

# **Council Meeting Minutes**

**20<sup>th</sup> January 2026**

**Hamilton Council Chambers**

## **Notice of Meeting of Council – Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> January 2026**

To Councillors,

In accordance with the Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2025, Notice is hereby given, that an Ordinary Meeting of Central Highlands Council is scheduled to be held in the Council Chamber, **Hamilton** on **Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> January 2026**, commencing at **5.00pm** with the business of the meeting to be in accordance with the following agenda paper.

In accordance with the Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2025 Part 2, Division 1, a notice of the meeting was published on the Council website on 2 January 2026.

### General Manager's Certification

PURSUANT to Section 65 (1) of the Local Government Act 1993, I hereby certify, with respect to the advice, information and/or recommendation provided for the guidance of Council in this Agenda, that:

- A. such advice, information and/or recommendation has been given by a person who has the qualifications or experience necessary to give such advice; and
- B. where any advice is given by a person who does not have the required qualifications or experience, that person has obtained and taken into account the advice from an appropriately qualified or experienced person.

Section 65(2) forbids Council from deciding any matter which requires the advice of a qualified person without considering that advice.

Dated at Bothwell this **15<sup>th</sup>** day of **January 2026**.



Stephen Mackey  
**General Manager**

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The meeting commenced at 5.00 p.m.

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### **AUDIO RECORDING DISCLAIMER**

As per *Regulation 43 of the Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2025*, audio recordings of meetings will be made available to Councillors, staff and members of the wider community including Government Agencies at no charge and will be made available on Council's website as soon as practicable after each Council Meeting. Unlike Parliament, Council meetings are not subject to parliamentary privilege, and both Council and the individual may be liable for comments that may be regarded as offensive, derogatory and/or defamatory.

The Mayor advises the meeting and members of the public that Council Meetings, not including Closed Sessions, are audio recorded and published on Council's Website in accordance with Council's Policy 2017-50.

The Mayor also advises, that members of the public are not permitted to make audio recordings of Council Meetings without prior approval being granted.

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### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY**

I acknowledge and pay respect to the Tasmanian Aboriginal Community as the traditional and original owners and continuing custodians of this land on which we gather today and acknowledge and pay respect to Elders, past, present and emerging.

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### **CONDUCT OF COUNCIL MEETING**

Central Highlands Council takes safety seriously. We have a duty to ensure that we provide a safe workplace for our Employees, Councillors, Contractors and members of the public while present at Council's workplaces.

These premises form part of the Council's workplace, and it is expected that everyone who attends Council meetings will behave in a polite and respectful manner. People should refrain from using offensive or derogatory language or comments and not be aggressive, threatening or speak in a hostile manner.

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## **1. PRESENT**

Mayor L Triffitt; Deputy Mayor J Allwright; Cr A Archer; Cr R Cassidy; Cr J Hall; Cr J Honner; Cr D Meacheam, and Cr S Triffett

### **1.1 IN ATTENDANCE**

Mr Stephen Mackey (General Manager) and Mrs Katrina Brazendale (Minute Secretary).

### **1.2 APOLOGIES**

Cr Y Miller

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## **2. CONSIDERATION OF SUPPLEMENTARY ITEMS TO THE AGENDA**

Nil.

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## **3. DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTEREST AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST BY COUNCILLORS AND STAFF**

### **PURPOSE**

In accordance with the requirements of Part 2 Regulation 10 of the Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2025, the chairperson of a meeting is to request Councillors to indicate whether they have, or are likely to have, a pecuniary interest or conflict of interest in any item on the Agenda.

- Stephen Mackey – Item Closed Session 3 Business Arising – December 2025 Closed Council Meeting
  - Katrina Brazendale – Item Closed Session 4.1 Australia Day Awards
  - Cr D Meacheam – Item Closed Session 4.2 Australia Day Awards
-

## 4. MINUTES

### 4.1 CONFIRMATION OF DRAFT ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – 9 DECEMBER 2025

#### **RESOLUTION 01/01.2026/C**

**Moved:** Cr J Honner

**Seconded:** Deputy Mayor J Allwright

**THAT** the Draft Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on Tuesday 9 December 2025 be confirmed.

**CARRIED**

#### **For the Motion**

Mayor L Triffitt; Deputy Mayor J Allwright; Cr A Archer; Cr R Cassidy; Cr J Hall; Cr J Honner; Cr D Meacheam and Cr S Triffett

#### **Attachment – Draft Minutes**

#### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of the report is to confirm the Council Minutes of the previous month. Copies of the minutes have been previously circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting.

## 5. BUSINESS ARISING – DECEMBER 2025 COUNCIL MEETING

#### **RESOLUTION 02/01.2026/C**

**Moved:** Cr D Meacheam

**Seconded:** Cr R Cassidy

**THAT** the information be received.

**CARRIED**

#### **For the Motion**

Mayor L Triffitt; Deputy Mayor J Allwright; Cr A Archer; Cr R Cassidy; Cr J Hall; Cr J Honner; Cr D Meacheam and Cr S Triffett

12.2	NOTICE OF MOTION – CR A Archer That the Mayor provide council with copies of correspondence forwarded and responses that have been received to date from the Premier to the letters requesting the holding of a cabinet meeting in Bothwell	Progressing
19.2	EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT	Nominations have been submitted to the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Management

20.2	POTENTIAL DARK SKY RESERVE	Scheduled 3 <sup>rd</sup> February Workshop
21.9	COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEETING DATES AND TIMES FOR 2026	Advertised 2 <sup>nd</sup> January 2026
21.1	BOTHWELL LIBRARY RENEWAL OF LEASE	Progressing
21.11	DRAFT STRATEGIC PLAN 2025-2030	Advertised 17 <sup>th</sup> December 2025 and closes on 27 <sup>th</sup> February 2026
22.1	TASMANIAN AUTUMN FESTIVAL 2026	Donation of \$2,000 - Payment has been processed

### Matters still progressing from the November 2025 Council Meeting

8.3	NOTICE OF MOTION – CR D MEACHEAM THAT Council establish a working group to progress the improvement of phone and internet services on the Central Plateau; THAT the group established has a ‘sunset’ date of March 2026; and THAT via our Facebook page and website, 2 interested community group members be invited to membership	Progressing – Report to the February meeting
17.3	DOG MANAGEMENT POLICY	Progressing – submissions close 11 <sup>th</sup> February 2026 – Report to the March meeting.
17.4	DEVELOPMENT ASSESSMENT PANEL (DAP) CONSULTATION	Progressing

**REPORT BY** Katrina Brazendale, Executive Assistant

#### PURPOSE

This report aims to provide an overview of the actions undertaken from the previous minutes.

## 6. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING TO THE PUBLIC

### RESOLUTION 03/01.2026/C

**Moved:** Cr J Honner

**Seconded:** Cr R Cassidy

**THAT** pursuant to Regulation 17 (1) of the Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2025, Council, by an absolute majority, close the meeting to the public to consider the following matters in Closed Session:

<b>Item Number</b>	<b>Matter</b>	
<b>2.1</b>	<i>Confirmation of the Minutes - Closed Session of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 9 December 2025.</i>	<i>Regulation 17 (2)(H) of the Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2025 – information of a personal and confidential nature or information provided to Council on the condition it is kept confidential.</i>
<b>5.1</b>	<i>Australia Day Awards 2026 - Young Citizen of the Year Award, Event of the Year Award and Certificates of excellence for community contribution.</i>	<i>Regulation 17 (2)(H) of the Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2025 – information of a personal and confidential nature or information provided to Council on the condition it is kept confidential.</i>
<b>5.2</b>	<i>Australia Day Awards 2026- Citizen of the Year Award.</i>	<i>Regulation 17 (2)(H) of the Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2025 – information of a personal and confidential nature or information provided to Council on the condition it is kept confidential.</i>
<b>5.3</b>	<i>Payment For Pelham Telstra Tower</i>	<i>Regulation 17 (2)(e) of the Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2025 - contracts, and tenders, for the supply of goods and services and their terms, conditions, approval and renewal.</i>

**CARRIED**

#### **For the Motion**

Mayor L Triffitt; Deputy Mayor J Allwright; Cr A Archer; Cr R Cassidy; Cr J Hall; Cr J Honner; Cr D Meacheam and Cr S Triffitt

#### **PURPOSE**

Under Regulation 17 (1) of the *Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2025* states that at a meeting, a council by absolute majority, or a council committee by simple majority, may close a part of the meeting to the public for a reason specified in sub-regulation (2).

As per *Regulation 17 (1) of the Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2025*, this motion requires an absolute majority.

**MEETING CLOSED** to the public at \_\_\_\_ p.m.

## 7. RE-OPEN MEETING TO THE PUBLIC

The meeting re-opened to the public at 6.14 p.m.

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## 8. PUBLIC RELEASE ANNOUNCEMENT(S)

The Chairperson announced that pursuant to Regulation 17(6)(7) of the Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2025 and having considered privacy and confidential issues, the Council authorised the release to the public of the following discussions, decisions, reports or documents relating to the closed meeting:

<b>Item Number</b>	<b>Matter</b>	<b>Decision</b>
2.1	<i>Confirmation of the Minutes - Closed Session of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 9 December 2025</i>	<i>THAT the Minutes of the Closed Session of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 9 December 2025 be confirmed</i>
5.1	<i>Australia Day Awards 2026 - Young Citizen of the Year Award, Event of the Year Award and Certificates of excellence for community contribution.</i>	<i>To be advised</i>
5.2	<i>Australia Day Awards 2026- Citizen of the Year Award.</i>	<i>To be advised</i>
5.3	<i>Payment For Pelham Telstra Tower</i>	<i>Commercial in confidence</i>

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## 9. NOTIFICATION OF COUNCIL WORKSHOP(S) HELD

Nil

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### 9.1 FUTURE WORKSHOP(S)

#### PURPOSE

The purpose of the report is for Councillors to note the Council Workshop date(s).

The proposed next Council Workshop will be held on the following date.

- 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2026 – Bothwell 9.00 a.m.
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## 10. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

In accordance with the *Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2025*, the Council conducts questions by member of the public to enable members of the public to ask question on Council related matters.

### Questions by member of the public

- (1) The chairperson of an ordinary council meeting must ensure that, if required, at least 15 minutes of that meeting is made available for questions by members of the public.
- (2) A question asked by a member of the public under regulation 37 or 38 , and the answer given to that question, is not to be debated at the ordinary council meeting.
- (3) A council is to determine any other procedures to be followed in respect of public question time at an ordinary council meeting.

### Questions without notice by member of the public

- (1) A member of the public may, on invitation by the chairperson of an ordinary council meeting, ask a question without notice at the meeting.
- (2) A public question without notice must relate to the activities of the council.
- (3) The chairperson of an ordinary council meeting may require a public question without notice to be –
  - a) put on notice in writing; and
  - b) answered at a later ordinary council meeting.

### Questions on notice by member of the public

- (1) A member of the public may, at least 7 days before an ordinary council meeting, give written notice to the general manager of a question to which the member of the public seeks an answer at the meeting.
- (2) A public question on notice must relate to the activities of the council.
- (3) The chairperson of an ordinary council meeting may address a public question on notice.
- (4) The period referred to in subregulation (1) includes Saturdays, Sundays and statutory holidays, but does not include –
  - a) the day on which notice is given under that subregulation; or
  - b) the day of the ordinary council meeting.

*Damian Bester and Christine Ferguson were in attendance when the meeting resumed.*

*Christine Ferguson raised the following:-*

*What is happening with the 'Back to Hamilton'*

*How to make Hamilton better*

- *Playground – underground watering system*
- *Dog Park*
- *Caravan Park – River Road expanded to enable more parking*

*Christine Ferguson left the meeting at 6.31p.m.*

**11. PETITIONS / DEPUTATIONS / PRESENTATIONS****11.1 PETITIONS**

Nil

**11.2 DEPUTATIONS**

Nil

**11.3 PRESENTATIONS**

Nil

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**12. NOTICE OF MOTIONS****PURPOSE**

Under Regulation 19 of the Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2025 relating to Motions on Notice. It states the following:

- (1) *A Councillor may give to the general manager, at least 7 days before a meeting, give written notice of a motion, together with supporting information and reasons, for the inclusion of the motion on the next meeting.*

Nil

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**13. COUNCIL ACTING AS A PLANNING AUTHORITY PURSUANT TO THE LAND USE PLANNING AND APPROVALS ACT 1993 AND COUNCIL'S STATUTORY LAND USE PLANNING SCHEME**

Nil

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**14. ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING RESUMED**

**NOT REQUIRED**

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## 15. MONTHLY MAYORAL AND ELECTED MEMBERS ACTIVITY

### RESOLUTION 04/01.2026/C

**Moved:** Cr J Honner

**Seconded:** Cr R Cassidy

**THAT** the Council notes the Mayoral and Elected Members Activities.

**CARRIED**

#### **For the Motion**

Mayor L Triffitt; Deputy Mayor J Allwright; Cr A Archer; Cr R Cassidy; Cr J Hall; Cr J Honner; Cr D Meacheam and Cr S Triffitt

#### IMPLICATIONS AND FINANCIALS

<b>Strategic Plan</b>	6.2 Ensure that Council members have the resources and skills development opportunities to effectively fulfil their responsibilities
<b>Council Policy</b>	Councillor Code of Conduct Policy
<b>Legislative Context</b>	Local Government Act 1993 Local Government (General) Regulations 2025 Local Government (Model Code of Conduct) Order 2024
<b>Consultation</b>	The community and stakeholders.
<b>Impact on Budget/Resources</b>	Not applicable.
<b>Risk</b>	Allocations for Councillor Conference attendance are included in the operational budget.

#### PURPOSE

This report aims to provide an overview of the Mayor and Elected Member's monthly activities.

#### BACKGROUND

The Mayor and Elected members can provide an activity report each month summarising any civic events they attend.

#### DISCUSSION

The Mayor and Elected Members represent the council at public and civic events and are the political interface between other bodies, governments, and the Council. In accordance with the Local Government Act 1993, the Mayor is designated as the spokesperson for the Council as well as a representative for the Council on regional organisations and at intergovernmental forums at regional, state, and federal levels. Reports below are provided outside the general functions of a Councillor, whereby Councillors meet with ratepayers and attend workshops.

#### **Mayor Loueen Triffitt**

3 December 2025	Discussions with Premier's Advisor
9 December 2025	Annual General Meeting and Ordinary Council Meeting (Bothwell)
9 December 2025	School Presentation (Bothwell)
12 December 2025	Catch up with the Premier
17 December 2025	School Presentation (Westerway)
23 December 2025	Council break up barbecue (Bothwell)

- Business of Council - **10**
- Ratepayer and community members – communications - **9**

- Elected Members - communications - **16**
- Council Management communications - **3**
- Legal Communications - **0**

**Deputy Mayor J Allwright**

9 December 2025 Annual General Meeting and Ordinary Council Meeting (Bothwell)  
23 December 2025 Council break up barbecue (Bothwell)

**Cr A Archer**

9 December 2025 Annual General Meeting and Ordinary Council Meeting (Bothwell)  
9 December 2025 Workshop Childcare (Bothwell)  
9 December 2025 School Presentation (Bothwell)

**Cr R Cassidy**

9 December 2025 Annual General Meeting and Ordinary Council Meeting (Bothwell)  
23 December 2025 Council break up barbecue (Bothwell)  
7 December 2025 Final Service and deconsecration of the St Michael's Church (Bothwell)

**Cr J Hall**

7 December 2025 Tas Fire Service Christmas barbeque (Arthurs Lake)  
7 December 2025 Final Service and deconsecration of the St Michael's Church (Bothwell)  
9 December 2025 Annual General Meeting and Ordinary Council Meeting (Bothwell)  
9 December 2025 Workshop Childcare (Bothwell)  
12 December 2025 HATCH Christmas event (Ouse)  
16 December 2025 School Presentation (Glenora)  
18 December 2025 Tas Fire Service Christmas barbeque (Gretna)  
23 December 2025 Council break up barbecue (Bothwell)

**Cr J Honner**

9 December 2025 Annual General Meeting and Ordinary Council Meeting (Bothwell)  
9 December 2025 School Presentation (Bothwell)  
23 December 2025 Council break up barbecue (Bothwell)

**Cr D Meacheam**

9 December 2025 Annual General Meeting and Ordinary Council Meeting (Bothwell)  
10 December 2025 LGAT Learning and Development Sub-committee (On-Line).  
12 December 2025 HATCH Christmas event, lobby State MP's. (Ouse)

**Cr Y Miller**

9 December 2025 Annual General Meeting and Ordinary Council Meeting (Bothwell)

**Cr S Triffett**

9 December 2025 Annual General Meeting and Ordinary Council Meeting (Bothwell)  
9 December 2025 Workshop Childcare (Bothwell)  
16 December 2025 School Presentation (Gretna)

## 15.1 MAYORAL GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS, GOVERNMENT AGENCIES AND PARLIAMENTARY MEMBERS LETTERS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

8<sup>th</sup> August 2025

The Hon. Jeremy Rockliff Premier  
Executive Building  
15 Murray Street  
Hobart TASMANIA 7000

Dear Mr Premier

### Invitation for Cabinet to Meeting in Bothwell

Firstly, congratulation on your re-election as Premier of Tasmania and the installation of your new cabinet.

With this said and based on our conversations during the election period with some candidates for Lyons we seek your support in your cabinet holding a meeting soon at Bothwell to meet with myself and my councillors.

As you may be aware there are matters, we wish to speak to you about and many of these are detailed below.

The Central Highland is part of Lyons which is the largest electoral area in Tasmania. The Council area covers some 8,010sq Km or approximately 12% of Tasmania's land mass within which are pristine wilderness areas and the state's best angling lakes. We are also one of the major Renewable Energy Zones in Tasmania and as such are doing our part to ensure Tasmania's goal of reaching their renewable energy targets by 2030 is achievable.

We are also Tasmania's major location for energy generation with most of the large Hydro Schemes in our municipal area.

When we seek support as most areas do during elections, we have extreme difficulty in not only getting the major parties to talk to us (Liberal or Labor) let alone getting them to find the time to visit and take the time to discuss with us those necessities that many in other parts of our state are privileged to have.

These include reestablishing medical services in Ouse which has a hospital but during the Liberal Government regime it has been closed, and the Doctor has also left.

In recent time we have been informed by the then Treasurer that we would have a part time doctor at Ouse within 6 Months. This time is well passed. This Government has also seen fit to close the Ouse school forcing those using it to travel substantial distance to another school or force families to have to sell up to be able to get their children the basic necessities of an education.

The Highland Lakes Road formerly The Lake Highway will be the major traffic route for the transport of all the material needed to develop the renewable energy projects that will benefit all of Tasmania, yet minimal to no improvements are proposed for this road.

Also, on this road south of Miena is a single lane bridge it has been the object of numerous requests to be replaced with a two-lane facility but again has fallen on deaf ears.

The request for a cabinet meeting in Bothwell for council to elaborate on these issues would be greatly appreciated.

Your faithfully

Lou Triffitt  
Mayor

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17th October 2025

The Hon. Jeremy Rockliff Premier  
Executive Building  
15 Murray Street  
Hobart TAS 7000

Dear Mr Premier

### **Invitation for Cabinet to Meeting in Bothwell**

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We are also Tasmania's major location for energy generation with most of the large Hydro Schemes in our municipal area.

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These include reestablishing medical services in Ouse which has a hospital but during the Liberal Government regime it has been closed, and the Doctor has also left.

In recent time we have been informed by the then Treasurer that we would have a part time doctor at Ouse within 6 Months. This time is well passed.

This Government has also seen fit to close the Ouse school forcing those using it to travel substantial distance to another school or force families to have to sell up to be able to get their children the basic necessities of an education.

The Highland Lakes Road formerly The Lake Highway will be the major traffic route for the transport of all the material needed to develop the renewable energy projects that will benefit all of Tasmania, yet minimal to no improvements are proposed for this road.

Also, on this road south of Miena is a single lane bridge it has been the object of numerous requests to be replaced with a two-lane facility but again has fallen on deaf ears.

Based on all of the above, and the fact that conservatively a further \$2 Bn in wind farm developments will occur in the next two to three years makes it essential that the government or at least the appropriate

ministers meet with council regularly to ensure we are proactive in regard to the necessary infrastructure improvements and health and education services to cater for the influx of the increased workforces needed to undertake these developments. These do not include those necessary to undertake the upgrade of the Tarraleah Power station.

The request for a cabinet meeting in Bothwell for council to elaborate on these issues would be greatly appreciated.

Your faithfully

Lou Triffitt  
Mayor

Minister for Energy and Renewables  
Minister for Parks  
Minister for Sport



Level 1, 7-9 Franklin Wharf HOBART TAS 7000 Australia  
GPO Box 123 HOBART TAS 7001 Australia  
Phone: +61 3 6165 7739  
Email: [minister.duigan@dpac.tas.gov.au](mailto:minister.duigan@dpac.tas.gov.au)

16<sup>th</sup> December 2025

Stephen Mackey  
Acting General Manager  
Central Highlands Council  
[smackey@centralhighlands.tas.gov.au](mailto:smackey@centralhighlands.tas.gov.au)

Dear Stephen

I am delighted to hear that your application for funding from the 2024-25 Tasmanian Active Infrastructure Grants Program has been supported by the Department of State Growth.

The Tasmanian Government is committed to ensuring more Tasmanians get active and have somewhere to participate in sport and active recreation activities.

The 2024-25 Tasmanian Active Infrastructure Grants Program supports the sport and active recreation sector to develop new infrastructure and upgrade existing infrastructure to maximise opportunities for lifelong participation in sport and active recreation.

We know participating in sport and active recreation provides benefits for both physical and mental health. We also recognise the important role it can play in providing a sense of belonging in a community and in the development of social connections.

I wish your organisation every success in undertaking the project.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nick Duigan".

Hon Nick Duigan MLC  
**Minister for Sport**

Minister for Education  
Minister for Children and Youth  
Minister for Disability Services



19 DEC 2025

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GPO Box 123 HOBART TAS 7001 Australia  
Phone: +61 3 6165 9420  
Email: [jo.palmer@dpac.tas.gov.au](mailto:jo.palmer@dpac.tas.gov.au)

Mr Stephen Mackey  
Acting General Manager – Central Highlands Council  
[smackey@centralhighlands.tas.gov.au](mailto:smackey@centralhighlands.tas.gov.au)

Dear Mr ~~Mackey~~ *Stephen*

Thank you for your correspondence from 29 September 2025 regarding the challenges faced by Central Highlands families in accessing Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) services. I sincerely apologise for the delay in responding.

The Tasmanian Government recognises how vital access to quality early learning services is for children's development and for supporting families and communities. I commend the Central Highland Council's proactive response to understanding the context and barriers to local education and care in the Central Highlands LGA.

We are committed to supporting Tasmanian families in accessing the care they need, and also acknowledge that workforce availability is a key factor in expanding access to ECEC services. I acknowledge your partnership working with Thrive Group to develop viable models of care and a local ECEC workforce. Your work in identifying demand at Bothwell for ECEC and Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) will assist education and care providers greatly with their scoping.

The Department for Education, Children and Young People (DECYP) is also working closely with the ECEC sector to build the capacity and increase the availability of services, including in the context of national reforms to improve access to quality ECEC. This is supported by our 2030 Strong Plan for Tasmania's Future with \$4.5 million to establish an Early Years Workforce Development Fund to grow the early years workforce, \$10 million to support schools to establish Outside School Hours Care in areas of need and an audit and release of surplus government land for new ECEC services.

The Building Early Education Fund (the Building Fund) is an Australian Government initiative to provide capital funding to build new and expand existing ECEC services in areas of need, including the outer suburbs and regional Australia. The Building Fund comprises a number of different funding streams, including:

- Capital funding to states and territories to build or expand ECEC services on or near school sites, and

- ECEC sector grants to build or expand ECEC services in areas of need including:
  - a large-scale grant round for large not-for-profit providers
  - a grant round for smaller providers and in-venue Family Day Care (FDC) providers.

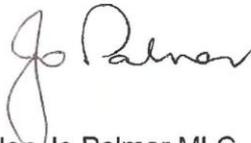
Priority sites under the Building Fund within the funding available to Tasmania will be determined in line with Australian Government criteria, which includes areas of ECEC undersupply, projected population growth, socioeconomic disadvantage and 'shovel readiness' to help bridge the gap in ECEC in Australia as soon as practical.

A further key Tasmanian Government initiative is the Early Learning for Three Year Olds (EL3) initiative that aims to increase access to ECEC in areas of low or no supply of ECEC, including in rural and remote areas. I am advised the EL3 implementation has recently made contact with the Principal and Business Manager of Bothwell District High School to discuss venue requirements for ECEC under DECYP's Co-located Partnerships Policy and Process.

Thank you again for your correspondence on this important issue. We understand the significant impact that limited access to childcare has on families and communities, particularly in regional areas. For further clarification of what is outlined in this letter and a point of contact for future reference, please contact Early Years by email at [el3@decyp.tas.gov.au](mailto:el3@decyp.tas.gov.au).

I also understand you are seeking a meeting with me on a separate matter. My office will be in touch to set up a time.

Yours sincerely



Hon Jo Palmer MLC  
**Minister for Education**

Minister for Health, Mental Health and Wellbeing  
Minister for Ageing  
Minister for Aboriginal Affairs

Level 5, 4 Salamanca Place, HOBART TAS 7000

GPO Box 123 HOBART TAS 7001

Phone: 03 6165 7794

Email: [Minister.Archer@dpac.tas.gov.au](mailto:Minister.Archer@dpac.tas.gov.au)

Ref: MIN25/3414



5 January 2026

Mayor Loueen Triffitt  
Central Highlands Council  
[council@centralhighlands.tas.gov.au](mailto:council@centralhighlands.tas.gov.au)

Dear Mayor Triffitt,

I am pleased to advise that on 22 December 2025, I released the exposure draft of *The Health Revolution* - Tasmania's 20-Year Preventive Health Strategy. This marks a crucial milestone in shaping a healthier future for our state. A future where prevention becomes the foundation for wellbeing, productivity, and resilience.

I would like to express my thanks to you and your representatives for your continued commitment and advocacy advancing preventive health for all Tasmanians. Local government plays a vital role in creating environments that keep people well, from planning and infrastructure to community programs. Your perspective is essential to making prevention real at the local level. We know that effective prevention cannot be driven by the Tasmanian Government alone. It requires a true partnership with the local leaders who understand the unique needs of their regions.

Over 5,000 Tasmanians contributed to the first round of consultation for the Strategy, helping to shape a shared vision for a healthier future. The exposure draft presents the high-level vision and strategic pillars for the next 20 years. We are aware that for councils to align their own long-term planning and investment with this Strategy, the direction must be clear, evidence-based, and actionable.

I now invite you to help us make it even stronger. The draft Strategy sets the long-term direction for the next 20 years. It will be supported by Action Plans and toolkits that make implementation practical, adaptable and reduce duplication of efforts across Tasmania.

Your feedback will help ensure the Strategy reflects local priorities and identifies opportunities for councils to work with the Tasmanian Government and other partners to deliver better outcomes for Tasmanians. We invite you to please review the draft and provide a submission to [consultation@health.tas.gov.au](mailto:consultation@health.tas.gov.au) by 27 February 2026.

When reviewing the draft Strategy, we'd like your perspective on whether:

1. The overall direction feels right, fair, and ambitious enough for Tasmania.
2. The long-term vision in this draft resonates with you.
3. The Strategy reflects the things you believe keep Tasmanians healthy and well.

4. The sub-pillars feel like the right building blocks to achieve our goals.
5. The commitments about how we'll deliver this work are clear and complete.
6. The language is clear, accessible, and easy to understand.
7. This plan makes you feel included in Tasmania's long-term health journey.
8. There is enough data and evidence to back the Strategy's direction and demonstrate its importance—and please suggest where this could be strengthened or if additional statistics should be included.

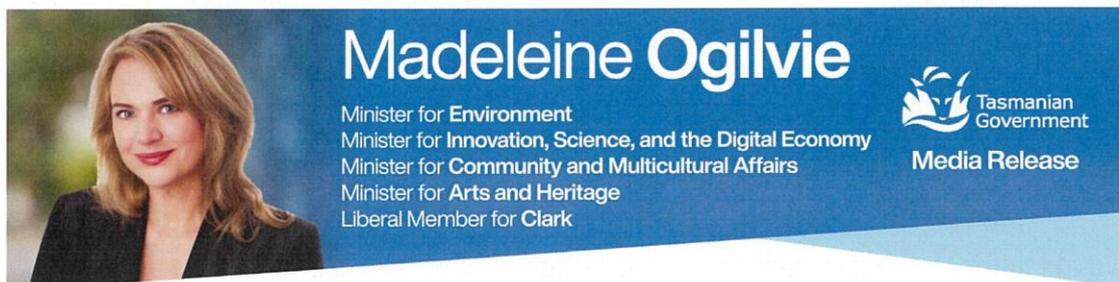
The draft and supporting materials are enclosed with this letter.

Your feedback will help determine the final shape of this document. Thank you for your leadership and commitment to building healthier communities. Together, we can create a Tasmania where more people feel well, stay well, and keep doing the things they love for as long as possible.

Yours sincerely



Hon Bridget Archer MP  
**Minister for Health, Mental Health and Wellbeing**



## **Madeleine Ogilvie, Minister for Innovation, Science and the Digital Economy**

7 January 2026

### **Upgrades to phone services on the Central Highlands welcomed**

Long awaited upgrades for telecommunications services by Telstra at Miena have been welcomed by the Tasmanian Government.

Minister for Innovation, Science and the Digital Economy, Madeleine Ogilvie, said the upgrades would bring relief to residents in the area concerned about the reliability of their service.

“Central Highlands residents have long expressed concerns about mobile phone and data outages in the Miena area particularly during periods of high visitation,” Minister Ogilvie said.

“Many Tasmanians live in remote and regional areas, and reliable phone and data services are a must for their safety.

“The Tasmanian Government has advocated for the Australian Government and Telstra to deliver improved services to those regions, and to provide solutions for the constrained network capacity issues.

“We welcome the upgrade to the Central Highlands areas of Miena, Liawenee, Steppes,

Reynolds Neck and Brandum by Telstra and we will continue to press for upgrades to other locations around the state where telecommunications network congestion results in service disruptions.”

The Tasmanian Government will continue to lobby for co-investment opportunities through programs such as the Regional Connectivity Program, Mobile Black Spot Program for regional Tasmania.

**Contact:** Trudy Brown

**Phone:** 0417 418 899

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**Our mailing address is:**  
*15 Murray St Hobart, TAS 7000*

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## 16. OPERATIONAL MATTERS ARISING (STRATEGIC THEME – COMMUNITY WELL-BEING)

### Build capacity to enhance community spirit and sense of wellbeing

- 1.1 Continue to upgrade existing public open spaces and sporting facilities and encourage community use
- 1.2 Advocate for improved health, education, transport and other government and non-government services within the Central Highlands
- 1.3 Continue to strengthen partnerships with all tiers of government
- 1.4 Support and encourage social and community events within the Central Highlands
- 1.5 Provide support to community organisations and groups
- 1.6 Foster and develop an inclusive and engaged community with a strong sense of ownership of its area
- 1.7 Foster and support youth activities in the Central Highlands

### 16.1 HEALTH AND WELLBEING PLAN 2020-2025 – MONTHLY PROGRESS REPORT

#### RESOLUTION 05/01.2026/C

**Moved:** Cr J Honner

**Seconded:** Cr R Cassidy

*THAT the Health and Wellbeing report be received.*

**CARRIED**

#### **For the Motion**

Mayor L Triffitt; Deputy Mayor J Allwright; Cr A Archer; Cr R Cassidy; Cr J Hall; Cr J Honner; Cr D Meacheam and Cr S Triffitt

#### **IMPLICATIONS AND FINANCIALS**

<b>Strategic Plan</b>	1.5 Provide support to community organisations and groups
<b>Council Policy</b>	Health & Wellbeing Plan 2020-2025
<b>Legislative Context</b>	<i>Local Government Act 1993</i>
<b>Consultation</b>	As required
<b>Impact on Budget/Resources</b>	As per Council's approved budget
<b>Risk</b>	The council must ensure that it meets its legislative and governance responsibilities in accordance with the Local Government Act 1993.

**REPORT BY** Kat Cullen, Community Development Officer

**BACKGROUND**

The following activities were performed during **December 2025**.

<b>COUNCIL PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES</b>	
<b>External Grants</b>	<p>GRANT SUCCESS: - \$500,000 to be received through Tas Active Infrastructure Grants (DPAC) Gretna Oval application. Confirmation of funding has been provided by Ministers Office, project planning to commence January once Grant Deed received.</p> <p>Building Early Education Fund – Federal investment of \$500 million in funding to build Early Childhood Education Centres. Council’s Childcare Options Analysis report will provide background to application for this grant which will open in 2026.</p>
<b>UPDATE: Council website upgrade</b>	<p>Commence content upload to new website draft.</p> <p>Engagement of photographer, as per Council decision, and commence image library to be used for website, and Council communications.</p>
<b>UPDATE: Childcare Project</b>	<p><u>Thrive Group</u> In collaboration with Council, Thrive Group hosted community info session about local childcare workforce training and development on 1 and 3 December. 8 local people are now signed up for free childcare qualification training commencing January 2026.</p> <p><u>Options Analysis</u> Ninety Mile Consulting – provided draft of Childcare Options Analysis. Updated draft to be provided to Mayor and Councillors mid-January.</p> <p><u>Westerway School After Hours Care</u> – Collaboration with school and provider to aim for program launch in 2026.</p>
<b>Community Grants</b>	<p>Coordination of community grants programs</p>
<b>RACT learner driver program</b>	<p>Coordination of final learning drivers’ lessons delivered in Bothwell by RACT. This program, funded through Cattle Hill Community Fund round 2 has been <b>free learner lessons delivered to 36 individuals</b> in the municipality.</p> 

<b>School Awards</b>	Coordination of Council's support for end of year awards. Attendance at awards.
<b>Australia Day 2026</b>	Awards nomination promotion, and event development.
<b>REPRESENTATION MEETINGS and EVENTS</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communities for Children Steering Committee</li> <li>• LGAT Health &amp; Wellbeing Network meeting.</li> <li>• HATCH</li> </ul>
<b>COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT</b>	
<b>Hamilton family Christmas event</b>	This community-led event, organised by families who coordinated the Halloween event, hosted a community Christmas movie on 19 January.
<b>Great lake Community Centre</b>	Working with committee to finalise council-funded insulation roofing installation project.
<b>School Holidays programs</b>	Support for school holiday programs in 2026 to be run through Action Crew Central Highlands. Commencing with film project with Gretna Junior Fire Brigade members in January, followed by craft project in Ellendale.
<b>Childcare and Ouse School</b>	Working with DEYCP and GM to support Ouse Family daycare through lack of certainty for lease at Ouse School in 2026. DECYP are considering supporting service through lease of private property in Ouse – currently scoping suitable residential properties.
<b>Ouse Online Access Centre</b>	Liaison with Acting GM, Libraries Tas and OAC to support secure ongoing functioning of OAC.
<b>COMMUNICATION and MEDIA</b>	
<b>Tourism brochure</b>	Update, edit, and reprint for Tourism Brochure exchange
<b>Residents guide</b>	Finalisation of community information and layout for printing.
<b>Council social media</b>	<p>Facebook followers: 2,876.</p> <p>December Posts: New GM announcement, Australia Day nominations and event; Telstra upgrade Great Lake and surrounds; Bush Fest 2027 save the date; swimming pool opening; review of dog management policy; seasons greeting post and holiday shutdown; advertising RACT driver program; Early Childhood Education and Care career sessions in Bothwell.</p>

<p><b>Telstra Tower upgrade – Great Lake area</b></p>	<p>Support for community messaging.</p>
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**Miena Children’s Christmas Party images – recipient of Council Community Grant.**



## 16.2 FISHING COMP DONATIONS REQUEST - WAYATINAH SPORTS AND SOCIAL CLUB

### RESOLUTION 06/01.2026/C

**Moved:** Cr R Cassidy

**Seconded:** Deputy Mayor J Allwright

**THAT** Council approve a request from Wayatinah Sports and Social Club for a donation of \$500 for costs associated with registration packs for children who enter the David Gasson Memorial Fishing Competition at Wayatinah.

**CARRIED**

#### For the Motion

Mayor L Triffitt; Deputy Mayor J Allwright; Cr A Archer; Cr R Cassidy; Cr J Hall; Cr J Honner; Cr D Meacheam and Cr S Triffett

**REPORT BY** Kat Cullen, Community Development Officer

[Attachment - Redacted donations request letter.](#)

#### **BACKGROUND**

Council has received a donation request from Wayatinah Sports and Social Club for \$500 for costs associated with registration packs for children who enter the David Gasson Memorial Fishing Competition at Wayatinah.

In 2025, there were 110 adults, and 86 children entered.

In recent years, Council has supported the children's registration packs by donating Council branded promotional items and merchandise remaining from the Bush Fest stock. This year, there is little remaining in the stock, and Wayatinah Sports and Social Club have been suggested to seek Council support through a cash donation

#### **FOR DISCUSSION**

The Club is seeking a donation of \$500 to purchase sunscreen, drink bottles, or hats for the registration packs for the junior entrants. This request is for an estimated \$5 per child, making 100 packs.

It is proposed that this expenditure be made against the Community Support and Donations project within the Community and Economic Development Budget, which has \$12,000 remaining for this financial year.

**17. OPERATIONAL MATTERS ARISING (STRATEGIC THEME – INFRASTRUCTURE AND FACILITIES**

<b>Manage Council’s physical assets in an efficient and effective manner</b>	
2.1	Develop and implement a 10 year Asset Management Plan for all classes of assets
2.2	Continue to lobby at regional and state levels to improve transport and infrastructure
2.3	Seek external funding to assist with upgrading of existing infrastructure and funding of new infrastructure and facilities
2.4	Ensure that the standard of existing assets and services are maintained in a cost effective manner

**17.1 WORKS & SERVICES MONTHLY REPORT – DECEMBER 2025**

**RESOLUTION 07/01.2026/C**

**Moved:** Cr J Honner

**Seconded:** Cr J Hall

**THAT** the Works & Services monthly report for December 2025 be received.

**CARRIED**

**For the Motion**

Mayor L Triffitt; Deputy Mayor J Allwright; Cr A Archer; Cr R Cassidy; Cr J Hall; Cr J Honner; Cr D Meacheam and Cr S Triffett

**REPORT BY** Barry Harback, Acting - Works & Services Manager

**BACKGROUND**

The following activities were performed during **December 2025** by Works & Services –

<b>Grading &amp; Sheeting</b>	
<b>Maintenance Grading</b>	
<b>Potholing / shouldering</b>	14 Mile Road, Mark Tree Road, Bluff Road Interlaken, Wihareja, Black snake lane, Weasel planes, Bashon road, Vic Valley Road, Old man’s head road, Dennistoun road,
<b>Spraying:</b>	Bothwell township.
<b>Culverts / Drainage:</b>	
<b>Occupational Health and safety</b>	Monthly Toolbox Meetings Day to day JSA and daily prestart check lists completed. Monthly workplace inspections completed. Playground inspections Traffic management diary

<b>Bridges:</b>	Small Bridge, Over Pump Spillway Canal, Tarraleah 14 Mile Road Refurbishment of Bridge Beams, Bearings and Associated Components all works completed
<b>Refuse / recycling sites:</b>	Cover Hamilton Tip twice weekly
<b>Other:</b>	Bothwell swimming pool maintenance Cold mix holes Ellendale Road, replace signs Hollow tree road, replace tap Bronty toilets, repair windy loo Miena, repair porta loo Bothwell waste transfer station, Install new signs Bothwell swimming pool, cold mix holes Arthurs Lake Road,
<b>Slashing:</b>	Lang low road, Thousand acer lane, Pelham Road, Bluff Road,
<b>Municipal Town Maintenance:</b>	Collection of town rubbish twice weekly Maintenance of parks, cemetery, recreation ground and Caravan Park. Cleaning of public toilets, gutters, drains and footpaths. Collection of rubbish twice weekly Cleaning of toilets and public facilities General maintenance Mowing towns and parks Town Drainage
<b>Buildings:</b>	
<b>Plant:</b>	New Holland tractor Two new tyres Kubota zero turn mower new deck pulleys Komatsu loader new battery Bomag compacter new battery Mack truck new fan assembly
<b>Private Works:</b>	Andrew Daly Gravel delivery
<b>Casuals</b>	Toilets, rubbish and Hobart Hamilton general duties Mowing and brush cutting Gardening
<b>Program for next 4 weeks</b>	Coring and scarifying of Gretna Cricket Oval Slashing of Municipal Roads Mowing and brush cutting around towns Drainage Dawson Road Culvert installation Holmes Road Drainage works Curlys Lane Thousand Acre Lane Road works Hollow Tree Road stabilisation works Fix water brake Hamilton recreation ground Cabell and water location Ellendale footpath

## 18. OPERATIONAL MATTERS ARISING (STRATEGIC THEME – FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY)

### Manage Council's finances and assets to ensure long term viability and sustainability of Council

- 3.1 Manage finances and assets in a transparent way to allow the maximisation of resources to provide efficient and consistent delivery of services
- 3.2 Review annually, Councils Long Term Financial Management Plan and Council's Long Term Asset Management Plan
- 3.3 Where efficiency gains can be identified, resource share services with other local government councils
- 3.4 Endeavour to, and continue to lobby for, an increase in the level of grant income
- 3.5 Encourage development to expand Council's rate base
- 3.6 Identify revenue streams that could complement/substitute for existing resources
- 3.7 Develop and maintain sound risk management processes

### 18.1 MONTHLY FINANCE REPORT TO 31 DECEMBER 2025

#### RESOLUTION 08/01.2026/C

**Moved:** Deputy Mayor J Allwright

**Seconded:** Cr R Cassidy

THAT the Monthly Finance Report to 31 December 2025 be received.

**CARRIED**

#### For the Motion

Mayor L Triffitt; Deputy Mayor J Allwright; Cr A Archer; Cr R Cassidy; Cr J Hall; Cr J Honner; Cr D Meacheam and Cr S Triffett

#### IMPLICATIONS AND FINANCIALS

<b>Strategic Plan</b>	3.1 Manage finances and assets in a transparent way to allow the maximisation of resources to provide efficient and consistent delivery of services
<b>Council Policy</b>	Not applicable
<b>Legislative Context</b>	The council's decision-making is under the provisions of the Local Government Act 1993, and the report details the basis for the recommendation
<b>Consultation</b>	The financial statements form part of the public record within the Council minutes
<b>Impact on Budget/Resources</b>	As attached
<b>Risk</b>	The council must ensure that it meets its financial obligations. This report captures the ongoing financial performance

**REPORT BY** Zeeshan Tauqeer, Accountant

#### BACKGROUND

Financial Expenditure Analysis Report - For the Period Ended 31 December 2025

# Year-to-Date Financial Report

## As of 31 December 2025 (Financial Year 2025–26)

This report summaries Council's year-to-date financial position and performance as at 31 December 2025, drawing on the bank account summary, comprehensive income statement, monthly operating report, and the Community & Economic Development program schedule. Comparative year-to-date figures (as at 31 December 2024) and the adopted 2025–26 budget are included for context.

### Management snapshot

Key year-to-date outcomes as at 31 December 2025 are summarised below. Figures are presented on a year-to-date basis for the 2025–26 financial year, with prior year year-to-date (as at 31 December 2024) comparatives where available.

Total revenues year-to-date were \$8,576,829 (prior year \$8,501,022), representing 80.6% of the annual budget of \$10,646,595.

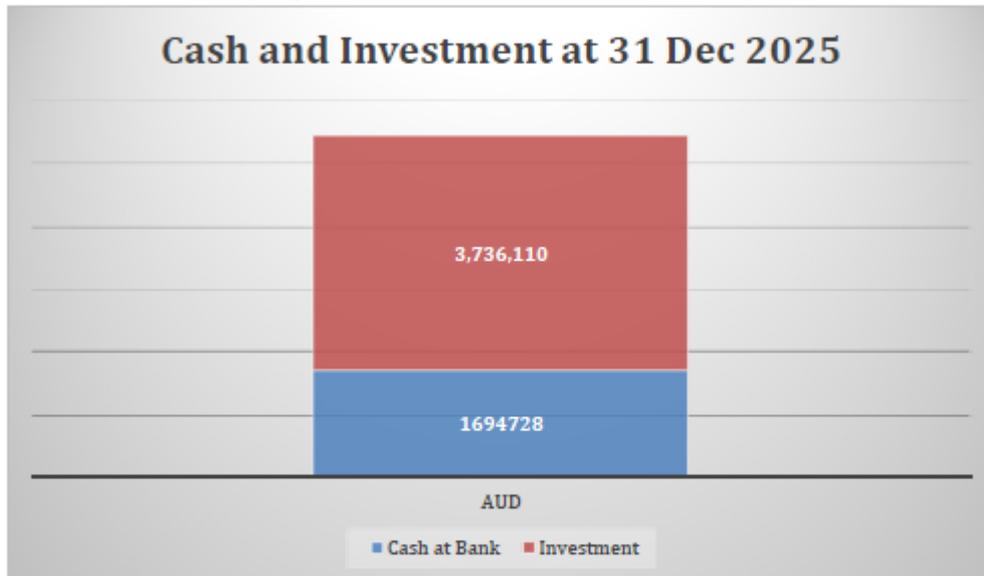
Total operating expenditure year-to-date was \$5,251,832 (prior year \$5,359,569), representing 47.9% of the annual budget of \$10,946,144.

The operating result year-to-date is a surplus of \$3,334,186 (prior year \$3,141,453). Including capital grants and other contributions of \$1,019,692 (prior year \$983,418), the overall year-to-date result is a surplus of \$4,353,878 (prior year \$4,124,871).

Capital works expenditure year-to-date totals \$352,534 (prior year \$1,163,755), representing 9.9% of the annual capital works budget of \$3,561,414.

Metric	Prior YTD (31 Dec 2024)	Current YTD (31 Dec 2025)	Movement
Cash and investments (closing)	-	\$5,430,838	-
Total revenues	\$8,501,022	\$8,586,018	\$84,996
Total operating expenditure	\$5,359,569	\$5,251,832	\$-107,737
Operating result (surplus/deficit)	\$3,141,453	\$3,334,186	\$192,733
Capital grants & other	\$983,418	\$1,019,692	\$362,74
Overall result (surplus/deficit)	\$4,124,871	\$4,353,878	\$229,007

**Cash and investment position**



Total cash and investments at 31 December 2025 were \$5,430,838.48. This balance is comprised of \$1,694,728.44 held in operating bank accounts (net of credit card balance) and \$3,736,110.04 held in short-term investments and at-call deposits.

Cash at bank and on hand includes the Commonwealth Bank general trading account balance of \$1,494,277.31 and the Westpac direct deposit account balance of \$195,219.24. The CBA credit card balance at month end was \$5231.89 and is presented within the cash at bank and on hand total.

Investments include term deposits and an at-call deposit as detailed in the bank summary schedule. Notable maturities within the current portfolio include:

- Term deposit \$500,000.00 at 3.97% (60 days), due 29 December 2025.
- Term deposit \$506,423.24 at 3.88% (37 days), due 2 January 2026.
- Term deposit \$2,640,101.96 at 4.01% (90 days), due 27 January 2026.
- At-call deposit \$89,584.84 at 3.60% (commenced 29 July 2025).

The bank summary allocates the combined cash and investment balance across the following internal liquidity groupings:

- Council Reserve: \$3,646,525.20.
- FAG, rates and fees: \$1,674,772.07.
- Community grants: \$19,956.37.

- Tascorp (St Michael and All Angels' Church, Bothwell): \$89,584.84.

Total cash at bank and on hand at 31 December 2025 was \$1,694,728.44, and total investments were \$3,736,110.04. Combined cash and investments were \$5,430,838.48.

Category	Amount	Share of total
Cash at bank and on hand	\$1,694,728.44	31.2%
Investments	\$3,736,110.04	68.8%
Total cash and investments	\$5,430,838.48	100.0%

#### Liquidity allocation (per bank summary)

Component	Amount
Council Reserve	\$3,646,525.20
Tascorp (Church) At-call	\$89,584.84
FAG & Rates & Fees	\$1,674,772.07
Community Grants	\$19,956.37

#### Operating performance (income and expenditure)

This section summarises year-to-date operating performance, based on the comprehensive income statement. Operating performance is presented on an accrual basis and includes non-cash expenses such as depreciation and amortisation.

Total Recurrent income year-to-date were \$8,576,829 (prior year \$8,501,022). Total operating expenditure year-to-date was \$5,251,832 (prior year \$5,359,569).

The resulting operating surplus is \$3,334,186 compared with \$3,141,453 at the same point last year.

#### Revenue analysis

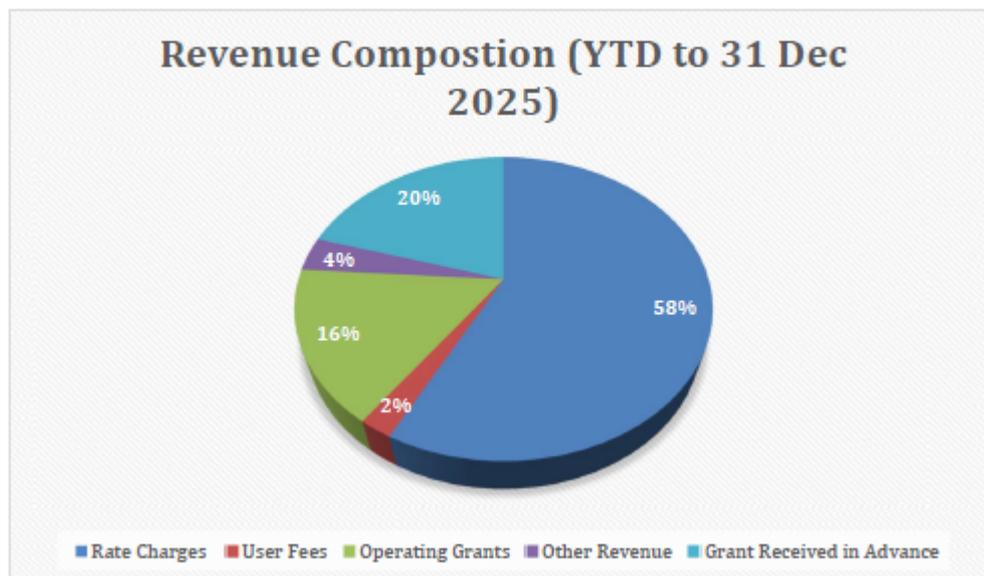
Year-to-date revenue performance by major stream is outlined below. Movements reflect year-to-date comparatives and the timing of annual revenue recognition.

- Rates & charges: Recurrent income \$4,943,026 year-to-date (prior year \$4,716,977), movement \$226,049. Annual budget is \$4,940,273; year-to-date is 100.1% of budget. Rates and charges are the primary recurrent revenue stream and are tracking at the annual budget level year-to-date.
- User fees: \$191,963 year-to-date (prior year \$35,700), movement \$56,263. Annual budget \$501,651; year-to-date is 38.3% of budget. User fees reflect fees for services and usage charges and are at a lower proportion of annual budget consistent with activity and seasonal timing.
- Operating grants: \$1,393,995 year-to-date (prior year \$301,397), movement \$1,092,598. Annual budget is \$4,428,454 year-to-date is 31.5% of budget. Operating grants include Financial Assistance Grants and

other operating grant streams; year-to-date performance is driven by grant timing and receipts recognised to date.

- Other revenue: \$310,528 year-to-date (prior year \$428,847), movement \$-118,319. Annual budget \$776,217; year-to-date is 40% of budget. Other revenue comprises interest, recoveries, reimbursements, and other miscellaneous income.
- Grants received in advance: \$1,746,506 year-to-date (prior year \$2,918,101), movement \$-1,171,595. Annual budget \$0 (budget utilisation not applicable for this stream). Grants received in advance reflect funding received before the intended recognition period and are sensitive to payment timing and grant schedules.

Revenue stream	Prior YTD	Current YTD	Movement	2025-26 budget	% of budget
Rates & charges	\$4,716,977	\$4,943,026	\$226,049	\$4,940,273	100.1%
User fees	\$135,700	\$191,963	\$56,263	\$501,651	38.3%
Operating grants	\$301,397	\$1,393,995	\$1,092,598	\$4,428,454	31.5%
Other revenue	\$428,847	\$310,528	\$-118,319	\$776,217	40%
Grants received in advance	\$2,918,101	\$1,746,506	\$-1,171,595	\$0	
<b>Total revenues</b>	<b>\$8,501,022</b>	<b>\$8,586,018</b>	<b>\$84,996</b>	<b>\$10,646,595</b>	<b>80.6%</b>

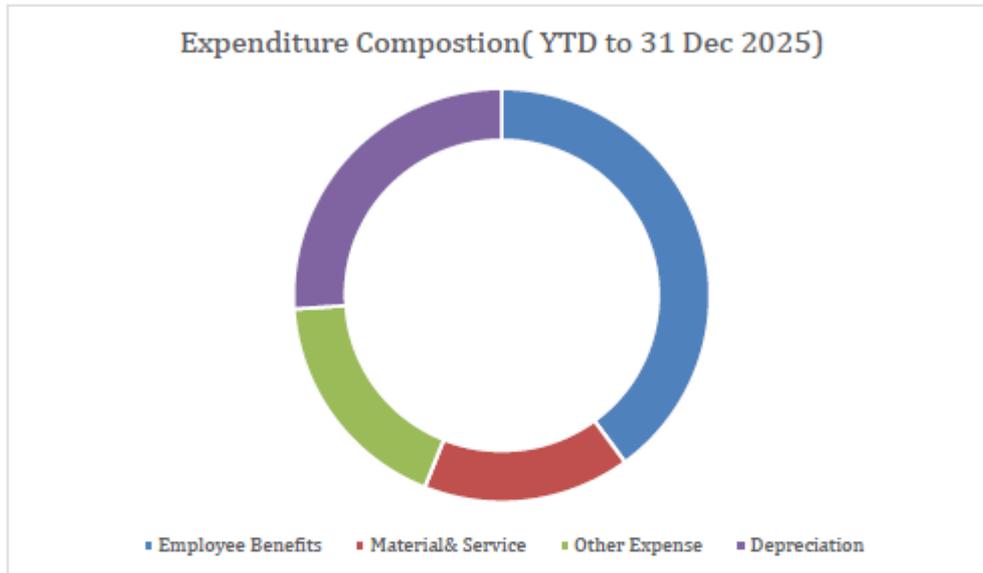


### Expenditure analysis

Year-to-date expenditure performance by major expense category is outlined below. Movements reflect year-to-date comparatives and the timing of expenditure recognition (including non-cash depreciation).

- Employee benefits: \$2,097,661 year-to-date (prior year \$1,504,709), movement \$592,952. Annual budget \$2,941,952; year-to-date is 71.0% of budget. Employee benefits include wages, salaries, superannuation, allowances, and related employment costs.
- Materials & services: \$845,714 year-to-date (prior year \$1,500,104), movement \$-654,390. Annual budget \$3,490,109; year-to-date is 24.2% of budget. Materials and services include contracted services, utilities, consumables, and other operational inputs.
- Other expenses: \$940,598 year-to-date (prior year \$1,091,885), movement \$-151,287. Annual budget \$2,116,449; year-to-date is 44.4% of budget. Other expenses include financing, contributions, and other operating costs not captured in the categories above.
- Depreciation & amortisation: \$1,367,859 year-to-date (prior year \$1,262,871), movement \$104,988. Annual budget \$2,397,634; year-to-date is 57.1% of budget. Depreciation and amortisation are non-cash expenses reflecting the consumption of Council's asset base.

Expense category	Prior YTD	Current YTD	Movement	2025-26 budget	% of budget
Employee benefits	\$1,504,709	\$2,097,661	\$592,952	\$2,941,952	71.0%
Materials & services	\$1,500,104	\$845,714	\$-654,390	\$3,490,109	24.2%
Other expenses	\$1,091,885	\$940,598	\$-151,287	\$2,116,449	44.4%
Depreciation & amortisation	\$1,262,871	\$1,367,859	\$104,988	\$2,397,634	57.1%
Total expenditure	\$5,359,569	\$5,251,832	\$-107,737	\$10,946,144	47.9%



**Departmental operating expenditure**

Departmental operating expenditure is summarised below on a year-to-date basis, showing annual budgets, prior year comparatives, and year-to-date utilisation.

- Corporate & Financial Services: \$1,407,023 year-to-date (52.5% of annual budget \$2,677,717). Prior year \$1,377,329; movement \$29,694.
- Development & Environmental Services: \$826,397 year-to-date (29.0% of annual budget \$2,845,210). Prior year \$988,961; movement \$-162,564.
- Works & Services: \$1,707,768 year-to-date (56.4% of annual budget \$3,025,581). Prior year \$1,656,399; movement \$51,369.

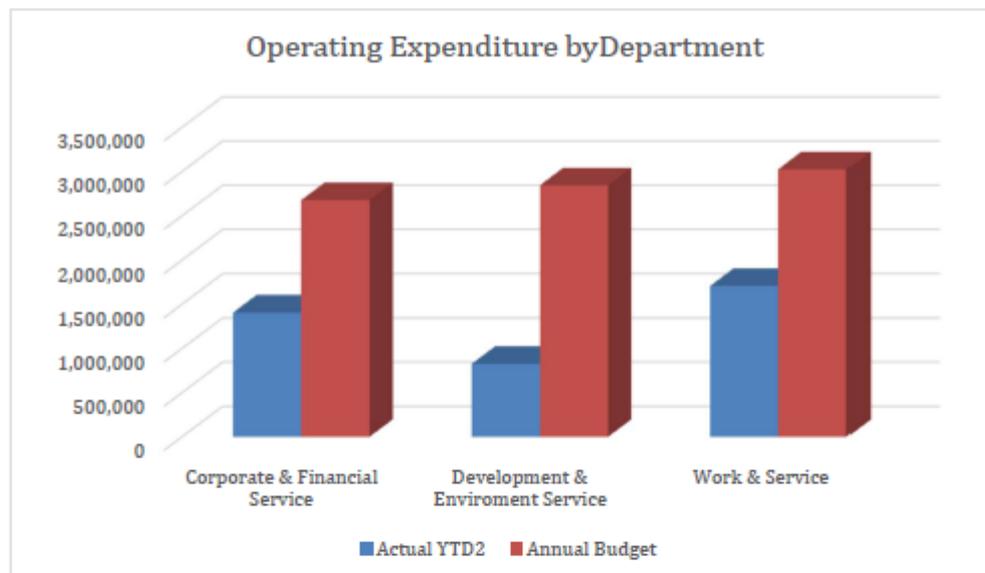
Within Works & Services, the larger year-to-date cost drivers include:

- ROAD MAINTENANCE (ROAD): \$621,524 year-to-date (57.2% of annual budget \$1,086,345).
- WASTE SERVICES: \$509,093 year-to-date (52.5% of annual budget \$968,939).
- PLANT M'TCE & OPERATING COSTS (PLANT): \$355,257 year-to-date (54.2% of annual budget \$655,036).
- PUBLIC CONVENIENCES (PC): \$125,683 year-to-date (43.3% of annual budget \$290,284).
- TOWN MOWING/TREES/STREETSCAPES(MOW): \$119,040 year-to-date (50.4% of annual budget \$236,008).
- PARKS AND GARDENS(PG): \$63,284 year-to-date (63.0% of annual budget \$100,524).

- CEMETERY (CEM): \$15,593 year-to-date (90.9% of annual budget \$17,161).

Total operating expenditure across all departments to 31 December 2025 is \$3,957,544, representing 46.3% of the annual operating budget of \$8,548,508.

Department	2025-26 budget	Prior YTD	Current YTD	Movement	% of budget
Corporate & Financial Services	\$2,677,717	\$1,377,329	\$1,407,023	\$29,694	52.5%
Development & Environmental Services	\$2,845,210	\$988,961	\$826,397	\$-162,564	29.0%
Works & Services	\$3,025,581	\$1,656,399	\$1,707,768	\$51,369	56.4%
Total all operating	\$8,548,508	\$4,022,689	\$3,957,544	\$-65,145	46.3%



### Capital works expenditure

Capital works expenditure is reported separately from operating expenditure. The summary below outlines year-to-date capital expenditure by major capital category against the approved annual capital budget, with prior year year-to-date comparatives.

- Road construction & reseals: \$256,040 year-to-date (11.7% of annual budget \$2,196,099). Prior year year-to-date \$805,007.
- Buildings: \$53,146 year-to-date (40.4% of annual budget \$131,667). Prior year year-to-date \$136,280.
- Halls: \$0 year-to-date (annual budget \$0). Prior year year-to-date \$0.
- Footpaths/kerbs/gutters: \$14,244 year-to-date (5.8% of annual budget \$245,000). Prior year year-to-date \$28,185.
- Bridges: \$9,637 year-to-date (17.5% of annual budget \$55,000). Prior year year-to-date \$0.
- Infrastructure: \$2,880 year-to-date (2.7% of annual budget \$105,000). Prior year year-to-date \$28,235.

Total capital expenditure to 31 December 2025 is \$352,534, compared with \$1,163,755 at the same point last year. This represents 9.9% of the annual capital works budget of \$3,561,414.

Capital category	2025–26 budget	Current YTD	% of budget	Prior YTD
Road construction & reseals	\$2,196,099	\$256,040	11.7%	\$805,007
Buildings	\$131,667	\$53,146	40.4%	\$136,280
Footpaths/kerbs/gutters	\$245,000	\$14,244	5.8%	\$28,185
Bridges	\$55,000	\$9,637	17.5%	\$0
Infrastructure	\$105,000	\$2,880	2.7%	\$28,235
Recreation grounds	\$402,000	\$616	0.2%	\$41,990
Halls	\$0	\$15,971		\$11,755
Drainage	\$169,000	\$0	0.0%	\$4,898
Parks & gardens	\$72,000	\$0	0.0%	\$239
<b>Total capital works</b>	<b>\$3,561,414</b>	<b>\$352,534</b>	<b>9.9%</b>	<b>\$1,163,755</b>

### Community & Economic Development program

The Community and Economic Development Support and Donations program capture operating allocations for community support, economic development initiatives, youth and children activities, and related grants. The schedule below summarises budget and year-to-date expenditure as at 31 December 2025.

- Total program budget: \$141,600. Year-to-date actual: \$32,747. Remaining balance: \$108,853.

Largest year-to-date expenditure items within the program include:

- Highlands Digest Support: \$14,364 year-to-date (budget \$15,800; remaining \$1,436).
- Community Grants: \$9,663 year-to-date (budget \$15,000; remaining \$5,337).
- Brighton Family Day Care: \$5,000 year-to-date (budget \$5,000; remaining \$0).
- Economic and Tourism Development Strategic Project: \$2,000 year-to-date (budget \$5,000; remaining \$3,000).
- Youth Service & Activities: \$1,227 year-to-date (budget \$5,000; remaining \$3,773).
- Community & Economic Development Support: \$393 year-to-date (budget \$10,000; remaining \$9,607).

Selected activity	Budget	Actual to 31 Dec 2025	Remaining
Community & Economic Development Support	\$10,000	\$393	\$9,607
Economic and Tourism Development Strategic Project	\$5,000	\$2,000	\$3,000
Youth Service & Activities	\$5,000	\$1,227	\$3,773
Children's Services and Activities	\$5,000	\$100	\$4,900
Highlands Digest Support	\$15,800	\$14,364	\$1,436
Total program (Support & Donations)	\$141,600	\$32,747	\$108,853

## **Council Expenditure on Living and Housing Units**

**Period: July 2025 to December 2025**

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### **Purpose**

This briefing provides an overview of council expenditure incurred in relation to living units and residential properties for the six-month period from July 2025 to December 2025, covering both council-owned properties and Independent Living Units.

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### **Total Expenditure**

Total council expenditure for the period amounted to \$53,811. Costs incurred include contractor payments, materials, council employee salaries, energy, pest control, council rates, water and sewerage charges, building maintenance, oncosts, and internal plant hire.

For the purposes of property cost analysis, **salaries, oncosts, and internal plant hire have been excluded** from the property-specific expenditure figures outlined below.

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### **Key Property Expenditure (Excluding Salaries and Internal Charges)**

- **Unit 01 – Ouse Housing Unit (6890 Lyne Highway): \$22,297**  
Includes contractor payments, council rates, water and sewerage, energy, and materials. This property represents the highest individual expenditure for the period.
  - **Independent Living Unit – Bothwell: \$6,162**  
Costs relate to council rates and water and sewerage charges.
  - **Doctor’s House – Victoria Valley Road: \$4,105**
  - **Cumberland Street Residence: \$3,644**
  - **Housing – High Street, Bothwell: \$2,358**
  - **Archer Drive, Bothwell (Units 1–6): \$2,523**  
Expenditure relates to contractor payments and building maintenance.
  - **Lyne Highway, Ouse – Unit 02: \$2,241**  
Costs relate to council rates and water and sewerage charges.
  - **Other Housing and Living Units:**  
Minor expenditure ranging from \$160 to \$1690 per unit, primarily relating to contractor payments, pest control, council rates, and water and sewerage charges.
- 

### **Ownership Consideration**

Independent Living Units are **not owned by council**. However, council incurred expenditure on these units during the reporting period, primarily in relation to statutory charges and minor maintenance and contractor service

**Rates Reconciliation as at 31 December 2025**

	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>
<b>Rates in Debit 30th June</b>	\$196,877.36	\$217,826.72
<b>Rates in Credit 30th June</b>	-\$145,341.00	-\$150,792.81
<b>Balance 30th June</b>	<b>\$51,536.36</b>	<b>\$67,033.91</b>
Rates Raised	\$4,729,920.23	\$4,971,230.43
Penalties Raised	\$36,021.97	\$33,837.66
Supplementaries/Debit Adjustments	\$20,842.89	\$27,047.44
<b>Total Raised</b>	<b>\$4,786,785.09</b>	<b>\$5,032,115.53</b>
<b>Less:</b>		
Receipts to Date	\$3,034,229.57	\$3,155,727.25
Credit Journals	\$18,097.03	\$18,327.00
Pensioner Rate Remissions	\$128,959.45	\$134,594.52
Remissions/Supplementary Credits	\$10,566.41	\$27,872.01
<b>Balance</b>	<b>\$1,646,468.99</b>	<b>\$1,762,628.66</b>

**Bank Reconciliation as at 31 December 2025**

	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>
Balance Brought Forward	\$6,077,399.35	\$5,021,743.82
Receipts for month	\$685,355.70	\$1,351,661.15
Expenditure for month	\$1,095,630.21	\$942,566.49
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Balance</b>	<b>\$5,667,124.84</b>	<b>\$5,430,838.48</b>
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<b>Represented By:</b>		
Balance Commonwealth Bank	\$1,198,776.85	\$1,494,277.31
Balance Westpac Bank	\$134,974.33	\$195,219.24
CBA Credit Card	\$0.00	\$5,231.89
Investments(Council Reserves + St Michael's Church)	\$4,332,823.66	\$3,736,110.04
Petty Cash & Floats	\$550.00	
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	<b>\$5,667,124.84</b>	<b>\$5,430,838.48</b>
Plus Unbanked Money		
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	<b>\$5,667,124.84</b>	<b>\$5,430,838.48</b>
Less Unpresented Cheques	\$0.00	
Unreceipted amounts on bank statements	\$0.00	
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	<b>\$5,667,124.84</b>	<b>\$5,430,838.48</b>
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>



**Comprehensive Income Statement**

31/12/2025

<b>Recurrent Income</b>	<b>Budget 2024-2025</b>	<b>Actual to date prior year</b>	<b>Actual to Date</b>	<b>Budget 2025-2026</b>
Rates Charges	\$4,682,233	\$4,716,977	\$4,943,026	\$4,940,273
User Fees	\$494,250	\$135,700	\$191,963	\$501,651
Grants - Operating	\$3,236,515	\$301,397	\$1,393,995	\$4,428,454
Other Revenue	\$704,366	\$428,847	\$301,339	\$776,217
Grants received in Advance	\$0	\$2,918,101	\$1,746,506	
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>\$9,117,364</b>	<b>\$8,501,022</b>	<b>\$8,576,829</b>	<b>\$10,646,595</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>				
Employee Benefits	\$2,584,261	\$1,504,709	\$2,089,306	\$2,941,952
Materials and Services	\$2,447,768	\$1,500,104	\$845,714	\$3,490,109
Other Expenses	\$1,892,738	\$1,091,885	\$939,764	\$2,116,449
Depreciation and Amortisation	\$2,327,800	\$1,262,871	\$1,367,859	\$2,397,634
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>\$9,252,567</b>	<b>5,359,569</b>	<b>5,242,643</b>	<b>10,946,144</b>
<b>Operating Surplus(Deficit)</b>	<b>(135,203)</b>	<b>3,141,453</b>	<b>3,334,186</b>	<b>(299,549)</b>
Capital Grants & Other	\$2,424,996	\$983,418	\$1,019,692	\$1,415,067
<b>Surplus(Deficit)</b>	<b>2,289,793</b>	<b>4,124,871</b>	<b>4,353,878</b>	<b>1,115,518</b>
<b>Capital Expenditure</b>	<b>\$5,122,085</b>	<b>\$1,163,755</b>	<b>\$352,534</b>	<b>\$3,561,414</b>

	BUDGET 2025/26	ACTUAL TO 31-Dec-24	ACTUAL TO 31-Dec-25	% OF BUDGET SPENT	BALANCE OF BUDGET
<b>CORPORATE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES</b>					
ADMIN HAMILTON	\$2,017,673	\$1,074,155	\$1,086,367	53.84%	\$931,306
ELECTED MEMBERS EXPENDITURE(AMEH)	\$281,916	\$155,229	\$139,606	49.52%	\$142,310
MEDICAL CENTRES(MED)	\$132,191	\$68,573	\$62,711	47.44%	\$69,480
STREET LIGHTING(STLIGHT)	\$43,994	\$18,049	\$15,153	34.44%	\$28,842
ONCOSTS	(\$470,879)	(\$301,516)	(\$237,598)	50.46%	(\$233,281)
COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & RELATIONS(COR+EDEV)	\$672,822	\$362,839	\$340,784	50.65%	\$332,038
<b>TOTAL CORPORATE &amp; FINANCIAL SERVICES</b>	<b>\$2,677,717</b>	<b>\$1,377,329</b>	<b>\$1,407,023</b>	<b>52.55%</b>	<b>\$1,270,694</b>
<b>DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES</b>					
ADMIN BOTHWELL	\$327,017	\$206,533	\$155,397	47.52%	\$171,620
ENVIRON HEALTH SERVICES (EHS)	\$38,628	\$15,756	\$17,507	45.32%	\$21,121
ANIMAL CONTROL(AC)	\$18,421	\$7,997	\$6,665	36.18%	\$11,756
PLUMBING/BUILDING CONTROL (BPC)	\$188,191	\$87,327	\$24,133	12.82%	\$164,058
SWIMMING POOLS (POOL)	\$32,572	\$15,603	\$18,334	56.29%	\$14,238
DEVELOPMENT CONTROL (DEV)	\$247,000	\$145,810	\$93,589	37.89%	\$153,411
WASTE SERVICES	\$968,939	\$507,842	\$509,093	52.54%	\$459,846
ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION (EP)	\$1,024,442	\$2,093	\$1,679	0.16%	\$1,022,763
<b>TOTAL DEVELOPMENT &amp; ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES</b>	<b>\$2,845,210</b>	<b>\$988,961</b>	<b>\$826,397</b>	<b>29.05%</b>	<b>\$2,018,813</b>
<b>WORKS AND SERVICES</b>					
PUBLIC CONVENIENCES (PC)	\$290,284	\$96,184	\$125,683	43.30%	\$164,601
CEMETERY (CEM)	\$17,161	\$6,725	\$15,593	90.86%	\$1,568
HALLS (HALL)	\$74,349	\$66,236	\$27,190	36.57%	\$47,159
PARKS AND GARDENS(PG)	\$100,524	\$78,841	\$63,284	62.95%	\$37,240
REC & RESERVES(Rec+Reserv)	\$130,679	\$57,740	\$50,321	38.51%	\$80,358
TOWN MOWING/TREES/STREETSCAPES(MOW)	\$236,008	\$115,460	\$119,040	50.44%	\$116,968
HOUSING (HOU)	\$160,753	\$93,048	\$53,488	33.27%	\$107,265
CAMPING GROUNDS (CPARK)	\$14,801	\$9,268	\$8,206	55.44%	\$6,596
LIBRARY (LIB)	\$2,640	\$1,687	\$0	0.00%	\$2,640
ROAD MAINTENANCE (ROAD)	\$1,086,345	\$718,721	\$621,524	57.21%	\$464,821
FOOTPATHS/KERBS/GUTTERS (FKG)	\$23,316	\$12,745	\$5,365	23.01%	\$17,951
BRIDGE MAINTENANCE (BRI)	\$23,388	\$3,031	\$6,489	27.74%	\$16,899
PRIVATE WORKS (PW)	\$51,372	\$12,687	\$18,732	36.46%	\$32,640
2TD-Traffic Data	\$25,000	\$0	\$7,317	29.27%	\$17,683
SUPER & VD OVERHEADS (SUPER)	\$844,041	\$436,355	\$392,816	46.54%	\$451,225
QUARRY/GRAVEL (QUARRY)	(\$181,988)	(\$21,291)	(\$50,676)	27.85%	(\$131,312)
NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT(NRM)	\$179,936	\$70,018	\$101,494	56.41%	\$78,442
SEB (SEB)	\$2,000	\$305	\$875	43.73%	\$1,125
PLANT MTCE & OPERATING COSTS (PLANT)	\$655,036	\$348,558	\$355,257	54.23%	\$299,779
PLANT INCOME	(\$795,036)	(\$511,330)	(\$248,756)	31.29%	(\$546,280)
DRAINAGE (DRAIN)	\$43,130	\$35,539	\$12,530	29.05%	\$30,600
OTHER COMMUNITY AMENITIES (OCA)	\$41,842	\$21,330	\$15,730	37.59%	\$26,112
WASTE COLLECTION & ASSOC SERVICES (WAS)	\$0	\$4,542	\$6,268		(\$6,268)
FLOOD REPAIRS		\$0	\$0		
<b>TOTAL WORKS &amp; SERVICES</b>	<b>\$3,025,581</b>	<b>\$1,656,399</b>	<b>\$1,707,768</b>	<b>56.44%</b>	<b>\$1,317,813</b>
<b>DEPARTMENT TOTALS OPERATING EXPENSES</b>					
Corporate Services	\$2,677,717	\$1,377,329	\$1,407,023	52.55%	\$1,270,694
Dev. & Environmental Services	\$2,845,210	\$988,961	\$826,397	29.05%	\$2,018,813
Works & Services	\$3,025,581	\$1,656,399	\$1,707,768	56.44%	\$1,317,813
<b>Total All Operating</b>	<b>\$8,548,508</b>	<b>\$4,022,689</b>	<b>\$3,957,544</b>	<b>46.30%</b>	<b>\$4,607,320</b>

	BUDGET 2025/26	ACTUAL TO 31-Dec-24	ACTUAL TO 31-Dec-25	% OF BUDGET SPENT	BALANCE OF BUDGET
<b>CAPITAL EXPENDITURE</b>					
<b>CORPORATE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES</b>					
Computer Purchases	\$7,648	\$28,584	\$0	0.00%	\$7,648
Equipment	\$6,000	\$0	\$0	0.00%	\$6,000
Miscellaneous	\$2,000	\$0	\$0	0.00%	\$2,000
	\$15,648	\$28,584	\$0	0.00%	\$15,648
<b>DEVELOPMENT &amp; ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES</b>					
Swimming Pool	\$0	\$1,870	\$0	0.00%	\$0
	\$0	\$1,870	\$0	0.00%	(\$1,870)
<b>WORKS &amp; SERVICES</b>					
Plant Purchases	\$170,000	\$76,712	\$0	0.00%	\$170,000
Camping Grounds	\$0	\$0	\$0	0.00%	\$0
Public Conveniences	\$0	\$0	\$0	0.00%	\$0
Bridges	\$55,000	\$0	\$9,637	17.52%	\$45,363
Road Construction & Reseals	\$2,196,099	\$805,007	\$256,040	11.66%	\$1,940,059
Drainage	\$169,000	\$4,898	\$0	0.00%	\$169,000
Parks & Gardens Capital	\$72,000	\$239	\$0	0.00%	\$72,000
Infrastructure	\$105,000	\$28,235	\$2,880	2.74%	\$102,120
Footpaths, Kerbs & Gutters	\$245,000	\$28,185	\$14,244	5.81%	\$230,756
Rec Grounds	\$402,000	\$41,990	\$616	0.15%	\$401,384
Halls	\$0	\$11,755	\$15,971	0.00%	(\$15,971)
Buildings	\$131,667	\$136,280	\$53,146	40.36%	\$78,521
	\$3,545,766	\$1,133,301	\$352,534	9.94%	\$3,193,232
<b>TOTAL CAPITAL WORKS</b>					
Corporate Services	\$15,648	\$28,584	\$0	0.00%	\$15,648
Dev. & Environmental Services	\$0	\$1,870	\$0	0.00%	\$0
Works & Services	\$3,545,766	\$1,133,301	\$352,534	9.94%	\$3,193,232
	\$3,561,414	\$1,163,755	\$352,534	9.90%	\$3,208,880

**Community & Economic Development****2025/2026 Budget**

	BUDGET 2025/26	Actual to Date 31/12/2025	Remaining Balance
<b>Strategic Project- Whole of Community</b>			
Community & Economic Development Support	\$10,000	\$393	\$9,607
Health & Wellbeing Plan (2020-2025) Implementation	\$5,000		\$5,000
Economic and Tourism Development Strategic Project	\$5,000	\$2,000	\$3,000
<b>Youth and Children Strategic Projects</b>			\$0
New- Family Day Care Seeding Fund Bothwell	\$5,000		\$5,000
New- Ouse Family Day Care Support	\$5,000		\$5,000
Youth Service & Activities	\$5,000	\$1,227	\$3,773
Children's Services and Activities	\$5,000	\$100	\$4,900
Bothwell High School Breakfast Club	\$2,000		\$2,000
Glenora School Breakfast Club	\$1,000		\$1,000
Westerway School Breakfast Club	\$1,000		\$1,000
New-Bothwell Playproup Support	\$1,000		\$1,000
<b>Community &amp; Donation and Financial Assistance</b>			\$0
Community Grants	\$15,000	\$9,663	\$5,337
Community Support & Donations	\$10,000		\$10,000
Church Grants	\$5,000		\$5,000
Further Education Bursaries	\$1,400		\$1,400
School Awards	\$400		\$400
Central Highlands School Support	\$3,000		\$3,000
<b>Community Event</b>			\$0
ANZAC Day	\$12,000		\$12,000
Australia Day	\$4,000		\$4,000
Community Event.eg Volunteer week	\$5,000		\$5,000
<b>Community Partnerships</b>			\$0
Highlands Digest Support	\$15,800	\$14,364	\$1,436
Australasian Golf Museum contribution to power	\$5,000		\$5,000
Visitors Centre Contribution to Power	\$5,000		\$5,000
Healthy Connect Project	\$10,000		\$10,000
Brighton Family Day Care	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$0
<b>Total Community &amp; Economic Development Support &amp; Donations</b>	<b>\$141,600</b>	<b>\$32,747</b>	<b>\$108,853</b>

## 19. OPERATIONAL MATTERS ARISING (STRATEGIC THEME – NATURAL ENVIRONMENT)

### Encourage responsible management of the natural resources and assets in the Central Highlands.

- 4.1 Continue to fund and support the Derwent Catchment Project
- 4.2 Continue with existing waste minimisation and recycling opportunities
- 4.3 Promote the reduce, reuse, recycle, recover message
- 4.4 Continue the program of weed reduction in the Central Highlands
- 4.5 Ensure the Central Highlands Emergency Management Plan is reviewed regularly to enable preparedness for natural events and emergencies
- 4.6 Strive to provide a clean and healthy environment
- 4.7 Support and assist practical programs that address existing environmental problems and improve the environment

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### 19.1 DERWENT CATCHMENT PROJECT

#### RESOLUTION 09/01.2026/C

**Moved:** Cr D Meacheam

**Seconded:** Cr R Cassidy

**THAT** the Derwent Catchment Project Report be received.

**CARRIED**

**For the Motion**

Mayor L Triffitt; Deputy Mayor J Allwright; Cr A Archer; Cr R Cassidy; Cr J Hall; Cr J Honner; Cr D Meacheam and Cr S Triffett



## Monthly Report for Central Highlands Council

3 December 2025 – 13 January 2026

### *General business*

The Nature Repair Pilot funding has now been received, with the first instalment of \$2 million coming through — an exciting milestone that will support upcoming works and enable new opportunities as the program ramps up. Orders have now been placed on a suite of new machinery to upgrade operational capability, including a Quick-sprayer and a new space-cab Ranger. Options for purchasing a large-scale chipper are being investigated by our Operations Manager, for use on the Clyde River project as well as other river restoration works.

The team enjoyed a well-earned Christmas and New Year break and are now back on the ground and getting stuck into the season, looking forward to the year ahead and the momentum the Nature Repair Pilot program is bringing. The ground crew has also welcomed two new team members, Anthony and Nathan, strengthening capacity as we head into a busy period.

### *Restoration and conservation*

*Strategic Actions: 4.1 Continue to fund and support the Derwent Catchment Project and 4.7 Support and assist practical programs that address existing environmental problems and improve the environment.*

#### **Clyde River Flood Resilience Project**

The Clyde River Flood Resilience Project Plan 2025–2028 has been completed and submitted to the Australian Government through the Disaster Ready Fund. The plan sets out a targeted, evidence-based program of works to address long-standing hydraulic constraints and improve flood behaviour along priority reaches of the Clyde River. It provides a comprehensive framework for improving flood behaviour by focusing on key hydraulic constraints rather than attempting whole-of-catchment flood mitigation, and brings together hydrological modelling, LiDAR and aerial analysis, desktop assessment, detailed field surveys and extensive landholder engagement to build a defensible understanding of how flooding occurs and where intervention will be most effective.

The plan also sets out the governance, engagement and delivery framework required to implement works safely and effectively across a complex, multi-tenure agricultural landscape. This includes clear objectives and strategy, a staged implementation program aligned with funding availability, detailed monitoring and evaluation methods, and a transparent discussion of risks, limitations and realistic outcomes. Importantly, the plan is explicit that flooding in the Clyde system is structural and ongoing, and that while large flood events are controlled by downstream constraints, targeted works can deliver meaningful local improvements in flow efficiency, drainage and flood duration at priority locations.

Within this framework, the project scope focuses on targeted, site-specific interventions designed to restore hydraulic function at the most influential choke points along the river. Works centre on selective willow and debris management to reopen main channels, secondary channels and internal flood spill areas, supported by stabilisation and riparian revegetation where required. The approach avoids blanket clearing and instead balances hydraulic improvement with erosion risk, amenity considerations and long-term river stability. Older willows that do not contribute to blockages may be retained, while disturbed areas are stabilised using hydro-mulch and targeted planting of flood-tolerant native species.

Delivery is staged and supported by site-specific management plans, landholder agreements and a strong community engagement program, particularly in and around Bothwell where early works are planned. A robust monitoring and reporting framework (including photo-points, drone surveys, remote sensing and operational reporting) ensures outcomes can be clearly demonstrated to funders and stakeholders and used to inform adaptive management over time.



*Figure 1. New willow roots extending from a fallen trunk into the river at a heavily infested section of the Clyde.*

Within this scope, the plan identifies priority sites along the Clyde River where targeted intervention is most likely to deliver measurable flood-resilience benefits. The plan identifies 21 priority sites along the Clyde River where targeted intervention will deliver the greatest

improvement in hydraulic function and local flood resilience. Collectively, these sites cover approximately 15.4 kilometres of river and have been prioritised into a staged delivery program. This includes 14 Tier 1 sites, comprising the fully funded works program and covering approximately 8 kilometres of river, and 7 Tier 2 sites, which have been assessed and costed but are not currently funded and cover a further 7.4 kilometres. The Tier 1 sites form the committed works program for the 2026–2028 implementation period, while the Tier 2 sites are retained as future or contingent opportunities should additional funding or delivery efficiencies become available.

Progress toward implementation of the Clyde River Flood Resilience Project Plan has focused on translating the strategic framework into site-ready actions. As part of the overall project plan, site-specific Management Zone Plans have been prepared for priority locations. These plans detail the on-ground works proposed at each site and provide practical direction for the planning and implementation of flood-related willow removal and associated restoration works. Importantly, the Management Zone Plans also form the basis for Landholder Agreement packages, ensuring that landholders are fully informed about the scope, nature and location of works proposed on or adjacent to their land. Together, these documents outline the rationale for intervention, document the activities to be undertaken, and provide transparency and certainty for all parties involved.

Implementation has now commenced in the Croakers Alley Management Zone, with early engagement activities underway. Further discussions have been held with affected landholders, and preparation and signing of Landholder Agreements is progressing to formally confirm access and consent. Broader community engagement is also underway, with a letter drop to all Bothwell residents to inform them of upcoming works at Croakers Alley, and on-site signage scheduled for installation this week. These actions represent the transition from planning to delivery and demonstrate early progress toward on-ground implementation of the project.



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*Figure 2. Just a fraction of the Croakers infestation - first in line to go!*

### **Miena Cider Gum Recovery Program**

Follow-up works at St Patricks Plains have focused on assessing whether the newly trialled possum deterrents are performing as intended. Camera traps are being checked and footage downloaded to determine if the spiky possum-proof bands are successfully preventing possum access, building on last month's monitoring of the newly completed possum-proof fencing and associated trials.



*Figure 3. Installing the spiky possum-deterrent bands at St Patrick's Plains.*

As part of this month's field work, six polycarbonate bands at the St Patricks Plains camera sites were removed and replaced with the spiky bands, with a further six bands still to be removed and swapped over. This transition will help reduce the moisture-trapping issues associated with plastic collars while maintaining an effective climbing deterrent. This work is made possible by the Saving Threatened Species Grant, funded by NRE Tasmania.

### **Hamilton native plant nursery updates**

Propagation work at the nursery remains in full swing, with Nursery Manager Karen continuing to prick out seedlings. She's being supported by Lorraine and Meagan (Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens staff) who have come on board to assist during the busy propagation season, along with volunteer Daniel. Irrigation has also now been installed in the shade house, improving efficiency and supporting seedling establishment during this high-demand period.



*Figure 4. Shade house irrigation installed!*

#### **Poatina intake restoration**

DCP has secured an additional \$20,000 from Hydro Tasmania to support restoration works near the Poatina intake within the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area. A site inspection in late November confirmed the key degradation areas and the earthworks required to prevent ongoing unauthorised camping and recreational vehicle access. The site plan has been completed, with the approach focussed on using sediment stockpiled onsite (from Hydro Tasmania's periodic intake clean-outs) to reshape and rehabilitate impacted areas and adjust access points, making informal campsites less accessible and directing visitors to established facilities at Arthurs Lake. Using onsite material also provides a biosecurity advantage by reducing the risk of introducing weeds or pathogens through imported fill.

The site was already showing signs of natural recruitment from the local seedbank, so it is anticipated that exclusion-focused earthworks, supported by local seed broadcasting, will be sufficient for vegetation to re-establish. Monitoring is recommended later in the year to confirm regeneration, with contingency for infill planting if recruitment is limited, using plants grown at the Hamilton Native Plant Nursery.

## *Weed management programs*

*Strategic Actions 4.4 Continue the program of weed reduction in the Central Highlands, and 4.7 Support and assist practical programs that address existing environmental problems and improve the environment.*

The weed treatment season is now well underway, following an improvement in weather conditions throughout December and January.

Ground crews have sprayed almost all gorse along the Interlaken Road roadsides, with the remaining section scheduled to be completed next week. Crews noted that gorse in this area is being heavily browsed and will be monitoring whether this has any impact on herbicide efficacy and overall treatment outcomes.



*Figure 5. Gorse spraying along Interlaken Road.*

Belchers Road has also been treated by the ground crew. The northern section is experiencing a significant foxglove infestation, which continues to be a major issue across the area. In response to the extent of foxglove infestation in this region, a community workshop will be delivered in Maydena, facilitated by Enviro-dynamics, to provide information on foxglove management, its recent listing as a declared weed, and landholder obligations. Local residents will receive a mailout advising the workshop date and detail.

Enviro-dynamics has received funding through NRE's Weed Action Fund to undertake this foxglove project, with DCP partnering in delivery. As part of this work, DCP will be completing extensive mapping of foxglove occurrences alongside coordinated treatment across the Central Highlands, Derwent Valley, and Brighton regions. This will improve understanding of distribution and support prioritisation of ongoing control efforts.

State Growth roadside spraying along the Lyell Highway is also progressing. The Hamilton to Ouse section has been completed, Gretna township has been sprayed, and the section between Hamilton and Gretna is being completed today (13/01/2026). With remaining operational days, the team will continue west of Ouse and extend coverage as far as time and conditions allow.

In the few days prior to Christmas, crews worked at Dee Lagoon and Tarraleah treating broom and holly. Conditions were chilly, with snowfall recorded during operations, making for a white Christmas in the highlands.



Figure 6. Dense broom infestations at Dee Lagoon getting obliterated by the crew.

This week, the team will be in the Waddamana area to treat Californian thistle at the Cattle Hill Wind Farm and undertake follow-up ragwort control across the broader Waddamana region. Follow-up is planned around the power station and within the Ouse River bed, where ongoing treatment has been conducted over multiple years. Following this, crews will move into nearby forestry coupes where ragwort infestations have been reported, to assess extent and implement control where required.

## *Community engagement*

### **Great Lake chemical storage cabinet – Cattle Hill grant**

Following last month's concrete pour for the Great Lake Weed Warriors chemical storage cabinet, the facility at the Great Lake Community Centre (Miena) is now being fitted out for operation. The cabinet has been stocked with herbicide and associated dispensing supplies, consistent with the project intent to provide the local community with weed control chemicals, spray bottles and personal protective equipment (PPE).

To support safe use, the cabinet has also been supplied with the relevant Safety Data Sheets and record-keeping materials to support the dispensing log system. In the next site visit, we will

install weed ID brochures and QR codes to direct users to guidance on appropriate control methods for priority weeds in their area, aligning with the project's planned community-facing promotion and education approach.

To launch and build community confidence in the system, we will also run an Adopt-a-Shore community working bee and workshop in Miena in February, which will include practical demonstrations of weed treatment by DCP crew and a walkthrough of how the cabinet will operate (including how community members can access supplies and the associated safety requirements).

Yours sincerely,

The Derwent Catchment Team

*Key Contacts:*

Josie Kelman (CEO) 0427 044 700

Eve Lazarus (Deputy CEO) 0429 170 048

Todd Holliday (Works Manager) 0428 192 728

Karen Phillips (Nursery Manager) 0400 039 303

Ella Weston (Weed program coordinator/NRM facilitator) 0400 953 220

## 20. OPERATIONAL MATTERS ARISING (STRATEGIC THEME – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT)

### Encourage economic viability within the municipality

- 5.1 Encourage expansion in the business sector and opening of new market opportunities
- 5.2 Support the implementation of the Southern Highlands Irrigation Scheme
- 5.3 Continue with the Highlands Tasmania and Bushfest branding
- 5.4 Encourage the establishment of alternative industries to support job creation and increase permanent residents
- 5.5 Promote our area's tourism opportunities, destinations and events
- 5.6 Support existing businesses to continue to grow and prosper
- 5.7 Develop partnerships with State Government, industry and regional bodies to promote economic and employment opportunities
- 5.8 Work with the community to further develop tourism in the area

### 20.1 DEVELOPMENT & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

#### RESOLUTION 10/01.2026/C

**Moved:** Cr J Honner

**Seconded:** Cr R Cassidy

**THAT** the Development & Environmental Services Report be received.

**CARRIED**

#### For the Motion

Mayor L Triffitt; Deputy Mayor J Allwright; Cr A Archer; Cr R Cassidy; Cr J Hall; Cr J Honner; Cr D Meacheam and Cr S Triffitt

**REPORT BY** Kathy Bradburn, Senior Administration

### PLANNING PERMITS ISSUED UNDER DELEGATION

The following planning permits have been issued under delegation during the past month.

#### NO PERMIT REQUIRED

DA NO.	APPLICANT	LOCATION	PROPOSAL
2025/74	Spectran Group	4079 Lyell Highway, Gretna	Land Spreading of Liquid Fish Waste
2025/73	Spectran Group	749 Rotherwood Road, Lower Marshes	Land Spreading of Liquid Fish Waste
2025/68	W Handbury	2 Watkins Road, Tods Corner	Outbuilding
2025/69	C R McIntosh & D M Mcintosh	16 Anglers Crescent, MIENA	Dwelling

**PERMITTED**

DA NO.	APPLICANT	LOCATION	PROPOSAL
2025/63	HBV Architects	37-39A Patrick Street, Bothwell	Amenities Block (Toilets)

**DISCRETIONARY**

DA NO.	APPLICANT	LOCATION	PROPOSAL
2025/61	E Datlen	58 Patrick Street, Bothwell	Dwelling
2025/62	Bothwell Country Womans Association	13-15 Dalrymple Street, Bothwell	Outbuilding (Shipping Container)
2025/65	V J King, G P Szalman	134 Ellendale Road, Westerway	Dwelling & Outbuilding
2025/58	Design East Pty Ltd - Monty East	444 Jones River Road, Ellendale	Visitor Accommodation

**ANIMAL CONTROL****Dog Management Policy Review**

The Dog Management Policy is currently out for public comment with submissions closing on **11<sup>th</sup> February 2026**. Advertisements have appeared in the Mercury Newspaper and New Norfolk News and also sent to the Highland Digest. Other advertising includes Council's Website & Facebook Page, Council Offices and posters placed in local businesses throughout the municipality.

**Statistics**

Total Number of Dogs Registered in 2024/2025 Financial Year – 966

Total Number of Kennel Licences Issued for 2024/2025 Financial Year – 52

2025/2026 Dog Registration Renewal have been issued and were due by 31 July 2025.

<b>Statistics as of 09 January 2026</b>	
Number of Dogs Impounded during last month	0
Number of Dogs Currently Registered	939
Number of Dogs Pending Re-Registration	10
Number of Kennel Licence Renewals Issued	35

## 21. OPERATIONAL MATTERS ARISING (STRATEGIC THEME – GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP)

### **Provide governance and leadership in an open, transparent, accountable and responsible manner in the best interests of our community**

- 6.1 Ensure Council fulfils its legislative and governance responsibilities and its decision making is supported by sustainable policies and procedures
- 6.2 Ensure that Council members have the resources and skills development opportunities to effectively fulfil their responsibilities
- 6.3 Ensure appropriate management of risk associated with Council's operations and activities
- 6.4 Provide a supportive culture that promotes the well-being of staff and encourages staff development and continuous learning
- 6.5 Provide advocacy on behalf of the community and actively engage government and other organisations in the pursuit of community priorities
- 6.6 Consider Council's strategic direction in relation to resource sharing with neighbouring councils and opportunities for mutual benefit
- 6.7 Support and encourage community participation and engagement
- 6.8 Ensure that customers receive quality responses that are prompt, accurate and fair
- 6.9 Council decision making will be always made in open council except where legislative or legal requirements determine otherwise.

### 21.1 INQUIRY LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCIAL REFORM

#### **RESOLUTION 11/01.2026/C**

**Moved:** Cr R Cassidy

**Seconded:** Deputy Mayor J Allwright

**THAT** Council note the draft response to the Federal Government House of Representatives Standing Committee on Regional Development, Infrastructure and Transport inquiry into Local Government Funding, once further comments are received from Councillors the draft response will be amended and forwarded to all councillor prior to sending.

**CARRIED**

#### **For the Motion**

Mayor L Triffitt; Deputy Mayor J Allwright; Cr A Archer; Cr R Cassidy; Cr J Hall; Cr J Honner; Cr D Meacheam and Cr S Triffett

**REPORT BY** Stephen Mackey, General Manager

**Attachment** - Submission of the LGAT dated 31 May 2024 in response to the previous inquiry.

## **DISCUSSION**

The House of Representatives Standing Committee on regional Development, Infrastructure and Transport has commenced a new enquiry into the funding and financial suitability of local governments in Australia.

The committee is examining the financial relationship between local government and other levels of government in Australia, with an emphasis on funding mechanisms and fiscal sustainability.

The inquiry aims to map funding received by local government, including from the Australian Government and state/territory governments. The Committee will also be exploring barriers to infrastructure service delivery and funding for emergency and disaster recovery. It will look at how councils attract and retain skilled workers, the barriers to security, and the impact of labour hire practices.

The committee will consider if existing funding mechanisms are addressing the evolving responsibilities of local government across Tasmania.

Evidence provided to the committee's previous inquiry into Local Government Sustainability during the 47<sup>th</sup> Parliament by the Local Government Association of Tasmania will be considered as part of this new inquiry.

The committee would welcome any updated Local Government Association of Tasmania views on any of the attached terms of reference. We encourage you to make a submission to the inquiry by close of business Tuesday 3 February 2026. It is preferred that submissions are uploaded electronically, through: - [www.aph.gov.au/Committee/Submissions](http://www.aph.gov.au/Committee/Submissions).

Inquiry into local government funding- Terms of Reference

The House of representatives Standing Committee on regional Development, Infrastructure and Transport will examine the financial relationship between local government and other levels of government in Australia, with a particular emphasis on funding mechanisms and financial sustainability. In doing so, the inquiry should;

### **1. Interactions between Governments**

- i. Assess the nature and scale of Australian, state and territory government funding provided to local government, both directly and through Commonwealth-state agreements.
- ii. Examine the legislative and policy frameworks underpinning Commonwealth financial support to local government.

### **2. Identification of All funding Sources**

- i. Identify and map all sources of funding received by local government from the Australia Government and state/territory governments, including:
  - a. Untied grants (e.g., Financial Assistance Grants).
  - b. Tied/specific-purpose grants and project-based programs, co-contribution requirements and competitive grant processes.

- c. Revenue sharing arrangements (e.g., stamp duty, rate capping subsidies, GST-related disbursements where applicable).
  - d. Emergency, disaster recovery and resilience funding.
  - e. One-off or ad hoc funding streams.
- ii. Examine local government own-source revenue (such as rates, fees, charges and commercial activities).

### **3. Impacts and Effectiveness**

- i. Evaluate how funding arrangements, including indexation freezing, influences the financial sustainability, service delivery capacity and infrastructure investment of local governments.
- ii. Consider whether existing funding mechanisms are addressing the evolving responsibilities of local governments.
- iii. Identify barriers to infrastructure service delivery including trends in attracting and retaining a skilled workforce, impediments to security for local government workers and impacts of labour hire practitioners.
- iv. Explore opportunities to improve productivity and coordination of local government.

### **4. Previous Inquiry**

- i. Consider evidence provided to the House of representatives Standing Committee on Regional Development, Infrastructure and Transport of the 47<sup>th</sup> Parliament Inquiry into Local Government Sustainability.

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Inquiry into Local Government sustainability  
Committee Secretary  
House of Representatives Standing Committee on Regional Development, Infrastructure and Transport.

By email: [www.aph.gov.au/Committee/Submissions](http://www.aph.gov.au/Committee/Submissions).

### **Inquiry into local government sustainability**

### **Rating of wind and solar farms and rate equivalent payments**

Currently rural councils in Tasmania are disadvantaged in four ways by the State Government:

- The first relates to the payment of rates by owners and operators of wind and solar farms. Tasmania state government has not yet legislated for the PiLoR (Payment in Lieu of Rates).

- The Valuation Division has undertaken a review of the relevant codes for the rating of these but the process to have revaluations undertaken is very slow.
- We also find that the owners of crown land are allowing commercial activities such as motel complexes to be built or operated as commercial enterprises on their land, and then through a lease agreement, provide these commercial activities with a competitive advantage over similar developments, by the inclusion of an exemption for rating. This is in no way compliant with national competition principles.
- The loss of income from the rate equivalent payments made by Hydro-Electric Corporation to the State government, small rural councils are further disadvantaged.

This matter has been the subject of a motion to a Local Government Association of Tasmania general meeting and has also been communicated to the relevant government agency, but to date no action has been commenced.

### **Provision of medical services rural areas**

Many rural councils are burdened with the cost of helping to provide medical services in their municipal area. The Central Highlands Council currently has a contract with a medical provider so that a medical service can exist in Bothwell, for this we pay a substantial contract payment, plus the provision of a council residence at no cost.

We are also charged with providing a residence for the use by Ambulance Tasmania to house the paramedics who provide the service from Ouse. Ambulance Tasmania is part of Tasmania Health Service. Shouldn't they be paying for accommodation?

Councils are also currently charged with having to make substantial contributions to the Local SES for the purchase of vehicles and for operational equipment. This is in the process of changing and will require Local Government to hand over free of charge all vehicles and equipment. We will still need to make an annual monetary contribution in the order of \$10,000. These are State services.

### **Library Services online access centres**

The State government is currently in the process of transferring the provision of online access centres to councils. This may not seem significant but in some rural areas there may be several facilities. The Government will provide some ongoing funding on transfer, not indexed, for the continuation of the service for possibly 5 years, but after that it will have to be funded by ratepayers. Councils will have to budget for on-going maintenance and utilities charges for these facilities.

### **Bus Services**

Rural communities who have minimal medical services means many residents must travel long distances to major cities to access medical care. Some medical conditions or procedures will not allow them to drive. Many of these older residents are not confident driving the distance to and from Hobart or returning in the dark on rural roads or driving in city traffic, especially during rush hours. Therefore, a bus is there only option.

In former times, Miena through Bothwell to Hobart had a bus service that ran more than 75 years, but was suspended, resulting in more commuter traffic and congestion in the metropolitan areas. In recent times, the twice a week service for two of our townships has been reduced to once per fortnight. We have now been advised that if we wish this to return to the two days per fortnight we will have to pay.

Further enquiries were made about the use of the school bus run by our elderly residents in an endeavour to have a more viable service to cater for their medical and social needs. This option we were advised is not permissible as it is for school students only, though previously it was acceptable for students of all ages to travel on the bus service.

### **Heavy Vehicle Registration Fees**

This has been set at \$1.5 million, since its inception. The Tasmania State government have this year increased the payment to \$3.5 Million, but have stated that it is for one year only.

### **Grants Federal and state**

Most of these grants are disbursed on a competitive basis meaning small councils must compete with the large city councils, that have significantly more staff to research and process these applications. It would appear to be a better process if the grants were split so that there were allocations for large city councils, medium sized councils and small councils, giving all a chance to obtain funding.

### **Grants Commission Methodology**

The State Grants commission has been attempting to make the methodology used for the calculation of the grants to local government more understandable, to no avail.

The only thing that has been fully understood is the complete lack of funding provided to the relevant state grants commission by the federal government. It appears that this funding has been reducing over the years and that it is well short of the necessary 1% of Federal revenues.

The State grants commission has made a change to the methodology for the residential population. That being a change by calling it a "service population", which includes a percentage for non-residents (Holiday Homeowners), which is now being phased in.

There should also be a calculation to cover loss of income, from exempt properties. By this I mean not only, those exempt under section 87 of the Local Government Act 1993, but also those exempt as they are owned by the Government such as government business enterprises or commercial developers who have a lease agreement to occupy crown land and who are provided an exemption from the payment of rates within the crown lease.

While councils are often best positioned to deliver many public services with their local knowledge and understanding, they are not funded sufficiently to do so.

This fact has been acknowledged by the current Federal Government, who made an election commitment to provide 'fair increases' to Financial Assistance Grants, recognising the key role Federal Assistance Grants play in supporting a sustainable local government sector. This is long overdue, as over the past 30 years Financial Assistance Grants have slipped from 1

percent of Commonwealth taxation revenue, to just half a per cent. This decline has been most strongly felt in regional, rural and remote councils, where Financial Assistance Grants often make up a much higher component of their annual operating revenue. It seems perverse that this decline in Federal Assistance Grants has occurred in the period when the range of services delivered by councils because of cost shifting from higher levels of government and changing community expectations has proportionally grown.

It is critical that this inquiry recommends that the untied and non-competitive funding be restored to at least one per cent of Commonwealth taxation revenue.

Yours faithfully

Stephen Mackey  
General Manager

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## 21.2 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTORAL REFORM

### **RESOLUTION 12/01.2026/C**

**Moved:** Cr A Archer

**Seconded:** Cr D Meacheam

**THAT** Council note the draft response to the consultation process regarding proposed amendments to the conduct of local government elections once further comments are received from councillors the draft res[ponce will be amended and forwarded to all councillors prior to sending.

**CARRIED 7/1**

#### **For the Motion**

Mayor L Triffitt; Deputy Mayor J Allwright; Cr A Archer; Cr R Cassidy; Cr J Hall; Cr J Honner; Cr D Meacheam and Cr S Triffett

#### **Against the Motion**

Cr R Cassidy

**REPORT BY** Stephen Mackey, General Manager

**Attachments** – [Councillors Allowances Information Sheet and Legislative Council Elections 2025 Handbook \(Page7-9\)](#)

## **DISCUSSION**

Reform1      Reduce prescription in the statutory framework to enable the Tasmanian Electoral Commission to approve the electoral process.

**PROCEEDING AS PROPOSED**

**Council supports this reform**

- Reform 2 Enable the Tasmanian Electoral Commission to approve procedures for voting, including by telephone and electronic means, for interstate and overseas electors and electors with impediments to ordinary participation, or for other classes of person prescribed by regulation.

PROCEEDING WITH REFORM

**Council supports this reform**

- Reform 3 Legislate that the Tasmanian Electoral Commission is required to approve procedures in accordance with universal franchise principles, namely all electors, including electors with additional barriers to participation, are to be afforded an opportunity to vote in an independent, secret and verifiable manner.

PROCESSING AS PROPOSED

**Council supports this reform**

- Reform 4 Require the Electoral Commissioner to publish after each election a statement on the implementation of the accessibility principles, after information, including relevant statistics and initiatives undertaken to promote universal participation in the election.

REFORM WILL PROCEED

**Council supports this reform**

- Reform 5 Require that a person lodging a notice of nomination must have it supported by 30 electors entitled to vote in the relevant election.

REFORM WILL PROCEED

**Council sees no reason to change the current nomination process. There are 25,816 persons enrolled for the division of Derwent were as Central Highlands had 2,499 enrolled at the last election in 2022. If we consider, the service population for Central Highlands as per the grants commission then the number is 6,239.**

**Considering the above population details for the Legislative Council the numbers base on the proposal for this council would be as follows.**

$$\underline{30 / 2499 = 1.22\%}$$

$$\underline{30 / 6239 = .48\%}$$

**This would mean that a person nominating for the legislative council would require the following number of electors:**

$$\underline{25,816 \times 1.22\% = 315}$$

$$\underline{25816 \times .48\% = 124}$$

**The percentage of voters required to make a legislative council nomination valid is 0.038% yet for the Central Highlands it will be 1.22%**

**Bringing it into line with the Legislative Council percentage it should be one (1) person to be a valid nomination or change the process for the Legislative council to conform with the proposal for Council elections this would mean 315 for a valid legislative council nomination.**

**Legislative council, they are required to have as a minimum 10 electors for a nomination to be valid. This is only for a single candidate not one endorsed by a political party. This is as per the Legislative Council nomination handbook pages 7 & 8.**

**The term of office for the legislative council is 6 years local government is 4 years. Legislative Councillors remuneration is \$171,000 and Central Highlands councillors current allowance is \$11,893.**

Reform 6      Transfer the responsibility for the maintenance of the General Manager's Roll to the Tasmanian Electoral Commission.

REFORM WILL PROCEED

**Council supports this reform**

Reform 7      Amend the definition of "occupier" for enrolment purposes, to refer to actual occupation and use, and clarify that tenants and licensees are occupiers for the purpose of the Act.

REFORM WILL PROCEED

**Council supports this reform**

Reform 8      Strengthen verification requirements for application for enrolment on the General Manager's Roll.

REFORM WILL PROCEED

**Council supports this reform**

Reform 9      Expressly prohibit dual enrolment, and require a person enrolled on both the House of Assembly roll and the General Manager's Roll to be removed from the latter.

REFORM WILL PROCEED

**Council seeks clarification as to how this will affect rural properties who currently can nominate a director to vote on behalf of the company as well as voting as an owner occupier on the House of Assembly Role. The provisions in question relate to section 255 Voting by corporations and section 256 Maximum number of votes.**

Reform 10 Require new candidates to complete a pre-nomination training course approved by the Director of Local Government.

REFORM WILL PROCEED

Council supports this reform

Reform 11 Require that the Tasmanian Electoral Commission provides all people submitting a notice of nomination the opportunity to provide a candidate information statement (in an approved format, providing prescribed information) and that the Commission is to publish candidate information through appropriate means.

REFORM WILL NOT PROCEED

Reform 12 Enable the Director of Local Government to publish council performance statements during the election periods.

REFORM WILL NOT PROCEED

Reform 13 Establish that nomination by a registered party is to be included in the information published by the Tasmanian Electoral Commission and printed on the ballot paper.

REFORM WILL NOT PROCEED

Council is of the view that this reform should be proceeded with

Reform 14 Provide for candidates whose nomination form is not lodged by a registered party to request to be identified with a group name.

THE TASMANIAN GOVERNMENT HAS DETERMINED NOT TO PROCEED WITH THIS REFORM

Reform 15 Introduce new legislation on the dissemination of misleading and deceptive statements (corresponding to the Electoral Act Review Final Report and the amended Section 197 of the Electoral Act 2004).

REFORM WILL PROCEED

**Council supports this reform**

Reform 16 Remove the general restriction on publishing a candidate's name or image without their consent.

REFORM WILL PROCEED

**Council does not support this reform**

Reform 17 Clarify the definition of electoral advertising.

REFORM WILL PROCEED

**Council supports this reform**

- Reform 18 Provided that only a candidate, intending candidate, or a nominated person may incur electoral expenditure; expenditure by others to promote or procure election will be an offence.

REFORM WILL PROCEED

**Council supports this reform**

- Reform 19 Institute authorisation requirements for electoral advertising and associated material.

REFORM WIL PROCEED

**Council supports this reform**

- Reform 20 Replace advertising expenditure limits with a general expenditure limit, with reference to the Legislative Council expenditure cap in the Electoral Disclosure and Funding Act 2023.

REFORM WILL PROCEED

**Council supports this reform**

- Reform 21 Require that a candidate is to report expenditure made on their behalf in their electoral expenditure return, in the same manner as personal expenditure. The present requirement to attribute, in full, to each candidate featured in joint advertising will be retained.

REFORM WILL PROCEED

**Council supports this reform**

- Reform 22 Prohibit any person from incurring any expenditure for or on behalf of a registered party with a view to promoting or procuring the election of a candidate or intending candidate.

REFORM WILL PROCEED

**Council supports this reform**

- Reform 23 Maintain the \$50 threshold for the disclosure of gifts and benefits and extend this requirement from incumbent councillors to all candidates, who will be required to lodge donation returns with the Tasmanian Electoral Commission.

REFORM WILL PROCEED

**Council supports this reform**

Reform 24 Provide that it is an offence for a person other than a candidate or intending candidate to accept a gift or benefit for the purpose of promoting or procuring the election of a candidate, or for the dominant purpose of influencing the way electors vote in an election; and that it is an offence to make a gift or donation to a person other than a candidate or intending candidate for this purpose.

REFORM WILL PROCEED

**Council supports this reform**

Reform 25 Provide that it is an offence for a councillor, intending candidate or candidate, at any time, to accept a donation for the purpose of promoting or procuring the election of a candidate or intending candidate at a local government election:

- over \$50, including services or goods valued in kind, without recording the basic details of that donor
- over \$50 in cash
- over \$50 from a foreign donor.

REFORM WILL PROCEED

**Council supports this reform**

Reform 26 Provide that a local government election or by-election may not be held such that the polling period overlaps the date of a Tasmanian or Australian Government parliamentary election.

REFORM WILL PROCEED

**Council supports this reform**

Reform 27 Provide the Tasmanian Electoral Commission with powers of investigation.

REFORM WILL PROCEED

**Council supports this reform**

Reform 28 Align electoral offences and sanctions with those in the Electoral Act 2004.

REFORM WILL PROCEED

**Council supports this reform**

Reform 29 Provide a statutory caretaker framework, applying from the notice of election to the date of the issue of the certificate of election for all elections other than by-elections and countbacks.

REFORM WILL PROCEED

**Council supports this reform**

Reform 30 Provide during the caretaker period, prohibit a council from making any major policy or financial decisions, namely decisions:

- relating to the appointment, reappointment, remuneration or termination of a general manager (except acting appointments)
- committing the council to expenditure greater than 1 per cent of general revenue or \$100,000 (whichever is greater)
- directing council resources to influence voting
- relating to matters that could reasonably be deferred, except for statutory or routine operational decisions.

REFORM TO PROCEED

**Council supports this reform**

Reform 31 Provide that during the caretaker period, it is an offence for a council to:

- publish any material promoting any candidate or group of candidates, or seeking to influence voters
- publish material related to the election other than information promoting participation or official electoral process information
- make council resources available to benefit one candidate over others

REFORM TO PROCEED

**Council supports this reform**

Reform 32 Provide that major policy or financial decisions of a council during the caretaker period are of no effect, and provide that person who incur loss or damage due to an ineffectual decision of a council, who act in good faith, are entitled to recover compensation from the council.

REFORM WILL PROCEED

**Council supports this reform**

Reform 33 Increase the proportion of electors signing a petition to compel a council to hold an elector poll to 20 per cent; while restricting the matters about which an elector poll may be held to matters with a legitimate connection to the exercise of a council's functions or powers or to the incorporation of the council. As determined by the council.

REFORM WILL PROCEED

**Council supports this reform**

Of the 33 reform proposals we make comment on the following:

Reform 9 Expressly prohibit dual enrolment, and require a person enrolled on both the House of Assembly roll and the General Manager's Roll to be removed from the latter.

REFORM WILL PROCEED

Council seeks clarification as to how this will affect rural properties who currently can nominate a director to vote on behalf of the company as well as voting as an owner occupier on the House of Assembly Role. The provisions in question relate to section 255 Voting by corporations and section 256 Maximum number of votes.

Reform 5 Require that a person lodging a notice of nomination must have it supported by 30 electors entitled to vote in the relevant election.

REFORM WILL PROCEED

**Council sees no reason to change the current nomination process. There are 25,816 persons enrolled for the division of Derwent were as Central Highlands had 2,499 enrolled at the last election in 2022. If we consider, the service population for Central Highlands as per the grants commission then the number is 6,239.**

**Considering the above population details for the Legislative Council the numbers base on the proposal for this council would be as follows.**

$$30 / 2499 = 1.22\%$$

$$30 / 6239 = .48\%$$

**This would mean that a person nominating for the legislative council would require the following number of electors:**

$$25,816 \times 1.22\% = 315$$

$$25816 \times .48\% = 124$$

**The percentage of voters required to make a legislative council nomination valid is 0.038% yet for the Central Highlands it will be 1.22% Bringing it into line with the Legislative Council percentage it should be one (1) person to be a valid nomination or change the process for the Legislative council to conform with the proposal for Council elections this would mean 315 for a valid legislative council nomination.**

**Legislative council, they are required to have as a minimum 10 electors for a nomination to be valid. This is only for a single candidate not one endorsed by a political party. This is as per the Legislative Council nomination handbook pages 7 & 8.**

**The term of office for the legislative council is 6 years local government is 4 years. Legislative Councillors remuneration is \$171,000 and Central Highlands councillors' current allowance is \$11,893.**

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**22. CONSIDERATION OF SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA ITEMS TO THE AGENDA**

Nil.

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**23. CLOSURE**

Mayor Triffitt thanked everyone for their contribution and declared the meeting closed at 7.23 p.m.