed within two years of when the Material Change of Use of Premises Development Permit starts to have effect with all stages of the development being completed within four years of when the Material Change of Use of Premises Development Permit starts to have effect.	N/A Development is not staged
Are lodged with Council after the 1 July 2018; with respect to applications lodged prior to the 1 July 2018, Council may in its sole discretion, consider Development Applications approved and not yet constructed, or Development Applications that have been lodged but not yet decided.	COMPLIES The application was properly made on 27 March 2020.

Are for any land use as defined within SC1.1 Use definitions of the Our Place Our Plan Gladstone Regional Council Planning Scheme V2 other than an Excluded Use as defined herein.	COMPLIES Nature Based Tourism is **not** an excluded use.
Are proposed to be located within a Priority Infrastructure Area or Township Zone as defined in the Our Plan Our Plan Gladstone Regional Council Planning Scheme V2.	DOES NOT COMPLY The subject site is located outside the Priority Infrastructure Area.
Rebate of maximum 50% based on the net charge amount up to a maximum concession value of $500,000	COMPLIES The Rebate request is for a 50% rebate on the Infrastructure Charge. If approved, the rebate would total $22,250.

The applicant's justification for lodging the rebate request is detailed in Attachment 1.

Risk Management Summary:

The proposed recommendation is made in accordance with the requirements of Council's Infrastructure Charge Rebate Scheme Policy (P-2019-28) and is consistent with Council's current appetite for reputational and financial risk.

Options and Opportunity Analysis:

Option 1 – The Officer's Recommendation
It is the Officer's recommendation that the application be refused as it does not comply in full with the Policy. Further, development services continues to work with the applicant to finalise signage for Fire fighting fittings on all on site water tanks to meet the conditions of the current approval.

Option 2 – Approve the application
Although the application does not meet the requirements of the Policy, Council may at its discretion resolve to approve the application for a 50% rebate. In this instance, an appropriate resolution would be:

> *"That Council approves the request for a reduction in the Infrastructure Charges for DA/9/2020 - Nature Based Tourism (15 sites) use at 2741 Round Hill Road, Agnes Water with a rebate of $22,250 applied thereby resulting in a total Adopted Infrastructure Charge of $22,250 subject to the applicant entering into an infrastructure agreement with Council. As the use has already commenced, payment of the infrastructure charge is to occur within thirty days of receiving the Infrastructure Agreement from Council"*

Stakeholder Engagement:

Nil

Legal and Regulatory Implications:

The Infrastructure Charge Rebate Scheme Policy (P-2019-28) sets out the application and conditions required to be met in order to receive a rebate. As the request does not meet all of the required application and conditions of the Policy, a decision at a General Council Meeting is required.

Financial and Resource Implications:

An Adopted Infrastructure Charge Notice was issued dated 23 September 2020 for the amount of $44,500.

Should Council resolve to refuse the Rebate request, then there will be no financial impacts to Council. Should Council decide to apply a rebate, the rebated proportion ($22,250) will be funded by the ratepayer and journalled from the existing Economic Development Budget to the Infrastructure Charge Budget.

Anticipated Resolution Completion Date:

If the request is refused, the Applicant will be informed within 5 business days of the decision. If the request for a rebate is approved, the Applicant will be informed within 5 business days of the decision with the Applicant then required to enter into an Infrastructure Agreement with Council to formalise.

Attachments:

1. Rebate Request from Zone Planning (on behalf of The Summit 1770) including Decision Notice and Infrastructure Charge Notice – 10 June 2026

G/4.4. MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE PERIOD ENDING 31 JULY 2026

Responsible Officer: General Manager Finance Governance and Risk

Prepared By: Management Accounting Specialist

Council Meeting Date: 1 September 2026

File Ref: FM15.1

Purpose:

This report seeks Council adoption of the Monthly Financial Statements for the year 2026-27 to date, for the period ended 31 July 2026.

Officer's Recommendation:

That Council receive the Monthly Financial Report for the period ended 31 July 2026 provided in accordance with s204 of the Local Government Regulation 2012.

Summary:

This report provides Council with the Monthly Financial Statements as at 31 July 2026 indicating Council's performance against its budget for 2026-27. The budgeted position for the 2026-27 year was adopted on 21 July 2026. No significant variances against budget have been identified.

Link to Corporate Plan:

Our Vision for Gladstone Region 2026-2031 includes the fundamental principles of responsible economic growth, trust and confidence. Regular monthly updates keep Councillors abreast of Councils financial position, allowing for evidence-based decisions that build confidence and support the long-term growth of the region.

Risk Management Summary:

While it is a legislative requirement to provide a monthly financial report to Council, the provision of a monthly report assists Council to manage its financial, regulatory and reputational risk. Financial reporting supports accountability within Council and long-term sustainability.

Council's risk appetite provides that Council will tolerate:

- Minor budget variations to natural account and cost centres within overall budget parameters.
- Calculated financial risks to deliver infrastructure, improve service delivery, or promote ecological sustainability.
- Minor losses, or capital outlays, attributable to new processes or innovation to improve services to meet community needs.

Background:

Section 204 of the Local Government Regulation 2012 requires local governments to prepare a financial report stating the progress that has been made in relation to the local government's budget. The financial report must be presented to Council at a General Meeting on a monthly basis.

Actuals are reported against the adopted budget.

Financial and Operating Statement Overview as at 31 July 2026:

The attached monthly financial and operating statements outline Council's financial position as at 31 July-2026.

Comparatives in both the Statement of Income & Expenditure and Statement of Financial Position for "Actual" results are still reflecting 30 June 2025. These figures will be updated to reflect 30 June 2026 upon completion of the end of year audit and sign-off of the annual Financial Statements in October 2026.

Overall Position

The 2026-27 budget was adopted with a projected operating surplus of $48k as of 30 June 2027.

8.5% of the financial year has passed. Accounts are therefore expected to fall within the range of 0% to 10% of the budget year to date (YTD).

The operating result is currently showing as a deficit, at $17.9m.

Money we receive (revenue)

- $3.2 million in operating revenue has been collected to date, representing 1.1% of the annual budget. Council's primary source of recurrent revenue is annual rates, together with water, sewerage and waste access charges. Due to the delayed adoption of the 2026/27 budget, these charges were generated in August rather than July, resulting in a timing difference. Revenue performance is expected to align with budget following the August generation and issue of rate notices.
- 80% of the Financial Assistance Grant, including a $8.7 million bring forward pre-payment, was received in June 2026. The first quarterly payment for 2026-27, representing 5% of the normal annual allocation (excluding the bring forward amount), will be received in August. The remaining 15% of the grant is expected to be received during the 2026-27 financial year.
- The FY26/27 budget assumed recognition of $10.0 million in grant revenue and the full GAWB water security charge of $13.2m to be incurred as an expense. Subsequent advice indicates the subsidy will be applied directly to the charge, with Council invoiced only for the residual balance. Accordingly, there is no net operating impact with the variance reflecting a change in gross revenue and expenditure presentation only.

Money we spend (expenditure)

- $21.1m has been spent operationally so far (7.07% of budget).
- Employee benefits are Council's largest recurrent expenditure. A vacancy factor of 3.0% has been incorporated into the 2026/27 budget for positions covered by the Certified Agreement, increasing to 5.0% for the Operations and Community & Lifestyle business units. The vacancy rate for July across all business units is 5.1%
- Legal costs are currently showing a negative balance as June year end accruals for legal consulting services remain recorded pending receipt of the related invoices.

Financial Health

- Cash balances remain healthy at $110.3m of which $65.0m is invested in term deposits.

Capital Works & Projects

Regular forecasting is undertaken by the Project Delivery team. The 2026/27 capital program budget is $142.8 million with year-to-date expenditure of $7.4 million, representing 5.8% of the annual budget.

Detailed Analysis (Recurrent Revenue and Recurrent Expenses)

No significant revenue or expenditure variances have been identified at this stage with July representing the first month of the financial year.

Revenue performance reflects the delayed adoption of the 2026/27 budget and associated timing impacts from annual rates generation, including required system and process changes to support the implementation of average valuations. These timing differences are expected to be resolved following the August rates generation, with financial performance anticipated to align more closely with budget as the year progresses.

Statement of Financial Position

	Current Value	Budget	Variance (Actual to Budget)
Year-to-date Assets	**$3.1b**	**$3.3b**	**-5.55%**
Year-to-date Liabilities	**$182.1m**	**$187.4m**	**-2.81%**
Year-to-date Liabilities (excl. unearned rates revenue)	**$182.1m**	**$187.4m**	**-2.81%**

Liabilities have been presented both including and excluding unearned rates revenue. The two will converge and be the same by June 2027, as all rates revenue is recognised on the profit and loss.

Trade and other receivables is reflecting a negative position at the end of July. This is due to $16.0m of prepaid rates, exceeding the balance of rates and other debtors owing. This will normalise following the rates generation during August.

The budget for assets and liabilities reflects the expected positions at 30 June 2027. Significant balance sheet movement is still expected to occur throughout the year:

- Cash to increase as rates are paid.
- Receivables to increase when rates are levied, then decrease as rates are paid.
- Cash to decrease as expenses are incurred and loan repayments are made.
- Property, plant and equipment balance to move based on in-year capital additions and disposals.
- Unearned rates revenue to increase when rates are levied, then decrease as recognised on the profit and loss statement each month.
- Borrowings to decrease as loan repayments are made.

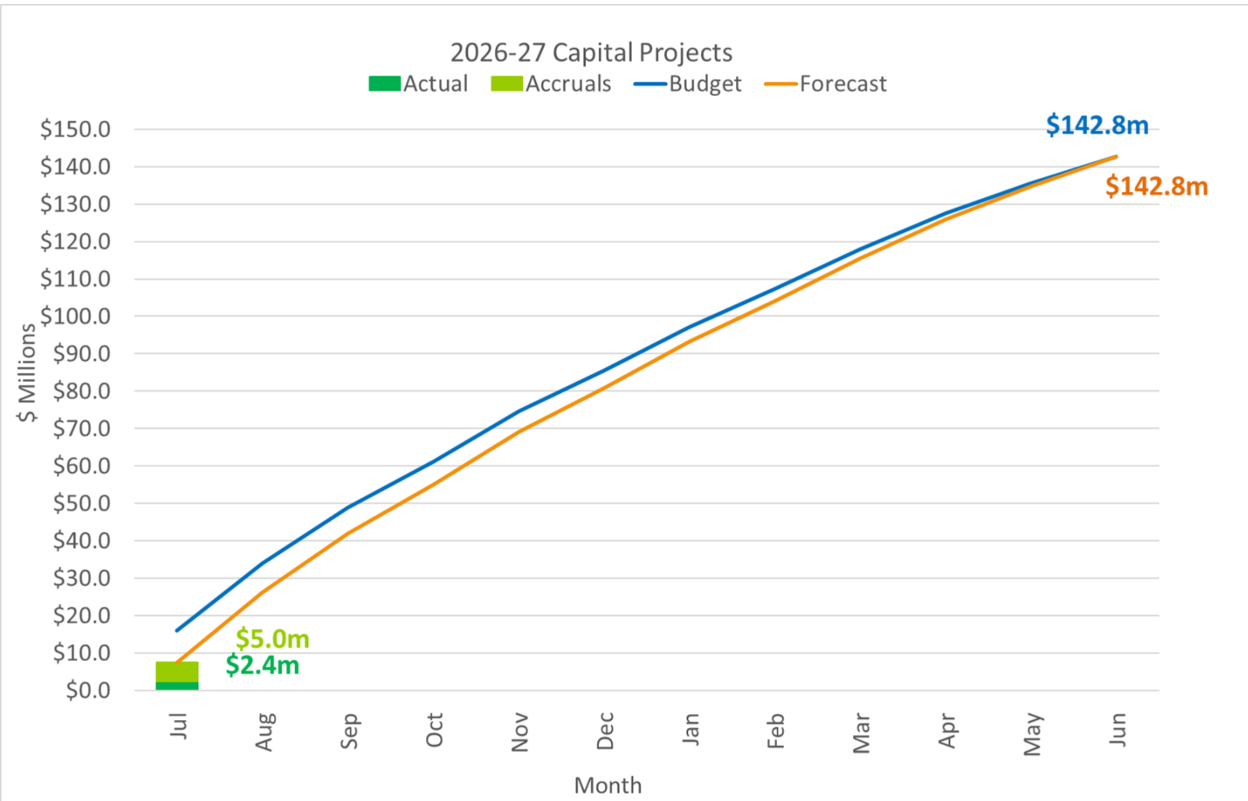
Capital Expenditure

Capital forecasting has been completed for July, however given it is the first month of the financial year and several large projects are still being assessed, forecasting certainty remains limited. As a result, the July forecast has been aligned to budget where appropriate with further review of material variances and project delivery assumptions to be undertaken as additional information becomes available.

Capital expenditure for groups with significant capital budgets is summarised in the table below:

Group	YTD Actual	Budget	Actual as % of Budget
Roads	$2.4m	$37.1m	6.38%
Sewerage	$0.6m	$16.3m	3.64%
Delivery Support and Performance	$0.0m	$7.5m	0.08%
Property Assets	$0.4m	$0.8m	47.30%
Asset Governance	$0.0m	$5.0m	0.00%
Waste	$1.3m	$11.1m	11.35%
Parks	$0.1m	$8.3m	0.84%
Community & Lifestyle	$0.0m	$5.0m	0.03%
Water	$0.6m	$14.4m	4.17%
Strategic Projects	$2.2m	$36.8m	5.85%
Other	$0.0m	$0.5m	-2.79%
Total	**$7.4m**	**$142.8m**	**5.19%**

Accrual estimates of $5.0M have been included in the actuals, to account for major claims relating to July work.



Sustainability Ratios

Financial ratios provide a useful snapshot of Council’s financial status and emerging trends. Individual ratios do not provide enough information to form a comprehensive opinion of Council's financial position and performance, but when the right mix of ratios are considered together, they become a valuable tool in analysing Council's overall financial performance.

Sustainability ratios are prepared and reported on a quarterly basis. The ratios for 2026-27 will first be presented in the report for period ending 30 September 2026.

Stakeholder Engagement:

This report seeks specialist input from relevant internal sources.

Legal and Regulatory Implications:

Council is required to receive an update at least monthly relative to its financial position, Section 204 Local Government Regulation 2012.

Anticipated Resolution Completion Date:

N/A

Attachments:

1. Monthly Financial Statements for the period ending 31 July 2026
2. Operating Statements for the period ending 31 July 2026

G/4.5. PAYMENTS APPROVAL DELEGATION - GLADSTONE AREA WATER BOARD (GAWB) PAYMENTS

Responsible Officer: General Manager Finance Governance and Risk

Prepared By: General Manager Finance, Governance and Risk

Council Meeting Date: 1 September 2026

File Ref: CM9.2

Purpose:

To increase the financial delegation of the Chief Executive Officer relevant to payments to Gladstone Area Water Board.

Officer's Recommendation:

That the Chief Executive Officer be delegated financial authority to approve all payments relevant to the purchase of bulk water from Gladstone Area Water Board in accordance with the water supply agreement.

Summary:

As a government agency, Gladstone Area Water Board is exempt from the requirement for Council to obtain quotes and tenders before entering into a Contract. Council has a water supply agreement with Gladstone Area Water Board that governs the purchase of bulk water which is then distributed throughout Council’s water network for the Lake Awoonga Scheme.

Purchases under this water supply agreement in 2026/27 are anticipated to be $47.4 million and this amount is anticipated to increase year on year. The Chief Executive Officer’s financial delegation for operational expenditure is $500,000, therefore a resolution of Council is required to authorise this expenditure.

Link to Corporate Plan:

Council’s vision articulates that Council seeks to make decisions that are well informed, explainable and consistently applied. Authorisation of expenditure in accordance with the approved contract, budget provisions and delegated authority framework demonstrates sound financial governance, accountability and transparent decision making. This supports community confidence that essential services are being managed responsibly and in line with Council's adopted plans and commitments.

Background:

Council receives bulk water into its Lake Awoonga Scheme from Gladstone Area Water Board as the sole service provider for this resource.

Under the relevant supply agreement and pricing set by Gladstone Area Water Board, that has been subject to oversight by Queensland Competition Authority, Council receives monthly invoices that are expected to be up to $4m a month in 2026/2027.

The total annual expenditure is expected to be in the vicinity of $47.4m for the current financial year, noting that invoicing arrangements for the Water Security Charge from Gladstone Area Water Board have not yet been finalised.

The Chief Executive Officer's financial delegation for operational expenditure is currently $500,00, and a resolution is required from Council to authorise expenditure under the water supply agreement.

Risk Management Summary:

The uninterrupted supply of bulk water from Gladstone Area Water Board is essential for Council to provide water services to customers within the Lake Awoonga Scheme. The proposed delegation is within Council's risk appetite.

Options and Opportunity Analysis:

Option 1 – Officer's Recommendation
The Officer's Recommendation proposes that the Chief Executive Officer be delegated financial authority to approve all payments relevant to the purchase of bulk water from Gladstone Area Water Board in accordance with the water supply agreement. It is intended that this would be a continuing delegation and would not require renewal each financial year. There is low risk in this approach as the Chief Executive Officer is limited to expenditure within Council's adopted budget. This approach also allows the approval to be processed without delay and removes the administrative burden of seeking approval from Council.

Option 2 – Restrict the Delegation to the 2026/27 financial year
If it was Council's preference, the delegation could be granted for the 2026/27 financial year, and a new report could be prepared for Council's consideration each year.

Stakeholder Engagement:

Nil.

Legal and Regulatory Implications:

The approval of payments for purchase of bulk water from Gladstone Area Water Board in accordance with the water supply agreement has not previously been questioned either internally or by external auditors, however in reviewing the financial delegations this was identified as an anomaly.

Section 257 of the Local Government Act 2009 allows Council to delegate powers to the Chief Executive Officer.

Financial and Resource Implications:

There are no direct costs to Council in delegating powers to the Chief Executive Officer however the delegation does facilitate the timely payment of Gladstone Area Water Board's tax invoices and does eliminate the administrative burden of preparing the necessary reports for Council's consideration.

Payments for bulk water have been included in Council's Operational Expenditure Budget.

Anticipated Resolution Completion Date:

This special delegation will be incorporated in Council's Financial Delegation Register by 4 September 2026.

Attachments:

Nil

G/5. COUNCILLORS REPORT

G/5.1. NEXT25 IMPROVING DEMOCRACY - TRANSFORMING POLITICS FOR WOMEN PROGRAM

Responsible Officer: Chief Executive Officer

Prepared By: Cr Leanne Patrick

Council Meeting Date: 1 September 2026

File Ref: CM6.1

Purpose:

Councillor Leanne Patrick submits the following report regarding attendance at the NEXT25: Improving Democracy – Transforming Politics for Women Program on Friday 17 July 2026 and Saturday 18 July 2026.

Councillor's Recommendation:

That the NEXT25: Improving Democracy – Transforming Politics for Women Program report from Councillor Leanne Patrick be received.

Background:

Executive Summary:

This report outlines the community-focused benefits arising from my personal participation in the NEXT25 Transforming Politics for Women program. This national, two-day leadership and governance conference brought together elected women from across Australia to strengthen democratic culture, reconnect with values, and build collective capability to improve political systems.

My participation represents a direct investment in stronger leadership, better governance, and improved community outcomes for the Gladstone Region – particularly important following recent, significant changes to Queensland Local Government Act. The program reinforced that **diverse voices around the decision-making table lead to better decisions**, especially when councillors are deeply engaged with their communities.

Purpose of participation:

The purpose of attending this program was to:

- Strengthen my leadership capability during a period of legislative reform
- Deepen values-aligned decision-making
- Improve governance culture within Council
- Bring national best practice back to Gladstone
- Ensure regional voices are represented in national democratic renewal
- Invest in leadership development that directly benefits our community
- Reinforce the importance of **diverse, community-connected leadership** in delivering better outcomes.

This was not a political or policy event. It was a leadership and systems-improvement program designed to support elected women in delivering better outcomes for their communities.

Program Overview:

- When: July 2026
- Where: Sydney, NSW
- Duration: Two days
- Participants: Elected women from metropolitan, regional, and remote councils
- Confidentiality: Conducted under Chatham House rules
- Focus: Values, leadership, democratic culture, governance improvement, and future-focused local government practice.

What Was Covered Over the Two Days:

Day 1 – Leadership, Values, and Democratic Culture

- **Reconnecting to core values** and purpose in public life
- Understanding how values guide decision-making under new legislation
- **Healthy democratic systems** and the behaviours that support them
- Psychological safety and respectful political engagement
- Leadership resilience and managing public pressure
- The role of elected women in modelling constructive political behaviour

Day 2 – Doing Local Government Better

- Future-focused local government practice
- Adaptive leadership during legislative change
- Strengthening transparency, accountability, and communication
- Improving community trust through values-aligned decision-making
- Collaborative governance and constructive debate
- National best practice sharing across jurisdictions

These sessions directly support the expectations placed on Queensland councillors following recent legislative reforms.

Why This Program Was Important:

Queensland's updated Local Government Act has introduced stronger requirements around:

- Councillor conduct
- Governance standards
- Transparency and accountability
- Decision-making processes
- Community Engagement

My participation provided timely leadership tools to meet these new obligations and strengthen council's ability to deliver high-quality governance.

Values-Aligned Leadership: Clear values support consistent, defensible decision-making and strengthen public trust.
Navigating Legislative Change: The program reinforced how leaders can adapt to new governance expectations while maintaining strategic focus and community connection.
Collective Leadership: Women leaders shared strategies for improving political culture – essential as councils adjust to new conduct and accountability standards.
National Collaboration: Learning from other jurisdictions strengthens Gladstone's ability to implement reform effectively and proactively.

Community Benefits and Return on Investment:

My participation in this program provides clear, measurable value to the Gladstone community.

Stronger Governance and Decision-Making

- Clearer, values-aligned decisions
- Improved ability to interpret and apply legislative changes
- Enhanced strategic thinking and long-term planning

Improved Transparency and Accountability

- Better communication with residents
- More consistent reasoning behind decisions
- Leadership that models respectful engagement

Healthier Political Culture

- More constructive debate
- Stronger collaboration within council
- Reduced conflict and improved problem-solving

Better Local Government Practice

The 'doing local government better' sessions provided practical tools to enhance:

- Community engagement
- Governance processes
- Decision-making frameworks
- Council culture and behaviour

Stronger Representation for Gladstone

- Ensures regional perspectives are included in national conversations
- Brings back best practice from other jurisdictions
- Positions Gladstone as a forward-thinking regional council

Diverse Voices Lead to Better Decisions

The program reinforced a key democratic principle: W**hen diverse voices are present around the decision-making table – and when councillors are deeply engaged with their communities – better, more representative decisions are made.** This strengthens:

- Community trust
- Policy relevance
- Long-term outcomes for residents
- Council's ability to reflect the full diversity of Gladstone

Support for Women's Leadership

- Signals that Gladstone values diverse leadership
- Encourages more women to participate in civic and community roles
- Strengthens long-term democratic resilience

Conclusion:

My personal participation in NEXT25's Transforming Politics for Women program represents a meaningful investment in leadership capability, governance improvement, and community benefit. The insights gained directly support stronger decision-making, improvement transparency, healthier political culture, and better outcomes for the Gladstone Region – particularly during a period of significant legislative change.

This program strengthens my ability to serve our community with clarity, integrity, and resilience, and contributes to a healthier, more effective local government for all residents.

Attachments:

Nil

G/6. URGENT BUSINESS

G/7. NOTICE OF MOTION

G/8. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS