



11 February 2026

To All Councillors

Notice is hereby given, in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1993, that the next Ordinary Meeting of Council will be held in the Council Chambers, on Wednesday, 18 February 2026 at 6.30pm, for the purposes of transacting the undermentioned business.

Public Forum

The Public Forum, if required, will be conducted from 6:00pm prior to the commencement of the Council Meeting. This will be web-cast, and allowed for approved speakers only.

**AGENDA:**

PAGE NO.

- (1) **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL LAND OWNERS**
- (2) **OPENING PRAYER**
- (3) **RECEIPT OF APOLOGIES AND APPLICATIONS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE , OR ATTENDANCE BY AUDIO-VISUAL LINK**
- (4) **CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**  
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- (6) **PETITIONS**
- (7) **CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF ALL REPORTS BY ENGLOBO**
- (8) **NOTICE OF INTENTION TO DEAL WITH MATTERS IN CONFIDENTIAL SESSION**  
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Report WI2/2026 - Hunter Resource Recovery Receiving and Processing of Domestic Kerbside Recycling Product (HRR 0001B)  
  
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‡ - Denotes that Report is for notation only.



## ***Principles for Local Government***

### **Exercise of functions generally**

The following general principles apply to the exercise of functions by Councils:

- a) Councils should provide strong and effective representation, leadership, planning and decision-making.
- b) Councils should carry out functions in a way that provides the best possible value for residents and ratepayers.
- c) Councils should plan strategically, using the integrated planning and reporting framework, for the provision of effective and efficient services and regulation to meet the diverse needs of the local community.
- d) Councils should apply the integrated planning and reporting framework in carrying out their functions so as to achieve desired outcomes and continuous improvements.
- e) Councils should work co-operatively with other Councils and the State government to achieve desired outcomes for the local community.
- f) Councils should manage lands and other assets so that current and future local community needs can be met in an affordable way.
- g) Councils should work with others to secure appropriate services for local community needs.
- h) Councils should act fairly, ethically and without bias in the interests of the local community.
- i) Councils should be responsible employers and provide a consultative and supportive working environment for staff.

### ***Council's Values***

- Integrity
- Accountability
- Respect
- Excellence
- Teamwork

### ***Our Community's Vision***

Cessnock will be a cohesive and welcoming community living in an attractive and sustainable rural environment with a diversity of business and employment opportunities supported by accessible infrastructure and services which effectively meet community need.

*Cessnock – thriving, attractive and welcoming.*

### ***Our Community's Desired Outcomes***

- A connected, safe and creative community.
- A sustainable and prosperous economy.
- A sustainable and healthy environment.
- Accessible infrastructure, facilities and services.
- Civic Leadership and effective governance.



## ***Council Code of Conduct***

Council adopted its current Code of Conduct on 23 October 2024. This Code provides details of statutory requirements and gives guidance in respect of the way in which pecuniary and conflict of interest issues must be disclosed. Councillors took an oath or affirmation at the commencement of their term of office under section 233A of the *Local Government Act 1993* (NSW) and are therefore obligated under Council's Code of Conduct to disclose and appropriately manage their conflicts of interest.

Generally, the Code outlines the following issues:

1. Councillors are under an obligation at law to disclose any interest they may have in any matter before the Council as soon as practicable and to refrain from being involved in any consideration or to vote on any such matter where required and out outlined in the Code of Conduct.
2. Councillors must disclose any interest in any matter noted in the business paper prior to or at the opening of the meeting.
3. The nature of the interest shall be included in the disclosure.
4. Councillors shall immediately and during the meeting disclose any interest in respect of any matter arising during the meeting which is not referred to in the business paper.
5. All disclosures of interest shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.
6. All disclosures of interest shall as far as is practicable be given in writing.
7. Any member having a pecuniary or non-pecuniary significant conflict of interest shall leave the meeting and remain absent while the subject of the interest is being considered by Council.
8. The meeting shall not discuss any matter in which a Councillor has a pecuniary or non-pecuniary significant conflict of interest while the Councillor is present at the meeting.



## ***Notice of Copyright and Disclaimer***

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**MINUTES OF ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING OF THE CESSNOCK CITY COUNCIL  
HELD IN COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON WEDNESDAY, 14 JANUARY 2026, COMMENCING  
AT 6.30PM**

**PRESENT:** His Worship the Mayor, Councillor D Watton (in the Chair) and Councillors Dixon, Dunne, Harrington, Hill, Jurd, King, Lea, Madden (Via AV Link), Mason, Palmowski, Pascoe and Hawkins.

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Interim General Manager (Director Planning and Environment)  
Acting Director Planning and Environment (Compliance Manager)  
Director Corporate and Community Services  
Director Works and Infrastructure  
Chief Finance Officer  
People and Culture Manager  
Senior Environment Planner - Strategic Planning  
Communications & Engagement Manager  
Principal Community Engagement Officer  
Community Engagement Officer  
Help Desk Support Officer  
Senior Business Support Officer – Council Services

*The Prayer was presented by Councillor Mason*

**ATTENDANCE BY  
AV LINK:**

**MOTION**                      **Moved:** Councillor Hill  
   **Seconded:** Councillor Harrington

333

**RESOLVED** that Council permit Councillor Madden to attend the 14 January 2026 Ordinary Council meeting by audio-visual link.

<b>FOR</b>	<b>AGAINST</b>
Councillor Dixon	
Councillor Dunne	
Councillor Harrington	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor King	
Councillor Lea	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
<b>Total (13)</b>	<b>Total (0)</b>
<b>CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY</b>	

**MINUTES:**

**MOTION**            **Moved:** Councillor Lea  
                          **Seconded:** Councillor Pascoe

334

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 10 December 2025, as circulated, be taken as read and confirmed as a correct record.

<b>FOR</b>	<b>AGAINST</b>
Councillor Dixon	
Councillor Dunne	
Councillor Harrington	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor King	
Councillor Lea	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
<b>Total (13)</b>	<b>Total (0)</b>

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST**

**DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST NO. DI1/2026**

**SUBJECT: DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST**

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**Nil**

**MAYORAL MINUTES**

**Nil**

**MOTIONS OF URGENCY**

**MOTIONS OF URGENCY NO. MOU1/2026**

**SUBJECT: MOTIONS OF URGENCY**

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**Nil**

## SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

**PROCEDURAL MOTION**

**Moved:** Councillor Hawkins  
**Seconded:** Councillor Mason

335

**RESOLVED**

That the order of business be amended so that item CC3/2026 Application to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal for a Permanent one-year special variation of 39.9%, be brought forward to be dealt with as the first item of the agenda.

<b>FOR</b>	<b>AGAINST</b>
Councillor Dixon	Councillor Jurd
Councillor Dunne	Councillor King
Councillor Harrington	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Lea	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
<b>Total (11)</b>	<b>Total (2)</b>

**CARRIED**

**CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY NO. CC3/2026**

**SUBJECT: APPLICATION TO THE INDEPENDENT PRICING AND REGULATORY TRIBUNAL FOR A PERMANENT ONE-YEAR SPECIAL VARIATION OF 39.9%**

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**MOTION**      **Moved:** Councillor Mason      **Seconded:** Councillor Hill

1. That Council approves the submission of an application to IPART for a permanent one-year Special Variation of 39.9%, inclusive of the applicable rate peg, to general income, commencing in the 2026/27 financial year.
2. That Council notes that the determination of whether the Special Variation is approved rests solely with IPART under delegation from the Minister for Local Government.
3. That Council notes that the application is supported by independent expert reports addressing financial sustainability, efficiency, capacity to pay, debt capacity, and community engagement, together with updated Long Term Financial Plan modelling.
4. That Council authorises the General Manager to finalise and lodge the Special Variation application and supporting documentation with IPART in accordance with the 2026–27 IPART Special Variation Guidelines.

An amendment proposed by Councillor Jurd was ruled out of order by the Mayor as it was deemed a direct negative of the original motion.

The Motion was then **PUT** and **CARRIED**

**MOTION**      **Moved:** Councillor Mason      **Seconded:** Councillor Hill

336

**RESOLVED**

1. That Council approves the submission of an application to IPART for a permanent one-year Special Variation of 39.9%, inclusive of the applicable rate peg, to general income, commencing in the 2026/27 financial year.
2. That Council notes that the determination of whether the Special Variation is approved rests solely with IPART under delegation from the Minister for Local Government.
3. That Council notes that the application is supported by independent expert reports addressing financial sustainability, efficiency, capacity to pay, debt capacity, and community engagement, together with updated Long Term Financial Plan modelling.
4. That Council authorises the General Manager to finalise and lodge the Special Variation application and supporting documentation with IPART in accordance with the 2026–27 IPART Special Variation Guidelines.

**FOR**

Councillor Dunne  
Councillor Harrington  
Councillor Hill  
Councillor Lea  
Councillor Mason  
Councillor Palmowski  
Councillor Pascoe  
Councillor Hawkins  
Councillor Watton

**Total (9)****AGAINST**

Councillor Dixon  
Councillor Jurd  
Councillor King  
Councillor Madden

**Total (4)*****CARRIED***

## RESCISSION MOTIONS

### RESCISSION MOTIONS NO. RM1/2026

**SUBJECT: BN19/2025 - SUSPENSION OF ALL NON-LEGISLATED NET ZERO EXPENDITURE TO SUPPORT FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY**

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**MOTION**            **Moved:**    Councillor Hill                    **Seconded:**    Councillor Palmowski  
337  
**RESOLVED**

**That the recommendation to BN18/2025 - Suspension of all Non-Legislated Net Zero Expenditure to support Financial Sustainability be rescinded.**

<b>FOR</b>	<b>AGAINST</b>
Councillor Dunne	Councillor Dixon
Councillor Hill	Councillor Harrington
Councillor Lea	Councillor Jurd
Councillor Madden	Councillor King
Councillor Palmowski	Councillor Mason
Councillor Pascoe	Councillor Watton
Councillor Hawkins	
<b>Total (7)</b>	<b>Total (6)</b>

**CARRIED**

**MOTION**            **Moved:**    Councillor Hill                    **Seconded:**    Councillor Palmowski  
338  
**RESOLVED**

- 1. That Council note the ongoing review into Financial Sustainability and efforts within the draft Long Term Financial Plan and reviewed Delivery Program which prioritises spending on asset maintenance and net positive organizational initiatives.**
- 2. That the General Manager provide a Councillor workshop to inform on the currently adopted Climate Change Resilience Plan (2023).**

*Councillor Jurd left the meeting, the time being 7.28pm*

*Councillor Jurd returned to the meeting, the time being 7.30pm*

**FOR**

Councillor Dunne  
Councillor Hill  
Councillor Lea  
Councillor Madden  
Councillor Mason  
Councillor Palmowski  
Councillor Pascoe  
Councillor Hawkins  
Councillor Watton

**Total (9)****AGAINST**

Councillor Dixon  
Councillor Harrington  
Councillor Jurd  
Councillor King

**Total (4)*****CARRIED***

## **CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY**

### **CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY NO. CC1/2026**

**SUBJECT: ADOPTION OF THE LONG TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2026-2036**

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**MOTION**      **Moved:** Councillor Hill      **Seconded:** Councillor Lea

That Council adopts the Long Term Financial Plan 2026-2036 and that the adopted Long Term Financial Plan is published on Council's website in accordance with Integrated Planning and Reporting requirements.

**PROCEDURAL MOTION**      **Moved:** Councillor Jurd  
**Seconded:** Councillor King

That the matter be deferred until a decision is made from IPART in regards to CC3/2026 Application to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal for a Permanent one-year special variation of 39.9%.

<b>FOR</b>	<b>AGAINST</b>
Councillor Dixon	Councillor Dunne
Councillor Jurd	Councillor Harrington
Councillor King	Councillor Hill
	Councillor Lea
	Councillor Madden
	Councillor Mason
	Councillor Palmowski
	Councillor Pascoe
	Councillor Hawkins
	Councillor Watton
<b>Total (3)</b>	<b>Total (10)</b>

The Procedural Motion was **PUT** and **LOST**

The Motion was then **PUT** and **CARRIED**

**MOTION**      **Moved:** Councillor Hill      **Seconded:** Councillor Lea  
339  
**RESOLVED**

That Council adopts the Long Term Financial Plan 2026-2036 and that the adopted Long Term Financial Plan is published on Council's website in accordance with Integrated Planning and Reporting requirements.

**FOR**

Councillor Dunne  
Councillor Harrington  
Councillor Hill  
Councillor Lea  
Councillor Madden  
Councillor Mason  
Councillor Palmowski  
Councillor Pascoe  
Councillor Hawkins  
Councillor Watton

**Total (10)****AGAINST**

Councillor Dixon  
Councillor Jurd  
Councillor King

**Total (3)*****CARRIED***

**CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY NO. CC2/2026**

**SUBJECT: REVIEW OF DISTRIBUTIVE EQUITY IN COUNCIL'S RATING STRUCTURE**

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**MOTION**            **Moved:**    Councillor Hill            **Seconded:**    Councillor Lea  
340  
**RESOLVED**

1. That the General Manager undertake a review of the distributive equity of Council's current rating structure; and
2. That Council notes that the distributive equity review will assess equity impacts, legislative compliance, revenue stability, administrative feasibility, with findings and any proposed options to be reported to Council for consideration, with an intention for inclusion in the 2027/28 Revenue Policy.

*Councillor King left the meeting, the time being 7.55pm*

*Councillor King returned to the meeting, the time being 7.56pm*

<b>FOR</b>	<b>AGAINST</b>
Councillor Dixon	Councillor Jurd
Councillor Dunne	Councillor King
Councillor Harrington	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Lea	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
<b>Total (11)</b>	<b>Total (2)</b>

**CARRIED**

## **COUNCILLOR REPORTS**

**Nil**

*The Meeting Was Declared Closed at 8.09pm*

**CONFIRMED AND SIGNED** at the meeting held on 18 February 2026

.....**CHAIRPERSON**

.....**GENERAL MANAGER**

Disclosures Of Interest

Report No. DI2/2026

Corporate and Community Services



**SUBJECT:** *DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST*

**RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:** *Corporate Governance Manager*

**RECOMMENDATION**

**That Councillors now disclose any interests and reasons for declaring such interest in the matters under consideration by Council at this meeting.**

**SUMMARY**

The provisions of Chapter 14 of the Local Government Act, 1993 regulate the way in which Councillors and nominated staff of council conduct themselves to ensure that there is no conflict between their private interests and their public trust.

The Act prescribes that where a member of Council (or a Committee of Council) has a direct or indirect financial (pecuniary) interest in a matter to be considered at a meeting of the Council (or Committee), that interest must be disclosed as soon as practicable after the start of the meeting and the reasons for declaring such interest.

As members are aware, the provisions of the Local Government Act restrict any member who has declared a pecuniary interest in any matter from participating in the discussions, voting on that matter, and require that member to vacate the Chamber.

Council's Code of Conduct provides that if members have a non-pecuniary conflict of interest, the nature of the conflict must be disclosed. The Code also provides for a number of ways in which a member may manage non pecuniary conflicts of interest.

**ENCLOSURES**

There are no enclosures for this report.

Notice of Intention to Deal With Matters in Confidential Session

Report No. NI1/2026

Corporate and Community Services



**SUBJECT:** *NOTICE OF INTENTION TO DEAL WITH MATTERS IN CONFIDENTIAL SESSION -*

*REPORT WI2/2026 - HUNTER RESOURCE RECOVERY RECEIVING AND PROCESSING OF DOMESTIC KERBSIDE RECYCLING PRODUCT (HRR 0001B)*

*REPORT WI3/2026 - PROCUREMENT CONCESSION UNDER SECTION 55(3)(I) WOLLOMBI ROAD UPGRADE PROJECT*

**RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:** *Corporate Governance Manager*

**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council considers in Confidential Session the following matters in accordance with Sections 10A (2) (c) (di) of the *Local Government Act 1993*:

Report WI2/2026 – Hunter Resource Recovery Receiving and Processing of Domestic Kerbside Recycling Product (HRR 0001B) as it deals with information that would, if disclosed, confer a commercial advantage on a person with whom the Council is conducting (or proposes to conduct) business; AND commercial information of a confidential nature that would, if disclosed (i) prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it.

Report WI3/2026 – Procurement Concession under Section 55(3)(I) Wollombi Road Upgrade Project as it deals with information that would, if disclosed, confer a commercial advantage on a person with whom the Council is conducting (or proposes to conduct) business; AND commercial information of a confidential nature that would, if disclosed (i) prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it.

**SUMMARY**

It is necessary for the Council to adopt a resolution to formalise its intention to deal with certain matters in Confidential Session. The reports are incorporated in the “Confidential” business paper which has been circulated to Councillors.

The Local Government Act, 1993 requires the General Manager to identify those matters listed on the business paper which may be categorised as confidential in terms of Section 10A of the Local Government Act, 1993.

**ENCLOSURES**

There are no enclosures for this report.

Mayoral Minute

Report No. MM1/2026

General Manager's Unit



***MAYORAL MINUTE No. MM1/2026***

***SUBJECT: VACANCY IN CIVIC OFFICE - RESIGNATION OF COUNCILLOR CHRIS MADDEN***

***RECOMMENDATION***

**That Council notes the vacancy in civic office and that the NSW Electoral Commission is currently conducting a countback process to fill the casual vacancy in Ward B.**

***REPORT/PROPOSAL***

Resignation of Councillor

Councillor Madden formally advised the Interim General Manager of his resignation from Council on Friday 23 January 2026, effective from Friday 30 January 2026. Mr Madden indicated that this decision was a result of changes introduced by the Minister for Local Government that restrict Councillors from being able to attend meetings via audio-visual if they are unable to be physically present due to work commitments.

Mr Madden stated that serving as an elected representative has been both challenging and rewarding and that while the role could be demanding, the sense of pride and achievement when hard work pays off was unparalleled.

Mr Madden has extended his sincere thanks to Council staff for their dedication and support during his time on Council.

Mr Madden notes that while his term as a Councillor has concluded, he will remain actively involved in the local community, working with several community organisations to deliver benefits for residents.

Countback process

Council staff are now liaising with the NSW Electoral Commission to progress the countback process. Council unanimously resolved in October 2024 that should a Councillor resign in the first 18 months of this term, a countback election would take place.

A countback process does not require voters of Ward B to return to the polls and a by-election is not required. The NSW Electoral Commission will contact all unelected Ward B candidates to confirm their interest in being elected to Council. If there is only one eligible candidate, that candidate is elected. If there are multiple eligible candidates, a countback election is conducted based on votes from the election in Ward B in September 2024.

Information about the countback process is available on the NSW Electoral Commission website: <https://elections.nsw.gov.au/elections/how-counting-works/countback-elections>

**Mayoral Minute**

**Report No. MM1/2026**

**General Manager's Unit**

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Acknowledgement of contribution

The resignation brings to a close Mr Madden's participation on Cessnock City Council, having been first elected as a Ward B Councillor in 2024, as a local community member who is passionate about the Cessnock and Kearsley communities, standing on the committee for several local sports including Cessnock Hockey and Kearsley Crusher Rugby League Football Club. Mr Madden contributed to several internal and external committees during his tenure including the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Committee, and the Buttai and Black Hill Quarry Consultative Committees.

On behalf of Councillors and staff, we thank Mr Madden for his contribution as a Councillor and we wish Mr Madden well in his future wherever that may take him.

***ENCLOSURES***

There are no enclosures for this report.

Motions of Urgency

Report No. MOU2/2026

Corporate and Community Services



**SUBJECT:** *MOTIONS OF URGENCY*

**RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:** *Corporate Governance Manager*

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**RECOMMENDATION**

**That Councillors now indicate if there are any matters of urgency which they believe should be conducted at this meeting of Council.**

**SUMMARY**

Under Clause 9.3 of Council's Code of Meeting Practice, business may be transacted at a meeting of Council even though due notice of the business has not been given to the Councillors. This can only happen if a motion is passed to have the business transacted at the meeting, the Mayor rules that the business is of great urgency and the business notified in the agenda for the meeting has been disposed of.

Only the mover of such a motion can speak to the motion before it is put.

**ENCLOSURES**

There are no enclosures for this report.

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC4/2026

Corporate and Community Services



**SUBJECT:** *AUTHORISATION FOR SALE OF SURPLUS COUNCIL LAND  
- PART LOT 378 DP 1002112*

**RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:** *Chief Finance Officer*

### **SUMMARY**

This report seeks Council authorisation to sell land identified as surplus to operational drainage requirements to an adjoining land owner. Under provisions of the *Local Government Act 1993*, a resolution of Council is required to authorise the sale of public land.

This matter was presented to the December 2025 meeting but was deferred pending clarification on the cost of removing a structure on site. This information is provided in the report.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

1. That Council authorise sale of part Lot 378 DP 1002112 subject to the purchaser bearing all costs associated with the transfer of the land including but not limited to the survey, registration, valuation, legal costs and registration of covenant.
2. That Council grant authority to the General Manager or delegated officer to negotiate the sale with reference to a current market valuation and execute all relevant documentation to affect the transaction.
3. That Council note the net proceeds of the sale are to be credited to the Property Investment Fund and allocated in accordance with the Property Investment & Development Policy.

### **BACKGROUND**

Council was approached by a developer on behalf of an owner of land at 51 Mills Crescent, Cessnock adjoining a Council-owned drainage reserve with a proposal to acquire an easement to drain water into the Black Creek stormwater channel. After investigations Council staff determined the best course of action was for the proponent to purchase the required portion of Council's land (**Enclosure 1**). As part of negotiations the proponent was also required to remove a shed which was constructed on the land without owners' consent and agree that no structures are built on the acquired land in the future.

### **REPORT/PROPOSAL**

The subject property was identified for purchase by an adjoining owner due to their requirement for drainage. After consultation with the internal asset owner, 134.5m<sup>2</sup> was identified as surplus to Council requirements and potentially able to be sold and consolidated with the proponent's development site. It was further discovered a shed and fencing had been erected on Council's drainage reserve many years ago after a building permit approval was obtained before the legal requirement for landowner's consent.

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC4/2026

Corporate and Community Services



Subject to Council authorisation of the land disposal, it has been agreed between the parties that Council’s solicitor will issue the proponent with an invoice in the amount of \$19,512.73 plus GST, being the agreed purchase price less the quoted cost to remove the shed. The sale and transfer will then commence once payment has been confirmed by our legal representative with the full cost being borne by the purchaser.

	\$ (excluding GST)
Value of land	27,272.73
Agreed Cost to remove shed	7,760.00
<b>Net income to be received by Council</b>	<b>19,512.73</b>

Should the actual removal costs of the shed exceed the agreed quoted amount, that additional cost is borne by the purchaser of the land and does not reduce the net income to Council.

**OPTIONS**

1. Council authorises sale of the surplus portion of drainage reserve, subject to conditions outlined in the recommendation. **Option 1 is Recommended**
2. Council retains the land. Not recommended - the land is surplus to requirements, and does not resolve the unauthorized structure currently on Council land.

**CONSULTATION**

Chief Financial Officer  
 Infrastructure Manger  
 Stormwater and Flood Mitigation Coordinator  
 Principal Property Specialist

**STRATEGIC LINKS**

**a. Delivery Program**

The Strategic Property Review is a key Delivery Program initiative which seeks to identify and evaluate opportunities to add value to Council’s property asset portfolio and implements approved strategies related to disposal, redevelopment or adaptive reuse of surplus Council properties. Disposal of surplus and under-utilised land is consistent with financial sustainability objectives including generation of revenue and reduction of maintenance costs.

**b. Other Plans**

Nil

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## **IMPLICATIONS**

### **a. Policy and Procedural Implications**

The report recommendation is in accordance with the objectives and requirements of the Property Investment and Development Policy.

### **b. Financial Implications**

After deduction of direct selling costs, the net proceeds from sale of the land would be transferred to the Property Investment Fund and allocated in accordance with the objectives and requirements of the Property Investment and Development Policy.

### **c. Legislative Implications**

s.377(h) of the *Local Government Act 1993* stipulates that only by resolution may a Council delegate to the General Manager the compulsory acquisition, purchase, sale, exchange or surrender of any land or other property.

### **d. Risk Implications**

Nil

### **e. Environmental Implications**

Nil

### **f. Other Implications**

Nil

## **CONCLUSION**

The land recommended for sale has been determined to be surplus to Council requirements. Consistent with financial sustainability objectives, the sale will generate revenue, reduce recurrent maintenance costs and facilitate removal of encroachments at no cost to Council.

## **ENCLOSURES**

[1](#) ➔ Enclosure 1 \_ Lot 378 DP 1002112 \_ Plan

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**SUBJECT:** *MINUTES OF THE ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD 5 DECEMBER 2025*

**RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:** *Community & Cultural Development Manager*

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### **SUMMARY**

The minutes of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee (the Committee) are presented to Council for consideration for adoption as a resolution of the Ordinary Council.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

**That the Minutes of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee meeting held 5 December 2025 be adopted as a resolution of the Ordinary Council.**

### **BACKGROUND**

Following the 2024 elections, at the Extraordinary Council meeting held 16 October 2024, Council resolved to reestablish the Committee for the term of Council. Whilst the Committee makes recommendations to Council on their area of expertise, such advisory Committees are usually established without delegations. This means that recommendations from the Committee need to be reported to Council for consideration and adoption.

### **REPORT/PROPOSAL**

The Minutes from the Committee meeting held 5 December 2025 are provided to Council and this report seeks endorsement to adopt the recommendations as a resolution of Council.

Note that the meeting became inquorate at the last agenda item *AACC01/2025 Correspondence from NSW Environment Protection Authority – Climate Change Licensee Requirements*. A general discussion occurred for this item with no recommendations moved by the Committee.

Listed matters and the recommendations are summarised below and *Enclosure 1* provides the full Minutes of the Meeting for Councils information.

### **AACLM10/2025 - STRATEGIC PLANNING PROJECT FOR ANAMBAH TO BRANXTON REGIONALLY SIGNIFICANT GROWTH AREA**

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Committee:

1. Note progress towards the development of the Anambah to Branxton Regionally Significant Growth Area Heritage Assessment.
2. Request for the matter to be discussed and updated with the Committee throughout the project.

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**AACLM11/2025 - SAWYERS GULLY URBAN INVESTIGATION AREA STRUCTURE PLANNING - CONNECTING WITH COUNTRY**

*RECOMMENDATION*

That the Committee:

1. Notes the status of the Sawyers Gully Urban Investigation Area Structure Plan project and the proposed scope and content of the Connecting with Country consultancy deliverables.
2. Request that the project continue to be presented and discussed at future committee meetings.

**AACLM12/2025 - DRAFT GENERIC PARKS PLAN OF MANAGEMENT - PUBLIC EXHIBITION**

*RECOMMENDATION*

That the Committee:

1. Note the report.
2. Are provided, via email, with the information regarding the five (5) parcels of land noted in the report subject to undetermined Aboriginal land claims.
3. And that the draft Plan of Management be reported back to the next Committee meeting prior to being presented to Council.

**AACLM13/2025 - MOUNT VIEW PARK DRAFT CONCEPT PLAN**

*RECOMMENDATION*

That the Committee discuss and note the Mount View Park Draft Concept Plan.

**AACLM14/2025 - NATIONAL RECONCILIATION WEEK AND NAIDOC WEEK**

*RECOMMENDATION*

That the Committee provides advice on the delivery of events as part of National Reconciliation Week 2026 and NAIDOC Week 2026.

**CONSULTATION**

The Committee is an advisory committee.



## **STRATEGIC LINKS**

### **a. Delivery Program**

This report aligns with the Delivery Program outcomes of:

- We are connected, safe and creative
  - Objective 1.2 Strengthen Community Culture
  - Action 1.2.1 Build unity and respect between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians
- We have strong leadership and effective governance
  - Objective 5.2 Encourage community collaboration in decision making

### **b. Other Plans**

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Action Plan 2025-2029.

## **IMPLICATIONS**

### **a. Policy and Procedural Implications**

The Committee operates as per its adopted Charter.

### **b. Financial Implications**

There are no financial implications associated with the report.

### **c. Legislative Implications**

N/A

### **d. Risk Implications**

Matters referred to and recommendations from the Committee are made to reduce potential cultural risk implications in Council operations and plans.

### **e. Environmental Implications**

N/A

### **f. Other Implications**

N/A

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**CONCLUSION**

The minutes of the Committee meeting are presented to Council for adoption.

**ENCLOSURES**

- [1](#) ⇒ Minutes of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee Meeting held 5 December 2025

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Corporate and Community Services



**SUBJECT:** *AUSTRALIAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION 2026 NATIONAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY - ATTENDANCE AND MOTIONS*

**RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:** *Corporate Governance Manager*

### **SUMMARY**

The Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) 2026 National General Assembly (NGA), is scheduled to be held at Canberra's National Convention Centre from 23-25 June 2026. The purpose of this report is to confirm Councillor attendance and determine any motions to be submitted to the Conference.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

1. That Council determine the voting delegate and attendees for the Australian Local Government Association 2026 National General Assembly.
2. That Council notes that no motions have been proposed by Councillors for submission for consideration at the Australian Local Government Association 2026 National General Assembly.
3. That Council endorse the regional motions identified by the Hunter Joint Organisation Board and that the following motions be submitted for consideration at the Australian Local Government Association 2026 National General Assembly:
  - a. This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:
    - Directly support Local Government actions and strategic planning that address imminent and substantial job losses arising from large scale industry closures in regional economies rapidly transforming to net zero by directly investing in Council led, place-based initiatives that:
      - Identify future land-use options post mining and economic diversification opportunities to provide jobs of the future.
      - De-risk industry investment and strategically inform and accelerate industry attraction, skills development and job creation in mining regions.
  - b. This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:
    - Lead systems reform for grant funding within Federal Government to:
      - Reform grant funding to non-competitive, multi-year block funding aligned to Local Government election cycles and Community Strategic Plans.
      - Build consistency in the governance frameworks, systems and documentation required across various funding programs to reduce the administrative burden on Local Government.

- **Improve the delivery of grant funding to councils across Australia to ensure equity.**
- c. **This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:**
  - **Update Federal road funding programs so they properly account for regional realities such as longer road networks, heavier freight use, and higher weather vulnerability.**
- d. **This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:**
  - **Amend disaster recovery funding rules to allow repairs to council owned water and sewer infrastructure.**

## **BACKGROUND**

### Australian Local Government Association

Established in 1947, the ALGA is a federation of member state and territory local government associations. Its mission is to achieve outcomes for local government through advocacy with impact, and maximise the economic, environmental and social wellbeing of councils and their communities. The ALGA advocates for better federal funding, policy reforms and effective partnerships.

The NGA is the largest annual gathering of local government leaders in Australia. This is an opportunity for council to come together, share ideas, debate motions and strengthen the relationship between local government and the Australian Government.

Given ALGA's structure, Constitution, and resources, the NGA resolutions do not bind ALGA. However, NGA resolutions are carefully considered by the ALGA Board to determine ALGA's policies, priorities and strategies to advance local governments within the national agenda

### Hunter Joint Organisation

The Hunter Joint Organisation (Hunter JO) is a collaborative body that brings together the ten councils in the region to provide a united and local voice for our communities. As the hub for local intergovernmental collaboration, the statutory mandate includes identifying key regional strategic priorities, advocating for these priorities, and building collaborations around these priorities with other levels of government, industry and community.

The Hunter JO entity itself is not a financial member of the NSW Local Government Association (given that Member Councils already are), the actual process of lodging the motions to the NGA needs to be undertaken by individual member councils. These will then be collated by the conference organisers and presented as a shared regional motion including the names of each of the Councils who have lodged the motion.

## **REPORT/PROPOSAL**

ALGA have provided information on the NGA to be held at Canberra's National Convention Centre from 23 to 25 June 2026. The theme of the 2026 NGA is – *Stronger Together: Resilient. Productive. United.* The purpose of the NGA is to shape the federal advocacy agenda that

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ALGA will undertake on behalf of Australian local governments. Details about the conference are available at [Australian Local Government Association](#).

Request to Attend

Councillors wishing to attend the conference were requested to make application to the General Manager so that Council could determine the attendees and voting delegates. At the time of this report one request to attend had been received from Mayor Daniel Watton. Previous attendance is summarised in **Enclosure 1**.

Motions

The ALGA Board seeks to ensure that motions debated at the NGA are focused on how local governments can partner with the Australian Government to address community challenges and leverage opportunities that align with national priorities. Motions will only be accepted for discussion at the Conference if they comply with ALGA requirements and ten priority areas, which can be found within the [2026 National General Assembly Discussion Paper](#).

Councillors were requested to notify the General Manager of any suggested motions so that Council could determine motions to be submitted in order to meet the ALGA submissions deadline. At the time of this report no proposed motions had been received from Councillors.

In preparation for the 2026 NGA the Hunter Joint Organisation Board of Mayors has confirmed a list of 5 shared regional motions to be put forward at the NGA on behalf of Hunter Councils across the advocacy areas of jobs and skills, financial sustainability, roads and infrastructure, and emergency management. The motions are summarised in **Enclosure 2**.

This approach seeks to:

- Amplify the shared advocacy priorities of the Hunter's councils on the national scale.
- Emphasise to the Federal Government the strength of alignment across the councils regarding the region's challenges, opportunities and agreed strategic directions

The regional motions have been adapted from the shared regional [advocacy priorities](#) of the Hunter Mayors, to reflect the broader national and industry wide local government focus required for NGA motions.

**CONSULTATION**

Hunter Joint Organisation  
Interim General Manager  
Councillors

**STRATEGIC LINKS**

**a. Delivery Program**

This report is linked to the Community's Desired Outcome Objective 5 "Lead: This desired outcome focuses on the need for strong civic leadership and effective governance with an engaged community actively participating in decision making processes affecting their future".

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**b. Other Plans**

The regional motions are consistent with the objectives and strategic directions included in the [Hunter JO Strategic Plan 2032](#), which are themselves drawn from the Community Strategic Plans of the ten Hunter JO Member Councils

**IMPLICATIONS**

**a. Policy and Procedural Implications**

Application for attendance to the 2026 NGA is in accordance with the adopted *Councillor Expenses and Facilities Policy*.

**b. Financial Implications**

The cost per delegate is estimated at \$2,500, inclusive of accommodation, registration and meals.

**c. Legislative Implications**

N/A

**d. Risk Implications**

As listed on page 21 of the ALGA discussion paper 'there is an expectation that a council representative will be present at the Conference to move and speak to Council motions if required.' Therefore, if Council does not send any delegate, Council will be unable to exercise its voting right.

**e. Other Implications**

The ALGA deadline for submission of motions is 27 February 2026. Council needs to adhere to the deadline and submission requirements in order for a motion to be considered.

**CONCLUSION**

This report provides information on the upcoming ALGA 2026 NGA and provides Council with the opportunity to consider motions to be submitted and for Councillor attendance.

**ENCLOSURES**

- [1](#) Summary of previous attendance by Councillors
- [2](#) Summary of Motions - Hunter JO

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**SUBJECT:** *DECEMBER 2025 REVIEW OF THE 2025-29 DELIVERY PROGRAM*

**RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:** *Acting Chief Finance Officer*

### **SUMMARY**

The purpose of this report is for Council to note the Quarterly update on the progress against Council's 2025-29 Delivery Program incorporating the Operational Plan 2025-26.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

- 1. That Council notes the progress in implementing the 2025-29 Delivery Program as at 31 December 2025.**
- 2. That Council approves changes to the Operational Plan actions and targets as outlined in the report.**

### **BACKGROUND**

Section 404(5) of the *Local Government Act 1993* requires the General Manager to provide regular progress reports to Council with respect to progress against the principal activities detailed in its Delivery Program with reports to be provided at least every six months.

The Quarterly Budget Review Statement required under clause 203 of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*, provides financial information in regards to estimates of income and expenditure and is separately reported to Council.

Council adopted the 2025-29 Delivery Program and incorporated Operational Plan 2025-26 in June 2025. The Delivery Program outlines the activities that Council will undertake to implement the strategies identified in the Community Strategic Plan and is the single point of reference for all principal activities undertaken by an elected Council during its term in office.

At the end of each quarter a report is prepared to assess Council's progress against 2025-29 Delivery Program actions and the Capital Works Program.

### **REPORT/PROPOSAL**

The 2025-26 Operational Plan is a one-year plan and was developed to implement the adopted actions from the 2025-29 Delivery Program. Some of the highlights for the December quarter are provided below:

- Carols in the Park 2025, sponsorship was secured via Newcastle Permanent and was held 5 December with over 2,000 people in attendance.
- The Visitor Information Centre earned Bronze at the 2025 NSW Tourism Awards, recognising service excellence and visitor experience.
- New bin communication and consultation with Environment & Waste team has now started, with opportunity for input on size and type of bin in new developments.

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- The Housing Discussion Paper has recently been exhibited and explores a range of options to address housing supply in the Cessnock LGA. Submissions are currently being reviewed, with amendments to be made before the Discussion Paper and outcomes from submissions are reported back to Council.
- Works have commenced to restore Centenary Park and install new irrigation.
- In partnership with Mai-Wel and the University of Sydney’s Centre for Disability Research and Policy, a workshop (*Getting Ready Together - Inclusive emergency planning for organisations and the people they support*) was held in November 2025. The workshop aim was to strengthen understanding of how inclusive and person-centred approaches can improve preparedness and response during emergencies.

**2025-29 Delivery Program Objectives**

At the conclusion of the Second Quarter, 11 (7%) of the 158 Actions from the 2025-26 Operational Plan were Completed with 130 (83%) currently In Progress. The ‘In Progress’ Actions will continue to be monitored and reported as part of the quarterly review process. There were no Actions at Risk, 6 (3%) Not Progressing and 11 (7%) which are Not Due to Start at the time of reporting.

Table 1 shows the overall status of actions at 31 December 2025.

**Table 1**

	LIVE We are connected, safe and creative	THRIVE We have a diverse and resilient community	PROTECT We have a healthy and sustainable environment	MOVE We have accessible and reliable infrastructure, services and facilities	LEAD We have strong leadership and effective governance	Total	%
In Progress	40	13	36	17	24	130	83
Complete	5	2	-	-	4	11	7
Not Due to Start	1	4	1	-	5	11	7
Not Progressing	-	-	2	3	1	6	3
At Risk	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Deferred	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	46	19	39	20	34	158	100

Details of the projects have been included in **Enclosure 1**.

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**2025-26 Delivery Program Capital Works**

At 31 December 2025, 14 of the 84 projects from the 2025-26 Capital Works Program were Completed, 3 were Not Progressing, 36 were In Progress, 1 was deferred and 16 projects are Not Due to Start at the time of reporting.

14 New Projects (refer to Table 3) were added to our program, with the majority of these projects externally funded from grants or contributions, and general funds used to leverage the funding opportunity.

Table 2 shows a summary the overall status of projects at 31 December 2025.

**Table 2**

Program	In progress	Complete	Not due to start	Deferred	Not progressing	New Projects	Total
Administration equipment & systems	1	1	1	-	-	-	3
Airport	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Aquatic Facilities	1	1	-	-	-	-	2
Bridges	1	-	1	-	-	-	2
Buildings	3	1	1	-	-	2	7
Cemeteries	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Depot Management	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Drainage	3	1	-	-	-	-	4
Fleet Management	2	-	-	-	-	-	2
Floodplain Management	-	-	3	-	-	1	4
Infrastructure Contributions Plans	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Libraries	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Other Infrastructure	-	2	1	-	-	-	3
Other Open Space & Recreation	6	3	3	-	-	3	15
Pathways	5	1	-	-	1	2	9
Plant & Equipment	1	-	3	-	-	-	4
Traffic Facilities & Road Safety	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Tourist Connections & Services	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Town Centres	3	-	-	-	-	-	3
Roads	6	2	1	-	2	6	17
Waste Management	3	1	1	-	-	-	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>84</b>



Table 3 shows a summary of new projects added to the 2025-26 Capital Works Program at 31 December 2025.

**Table 3**

<b>NEW 2025-26 Capital Works Projects</b>					
<b>Suburb</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Budget Forecast</b>	<b>Particulars</b>	<b>Who</b>
North Rothbury	Thomas Street	Deliver betterment	\$3,517,695	Grant Funds	Infrastructure Manager
Heddon Greta	Heddon Street	Investigate and Design Phase 1	\$79,612	Grant Funds	Infrastructure Manager
Heddon Greta	Avery's Lane	Investigate and Design Phase 1	\$800,000	Contributions	Infrastructure Manager
Ellalong	Campbell Street	Deliver road upgrade and drainage	\$20,000	Stormwater levy	Infrastructure Manager
Cessnock	Vincent Street	Property Land Acquisitions	\$725,000	Contributions	Community and Cultural Development Manager
Greta	West Street	Deliver shared pathway	\$422,946	Contributions	Infrastructure Manager
Abermain	Abermain to Kurri	Deliver shared pathway	\$300,000	Grant funds	Infrastructure Manager
Cessnock	Black Creek	Deliver flood mitigation	\$268,000	Grant funds/stormwater/general funds	Asset Planning Manager
Kurri Kurri	Birralee Park (Juniors)	Deliver refurbishment and extension drawings	\$30,716	Contributions	Open Space and Community Facilities Manager
Laguna	Great North Road	Deliver road safety blackspot program – grant funded	\$50,000	Grant funds	Infrastructure Manager
Branxton	Greta Central Oval	Deliver amenities renewal	\$329,115	Contributions	Open Space and Community Facilities Manager
Cessnock	Cessnock Hockey	Deliver surface replacement	\$21,000	General funds	Open Space and Community Facilities Manager
Cessnock	Cessnock City Library	Deliver and design expansion and upgrades	\$200,000	Contributions	Open Space and Community Facilities Manager
Nulkaba	McDonalds Road	Deliver intersection upgrade	\$140,000	General funds	Infrastructure Manager

Detailed information on the Capital Works Program is also included in **Enclosure 1**.

## **OPTIONS**

N/A

## **CONSULTATION**

The General Manager, Directors, Managers and Coordinators provided the information for this report and its enclosures.

## **STRATEGIC LINKS**

### **a. Delivery Program**

This report is part of the organisation's governance framework – providing feedback on the progress against the key plans adopted by Council. This is in line with the community's desired outcome of: *"LEAD: We have strong leadership and effective governance."*

### **b. Other Plans**

Nil

## **IMPLICATIONS**

### **a. Policy and Procedural Implications**

Nil

### **b. Financial Implications**

The quarterly budget review forecasts are reported separately to Council.

### **c. Legislative Implications**

This report satisfies the requirements of Section 404 of the *Local Government Act 1993*.

### **d. Risk Implications**

Nil

### **e. Other Implications**

Nil

## **CONCLUSION**

The review of the 2025-29 Delivery Program against the Operational Plan 2025-26, for the Quarter ended 31 December 2025, is submitted for Council's consideration.

## **ENCLOSURES**

[1](#) 2025-26 Quarter 2 Review Report

**SUBJECT:** *QUARTERLY BUDGET REVIEW STATEMENT - QUARTER 2, 31 DECEMBER 2025*

**RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:** *Acting Chief Finance Officer*

## SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to present the Quarterly Budget Review Statement (QBR) for the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter December 2025 for Council's information.

## RECOMMENDATION

1. That Council receives the December 2025 Quarterly Budget Review Statement in accordance with Clause 203 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021.
2. That Council approves proposed changes to the 2025-26 operating and capital budgets as presented in the Quarterly Business Report December 2025.

## BACKGROUND

Section 203 of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* (the Regulation) requires the QBR to be prepared and submitted to Council. A separate report to Council contains information in regard to Council's Delivery Program and reporting under Integrated Planning and Reporting requirements.

The QBR for December 2025 is presented to Council for consideration and contains all necessary Quarterly Budget Review Statements. The QBR was presented to the Audit Risk and Improvement Committee at the 11 February 2026 Committee meeting.

## REPORT

The budget review process involved responsible budget managers reviewing income and expenditure patterns and, after consultation with finance staff, proposing any required changes. Changes may have been from unforeseen circumstances or elements beyond the control of Council, additional funding opportunities, or from Council resolutions.

### **General Budget Commentary**

The QBR Q2 December 2025 is provided at **Enclosure 1** and shows a projected operating surplus of \$53m for the year ending 30 June 2026, or a forecast net operating deficit of \$26m excluding capital grants and contributions income.

The QBR also shows a revised capital works program forecasting changes that decrease the current program of \$82m by \$6.8m. December YTD spend on the capital works program is \$33m with the largest spend on the new landfill development and road renewal projects.

For details on all proposed budget changes refer to the notes in the QBR attachment.

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### **Employee Costs**

There is a risk that employee costs may remain above budget at the end of the financial year. Currently, employee expenditure is above budget driven by multiple factors, including a reduced level of salary capitalisation in the capital works program, employee leave entitlements timing differences, vacancy movements (inclusive of General Manager departure in July 2025) and other timing differences. This will be investigated further and reported as part of the March QBRs.

### **Cash and Investments**

As can be seen in the attached enclosure, Council YTD unallocated reserves are in the positive. There will be a continued focus on cash management throughout the year with impacts being strongly felt each month prior to a rates payment. As per the financial sustainability review this is another key indicator for the need for a Special Variation.

### **Responsible Accounting Officer Statement**

Section 203 (2) of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* requires that the budget review statement include, or be accompanied by, a report from the Responsible Accounting Officer. This report is required to indicate whether the Responsible Accounting Officer (RAO) believes that the statement indicates that the financial position of the Council is satisfactory, having regard to the original estimate of income and expenditure, and, if that position is unsatisfactory, recommendations for remedial action.

The RAO statement is:

*It is my opinion that the Quarterly Budget Review Statement for Cessnock City Council for the quarter ended 31 December 2025 indicates that Council's projected financial position at 30 June 2026 will be satisfactory at year end, having regard to the projected estimates of income and expenditure and the original budgeted income and expenditure and remains in line with Council's financial strategy. This is predicated on a successful Council application for a special rate variation as outlined in the financial sustainability review.*

### **CONSULTATION**

The following staff provided input into the preparation of this report and its enclosures:

- General Manager
- Directors
- Managers
- Senior finance staff

### **STRATEGIC LINKS**

#### **a. Delivery Program**

This report is a crucial part of the organisation's governance framework – providing feedback on the progress against the budget adopted by Council. This is in line with the community's desired outcome of: "*Civic Leadership and Effective Governance.*"

## **IMPLICATIONS**

### **a. Policy and Procedural Implications**

N/A

### **b. Financial Implications**

The QBRS is presented in accordance with the adopted budget strategy. The detailed review of all operational and capital budgets is a continuous process. The objective is to improve Council's current and future financial position.

### **c. Legislative Implications**

Section 203 of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* requires the Responsible Accounting Officer to prepare and submit to Council a QBRS that shows revised estimates of income and expenditure for the year.

### **d. Risk Implications**

The following are some of the risks that may impact achievement of the projected full year operating statement deficit:

- Losses on disposal of asset values as a result of assets being upgraded or renewed prior to the end of their effective lives;
- Unrealised losses associated with the managed fund held with TCorp;
- Increased operational employee costs due to lower capitalisation of labour; and
- Increased costs associated with materials including electricity, fuel, insurance and construction.

### **e. Other Implications**

N/A

## **CONCLUSION**

The Quarterly Budget Review Statement for December 2025 is submitted for approval.

## **ENCLOSURES**

- [1](#) Quarterly Budget Review Statement - Q2, 31 December 2025

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Corporate and Community Services



**SUBJECT:** *DISCLOSURES OF INTERESTS IN WRITTEN RETURNS*

**RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:** *Corporate Governance Manager*

### **SUMMARY**

The purpose of this report is to table returns received from designated persons for the period 1 November 2025 to 31 January 2026 in accordance with the Code of Conduct (the Code).

### **RECOMMENDATION**

**That Council notes the tabling of the disclosures of interests in written returns for the period 1 November 2025 to 31 January 2026 in accordance with Council's Code of Conduct.**

### **BACKGROUND**

Part 4 of the Code governs matters concerning disclosures of interests in written returns. Clause 4.24 of the Code requires the General Manager to keep a register of returns lodged by Councillors and designated persons and to table them at a meeting of Council.

### **REPORT/PROPOSAL**

In accordance with Clause 4.21 of the Code, a Councillor or designated person must make and lodge a return within three months of becoming or ceasing to be a Councillor or designated person, 30 June each year, and or becoming aware of an interest they are required to disclose.

Clause 4.8 of the Code provides that designated persons are:

- (a) *The General Manager;*
- (b) *Other senior staff of Council for the purposes of section 332 of the LG Act;*
- (c) *A person (other than a member of the senior staff of Council) who is a member of staff of Council or a Delegate of Council and who holds a position identified by Council as the position of a designated person because it involves the exercise of functions (such as regulatory functions or contractual functions) that, in their exercise, could give rise to a conflict between the person's duty as a member of staff or Delegate of Council and the person's private interest;*
- (d) *A person (other than a member of the senior staff of Council) who is a member of a committee of Council identified by Council as a committee whose members are designated persons because the functions of the committee involve the exercise of Council's functions (such as regulatory functions or contractual functions) that, in their exercise, could give rise to a conflict between the member's duty as a member of the committee and the member's private interest.*

### **OPTIONS**

N/A

## **CONSULTATION**

Designated persons were provided the [Self-Help Guide](#) from the Office of Local Government to assist them in the completion of their returns.

## **STRATEGIC LINKS**

### **a. Delivery Program**

Completion of the written returns for the period links to the community's desired outcome of "Civic Leadership and Effective Governance", and in particular, it links to:

- Strategic direction 5.3.7 within the Delivery Program 2022-2026 – *continue to manage Council governance functions and statutory requirements*, and
- Strategic action 5.3.7b within the Operational Plan 2023-2024 – *carry out governance functions, provide advice and conduct education programs to comply with legislation and best practice including in relation to delegations, legislative interpretation, compliance, complaints, UCCs, GIPA, PPIPA, Copyright, PIDs, Fraud and Corruption Prevention, policies, etc*

### **b. Other Plans**

N/A

## **IMPLICATIONS**

### **a. Policy and Procedural Implications**

Clause 4.24 of the Code requires the General Manager to keep a register of returns lodged and clause 4.25 requires the General Manager to table such returns at the first meeting of Council after the last day the returns are required to be lodged.

### **b. Financial Implications**

N/A

### **c. Legislative Implications**

N/A

### **d. Risk Implications**

Failure by a Councillor or designated person to lodge a written return of interest may constitute a breach of the Code.

### **e. Environmental Implications**

N/A

Corporate and Community

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Corporate and Community Services

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**f. Other Implications**

Tabling the register of returns and allowing access demonstrates Council's commitment to openness and transparency, and is a crucial element of civic leadership and effective governance.

**CONCLUSION**

Tabling of the register of returns satisfies Council's requirements under the Code.

**ENCLOSURES**

There are no enclosures for this report.

**SUBJECT:** *INVESTMENT REPORT - DECEMBER 2025*

**RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:** *Acting Chief Financial Officer*

### **SUMMARY**

Section 625 of the *Local Government Act 1993* (the Act), Clause 212 of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* (the Regulation) and Council's Investment Policy (the Policy) requires a monthly report to Council detailing all money invested.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

**That Council receives the Investment Report for December 2025 and notes that:**

- **Investments are held in accordance with Council's Investment Policy, which is in accordance with the Ministerial Investment Order.**
- **Council's month end cash and investments balance was \$77,104,014.**

### **BACKGROUND**

A monthly report to Council detailing money invested as per the Act, Regulation and Policy.

### **REPORT**

#### Statement by the Responsible Accounting Officer

The Responsible Accounting Officer has certified that this report is produced in accordance with Clause 212 of the Regulation and that all investments have been made in accordance with the Act, Regulation and Policy.

#### General Investment Commentary

Council officers monitor and manage the cash and investment portfolio by taking into consideration credit ratings of financial institutions, interest rates offered for periods of investment, counterparty exposures and cash flow requirements.

Following assessment of projected cash flow requirements, surplus funds are invested in accordance with the Policy. Investment returns of the portfolio to the end of December 2025 are exceeding budget.



Investment Portfolio Information

**Table 1** Total cash and investments held by Council as at 31 December 2025

Invest No	Financial Institution Investment Held With	Invest Type	Interest Coupon Term	Maturity	Current Coupon Rate	Par Value \$'000
	Commonwealth Bank	CASH			3.25%	1,852
	Commonwealth Bank	At Call			3.60%	22,542
	Commonwealth Bank	At Call			3.25%	756
1243	AMP Bank	At Call			2.00%	567
1533	National Bank	TD	270	10-Feb-26	4.33%	2,500
1534	Bank of Queensland	TD	275	05-Mar-26	4.20%	6,000
1536	Bank of Queensland	TD	218	07-Jan-26	4.30%	5,000
1537	Suncorp Bank	TD	365	03-Jun-26	4.14%	4,000
1538	Suncorp Bank	TD	299	21-Apr-26	4.24%	2,500
1540	Bank of Queensland	TD	218	28-Jan-26	4.37%	2,000
1541	Suncorp Bank	TD	272	30-Mar-26	4.30%	3,000
1542	National Bank	TD	365	10-Sep-26	4.20%	2,000
1543	Suncorp Bank	TD	243	01-Jun-26	4.30%	3,000
1544	Bank of Queensland	TD	243	01-Jun-26	4.23%	2,000
1545	Teachers Mutual Bank	FRN	1096	03-Oct-28	4.54%	1,000
1546	Suncorp Bank	TD	216	09-Jun-26	4.32%	3,000
1547	Suncorp Bank	TD	245	22-Jul-26	4.28%	5,000
1548	Police Bank Limited	FRN	1096	03-Nov-28	4.69%	750
1549	Commonwealth Bank	TD	154	28-Apr-26	4.22%	5,000
1463	Treasury Corporation	Growth Fund				4,637
<b>TOTAL</b>						<b>77,104</b>

**Table 2** Level of funds held and the percentage invested with financial institutions

Financial Institution	Credit Rating	Institution Maximum	Amount \$'000	% of Portfolio
Commonwealth Bank	AA-	40%	5,000	9.73%
National Australia Bank	AA-	40%	4,500	8.76%
Suncorp Bank	AA-	40%	20,500	39.89%
Bank of Queensland	A-	40%	15,000	29.19%
Teachers Mutual Bank	BBB+	15%	1,000	1.95%
Police Bank	BBB+	15%	750	1.46%
Treasury Corporation	Unrated	30%	4,637	9.02%
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>51,387</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

In accordance with the Policy, figures in Table 2 above exclude cash and at call balances in Council's main operating account held with the Commonwealth and AMP banks.

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Corporate and Community Services



Investment in NSW Treasury Corporation (TCorp)

TCorpIM Funds are unit trusts. Distributions are made annually and are automatically reinvested into the fund to buy additional units. As this investment is held for medium to long-term capital appreciation, gains or losses will only be realised on redemption of the investment.

The December 2025 unrealised return was a gain of \$ 3005.35 or 0.06% (3.66% annualised).

**Table 3** NSW Treasury Corporation Performance Summary (November 2025)

	<b>10 years (% pa)</b>	<b>7 years (% pa)</b>	<b>3 years (% pa)</b>	<b>1 year %</b>	<b>FYTD %</b>	<b>1 month %</b>
IM Medium Term Growth Fund	4.46	4.68	6.79	8.10	3.54	(0.30)
Benchmark: CPI + 2.0% p.a. (over rolling 5 years)	4.83	5.32	5.77	5.32	2.52	0.50
Return above benchmark p.a.	(0.37)	(0.64)	1.02	2.78	1.02	(0.80)

**Table 4** Investment types, risk, amount and percentage invested compared to total.

<b>Investment Type</b>	<b>Risk Assessment</b>		<b>Amount</b>	<b>% Of</b>
	<b>Capital</b>	<b>Interest</b>	<b>\$'000</b>	<b>Portfolio</b>
Term Deposits	Low	Low	45,000	58.36%
Cash/At Call Deposits	Low	Low	25,717	33.36%
Floating Rate Note	Low	Low	1,750	2.27%
Capital Growth Fund	Medium	Medium	4,637	6.01%
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>77,104</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

**Table 5** Comparison of interest rates, earnings and balances this year to last year

<b>Performance Measures</b>	<b>This Year</b>	<b>Last Year</b>
Investment Portfolio Average Interest Rate (year to date)	3.94%	5.34%
BBSW Average Interest Rate (year to date) *	3.71%	4.5%
Actual Investment Interest Earned (for the current month)	\$252,877	\$255,027
Actual Investment Interest Earned (year to date) ^	\$1,689,843	\$1,664,984
Revised Budget Investment Interest (year to date)	\$1,375,000	\$1,375,000
Original Budget Investment Interest (annual)	\$2,750,000	\$2,500,000
Revised Budget Investment Interest (annual)	\$2,750,000	\$2,750,000
TCorp unrealised movement (year to date)	3.66%	4.08%

<b>Investment and Cash Balances (Par Value) #</b>	<b>This Year</b>	<b>Last Year</b>
Opening Balance as at 1 July	\$97,128,204	\$83,084,775
Closing Balance as at 31 December	\$77,104,014	\$66,290,975

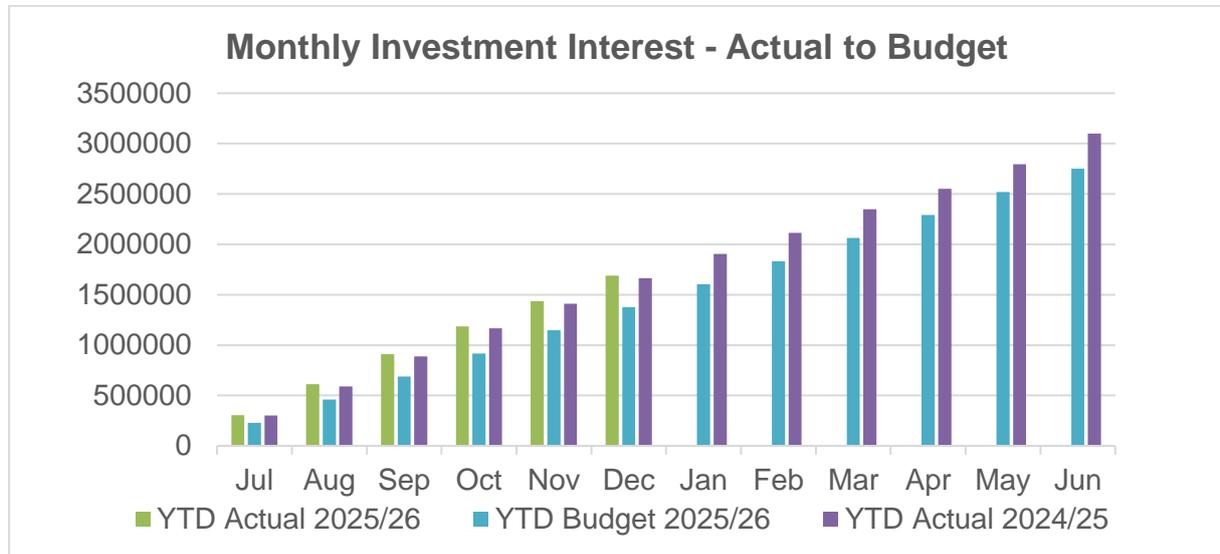
\* BBSW 90-day Bank Bill Reference Rate (performance measure as per Council's Investment Policy)

^ Excludes TCorp unrealised returns

# Excludes Section 355 Committee cash held



**Graph 1** Actual interest earned compared to revised budget and actual interest last year



**Table 6** Internal and external restrictions over cash and investments held

Month End Totals \$'000	Dec 2025	Nov 2025	Oct 2025	Sept 2025	Aug 2025	Jul 2025
<b>External Restrictions</b>	75,752	81,119	77,431	85,511	89,117	81,418
<b>Internal Restrictions</b>	1,224	1,105	2,246	7,020	8,198	7,349
<b>Total Restrictions</b>	<b>76,976</b>	<b>82,224</b>	<b>79,677</b>	<b>92,531</b>	<b>97,315</b>	<b>88,767</b>
<b>Unrestricted</b>	128	95	349	882	853	94
<b>Total Cash &amp; Investments</b>	<b>77,104</b>	<b>82,319</b>	<b>80,026</b>	<b>93,413</b>	<b>98,168</b>	<b>88,861</b>

Council's cashflow profile is inherently uneven, with the majority of cash inflows occurring during the quarterly rate instalment periods in August, November, February and May. Outside these peak collection windows, Council relies on available cash reserves to meet ongoing operational and capital expenditure commitments.

At present, a number of major capital projects are being delivered which are significantly funded from restricted cash sources (for example, grants, developer contributions and externally restricted reserves). While these funds contribute to overall cash holdings, they are not available for general operations and must be applied in accordance with their specific purpose. As a result, Council's reported cash balance at any point in time does not represent unrestricted liquidity available to support day-to-day service delivery.

This timing mismatch between when revenue is received and when expenditure occurs is a normal feature of local government cash management and is actively managed through cashflow forecasting and reserve planning.

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC10/2026

Corporate and Community Services



## **CONSULTATION**

- Director Corporate and Community Services
- Chief Financial Officer
- Finance staff

## **STRATEGIC LINKS**

### **a. Delivery Program**

Investment returns are an integral part of funding for future services and community expectations within the Delivery Program and Operational Plan. This report is a part of Council's governance framework – providing feedback on the progress against the investment policy and budget. This is in line with the community's desired outcome of: "*Civic Leadership and Effective Governance*" and more specifically links to strategic direction:

- 5.3.2: Our Council's processes are efficient and transparent;
- 5.3.3: Our Council is financially sustainable.

## **IMPLICATIONS**

### **a. Policy and Procedural Implications**

Investments are held in accordance with Council's Investment Policy.

### **b. Financial Implications**

Investment returns are included in Council's Delivery Program and Operational Plan. Amendments are affected through the Quarterly Budget Review process. Investment portfolio performance is detailed within the report with comparisons to prior year and budget.

A portion of the portfolio and its associated investment income is restricted as it relates to funds from developer contributions, payments in advance for grant projects, Domestic Waste Management, and stormwater management income to be applied to specific purposes and not available for general operational projects.

### **c. Legislative Implications**

This report meets Council's statutory obligations under the Act and Regulation.

### **d. Risk Implications**

Investment risks are detailed within this report.

### **e. Other Implications**

There are no environmental, community, consultative or other implications to this report.

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC10/2026

Corporate and Community Services

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***CONCLUSION***

The report details investments held at month end and meets Councils reporting obligations.

***ENCLOSURES***

There are no enclosures for this report.

**SUBJECT:** *INVESTMENT REPORT - JANUARY 2026*

**RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:** *Acting Chief Finance Officer*

### **SUMMARY**

Section 625 of the *Local Government Act 1993* (the Act), Clause 212 of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* (the Regulation) and Council's Investment Policy (the Policy) requires a monthly report to Council detailing all money invested.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

**That Council receives the Investment Report for January 2026 and notes that:**

- **Investments are held in accordance with Council's Investment Policy, which is in accordance with the Ministerial Investment Order.**
- **Council's month end cash and investments balance was \$73,567,689.**

### **BACKGROUND**

A monthly report to Council detailing money invested as per the Act, Regulation and Policy.

### **REPORT**

#### Statement by the Responsible Accounting Officer

The Responsible Accounting Officer has certified that this report is produced in accordance with Clause 212 of the Regulation and that all investments have been made in accordance with the Act, Regulation and Policy.

#### General Investment Commentary

Council officers monitor and manage the cash and investment portfolio by taking into consideration credit ratings of financial institutions, interest rates offered for periods of investment, counterparty exposures and cash flow requirements.

Following assessment of projected cash flow requirements, surplus funds are invested in accordance with the Policy. Investment returns of the portfolio to the end of January 2026 are exceeding budget.



Investment Portfolio Information

**Table 1** Total cash and investments held by Council as at 31 January 2026

Invest No	Financial Institution Investment Held With	Invest Type	Interest Coupon Term	Maturity	Current Coupon Rate	Par Value \$'000
	Commonwealth Bank	CASH			3.25%	1,781
	Commonwealth Bank	At Call			3.60%	19,041
	Commonwealth Bank	At Call			3.25%	758
1243	AMP Bank	At Call			2.00%	564
1533	National Bank	TD	270	10-Feb-26	4.33%	2,500
1534	Bank of Queensland	TD	275	05-Mar-26	4.20%	6,000
1537	Suncorp Bank	TD	365	03-Jun-26	4.14%	4,000
1538	Suncorp Bank	TD	299	21-Apr-26	4.24%	2,500
1541	Suncorp Bank	TD	272	30-Mar-26	4.30%	3,000
1542	National Bank	TD	365	10-Sep-26	4.20%	2,000
1543	Suncorp Bank	TD	243	01-Jun-26	4.30%	3,000
1544	Bank of Queensland	TD	243	01-Jun-26	4.23%	2,000
1545	Teachers Mutual Bank	FRN	1096	03-Oct-28	4.54%	1,000
1546	Suncorp Bank	TD	216	09-Jun-26	4.32%	3,000
1547	Suncorp Bank	TD	245	22-Jul-26	4.28%	5,000
1548	Police Bank Limited	FRN	1096	03-Nov-28	4.69%	750
1549	Commonwealth Bank	TD	154	28-Apr-26	4.22%	5,000
1550	Westpac Bank	TD	272	06-Oct-26	4.56%	5,000
1551	Westpac Bank	TD	272	27-Oct-26	4.72%	2,000
1463	Treasury Corporation	Growth Fund				4,673
	<b>TOTAL</b>					<b>73,567</b>

**Table 2** Level of funds held and the percentage invested with financial institutions

Financial Institution	Credit Rating	Institution Maximum	Amount \$'000	% of Portfolio
Commonwealth Bank	AA-	40%	5,000	9.72%
Westpac Bank	AA-	40%	7,000	13.61%
National Australia Bank	AA-	40%	4,500	8.75%
Suncorp Bank	AA-	40%	20,500	39.87%
Bank of Queensland	A-	40%	8,000	15.56%
Teachers Mutual Bank	BBB+	15%	1,000	1.94%
Police Bank	BBB+	15%	750	1.46%
Treasury Corporation	Unrated	30%	4,673	9.09%
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>51,423</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC11/2026

Corporate and Community Services



In accordance with the Policy, figures in Table 2 above exclude cash and at call balances in Council's main operating account held with the Commonwealth and AMP banks.

Investment in NSW Treasury Corporation (TCorp)

TCorpIM Funds are unit trusts. Distributions are made annually and are automatically reinvested into the fund to buy additional units. As this investment is held for medium to long-term capital appreciation, gains or losses will only be realised on redemption of the investment.

The January 2026 unrealised return was a gain of \$ 35,401.16 or 0.76% (4.45% annualised).

**Table 3** NSW Treasury Corporation Performance Summary (December 2025)

	10 years (% pa)	7 years (% pa)	3 years (% pa)	1 year %	FYTD %	1 month %
IM Medium Term Growth Fund	4.5	4.8	7.4	7.7	3.6	0.1
Benchmark: CPI + 2.0% p.a. (over rolling 5 years)	4.8	5.3	5.7	5.5	3.0	0.5
Return above benchmark p.a.	(0.3)	(0.5)	1.7	2.2	0.6	(0.40)

**Table 4** Investment types, risk, amount and percentage invested compared to total.

Investment Type	Risk Assessment		Amount	% Of
	Capital	Interest	\$'000	Portfolio
Term Deposits	Low	Low	45,000	61.17%
Cash/At Call Deposits	Low	Low	22,144	30.1%
Floating Rate Note	Low	Low	1,750	2.38%
Capital Growth Fund	Medium	Medium	4,673	6.35%
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>73,567</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

**Table 5** Comparison of interest rates, earnings and balances this year to last year

Performance Measures	This Year	Last Year
Investment Portfolio Average Interest Rate (year to date)	4.73%	5.4%
BBSW Average Interest Rate (year to date) *	3.64%	4.51%
Actual Investment Interest Earned (for the current month)	\$239,860	\$233,515
Actual Investment Interest Earned (year to date) ^	\$1,929,703	\$1,898,211
Revised Budget Investment Interest (year to date)	\$1,604,167	\$1,604,167
Original Budget Investment Interest (annual)	\$2,750,000	\$2,500,000
Revised Budget Investment Interest (annual)	\$2,750,000	\$2,750,000
TCorp unrealised movement (year to date)	4.45%	4.08%

Investment and Cash Balances (Par Value) #	This Year	Last Year
Opening Balance as at 1 July	\$97,128,204	\$83,084,775
Closing Balance as at 31 January	\$73,567,689	\$66,290,975

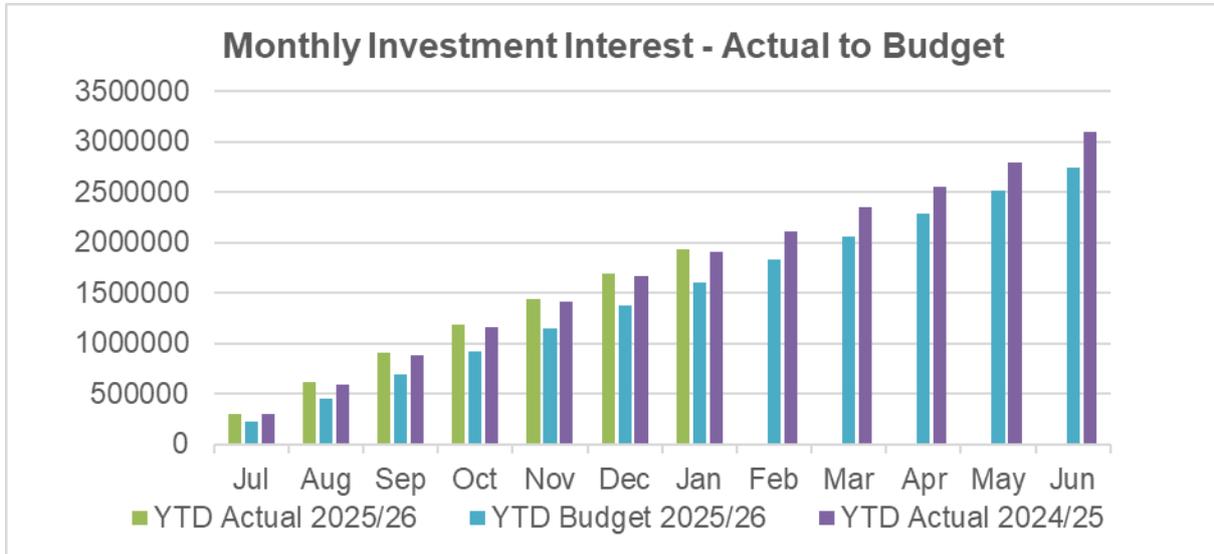
\* BBSW 90-day Bank Bill Reference Rate (performance measure as per Council's Investment Policy)

^ Excludes TCorp unrealised returns

# Excludes Section 355 Committee cash held



**Graph 1** Actual interest earned compared to revised budget and actual interest last year



**Table 6** Internal and external restrictions over cash and investments held

Month End Totals \$'000	Jan 2026	Dec 2025	Nov 2025	Oct 2025	Sept 2025	Aug 2025
<b>External Restrictions</b>	72,313	75,752	81,119	77,431	85,511	89,117
<b>Internal Restrictions</b>	1,119	1,224	1,105	2,246	7,020	8,198
<b>Total Restrictions</b>	<b>73,432</b>	<b>76,976</b>	<b>82,224</b>	<b>79,677</b>	<b>92,531</b>	<b>97,315</b>
<b>Unrestricted</b>	135	128	95	349	882	853
<b>Total Cash &amp; Investments</b>	<b>73,567</b>	<b>77,104</b>	<b>82,319</b>	<b>80,026</b>	<b>93,413</b>	<b>98,168</b>

Council’s cashflow profile is inherently uneven, with the majority of cash inflows occurring during the quarterly rate instalment periods in August, November, February and May. Outside these peak collection windows, Council relies on available cash reserves to meet ongoing operational and capital expenditure commitments.

At present, a number of major capital projects are being delivered which are significantly funded from restricted cash sources (for example, grants, developer contributions and externally restricted reserves). While these funds contribute to overall cash holdings, they are not available for general operations and must be applied in accordance with their specific purpose. As a result, Council’s reported cash balance at any point in time does not represent unrestricted liquidity available to support day-to-day service delivery.

This timing mismatch between when revenue is received and when expenditure occurs is a normal feature of local government cash management and is actively managed through cashflow forecasting and reserve planning.

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC11/2026

Corporate and Community Services



## **CONSULTATION**

- Director Corporate and Community Services
- Chief Financial Officer
- Finance staff

## **STRATEGIC LINKS**

### **a. Delivery Program**

Investment returns are an integral part of funding for future services and community expectations within the Delivery Program and Operational Plan. This report is a part of Council's governance framework – providing feedback on the progress against the investment policy and budget. This is in line with the community's desired outcome of: "*Civic Leadership and Effective Governance*" and more specifically links to strategic direction:

- 5.3.2: Our Council's processes are efficient and transparent;
- 5.3.3: Our Council is financially sustainable.

## **IMPLICATIONS**

### **a. Policy and Procedural Implications**

Investments are held in accordance with Council's Investment Policy.

### **b. Financial Implications**

Investment returns are included in Council's Delivery Program and Operational Plan. Amendments are affected through the Quarterly Budget Review process. Investment portfolio performance is detailed within the report with comparisons to prior year and budget.

A portion of the portfolio and its associated investment income is restricted as it relates to funds from developer contributions, payments in advance for grant projects, Domestic Waste Management, and stormwater management income to be applied to specific purposes and not available for general operational projects.

### **c. Legislative Implications**

This report meets Council's statutory obligations under the Act and Regulation.

### **d. Risk Implications**

Investment risks are detailed within this report.

### **e. Other Implications**

There are no environmental, community, consultative or other implications to this report.

Corporate and Community

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Corporate and Community Services

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***CONCLUSION***

The report details investments held at month end and meets Councils reporting obligations.

***ENCLOSURES***

There are no enclosures for this report.

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC12/2026

Corporate and Community Services



**SUBJECT:** *RESOLUTIONS TRACKING REPORT*

**RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:** *Corporate Governance Manager*

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### **SUMMARY**

The enclosure contains pending actions from previous meetings as well as completed actions for period 2 December 2025 to 10 February 2026 .

### **RECOMMENDATION**

**That Council receives the report and notes the information in the Resolutions Tracking Report.**

### **ENCLOSURES**

- [1](#) ⇨ Outstanding Actions
- [2](#) ⇨ Completed Actions

Works and Infrastructure

Report No. WI1/2026

Works and Infrastructure



**SUBJECT:** *INVESTIGATE OPTIONS TO REMOVE THE SHARED ZONE WITHIN COOPER STREET & CHARLTON STREET INTERSECTION*

**RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:** *Infrastructure Manager*

## **SUMMARY**

This report provides options for consideration that are intended to improve safety for pedestrian and vehicular traffic at the Cooper and Charlton Street intersection and includes consideration of parking in public car parks to prioritise pedestrian safety and maintain a similar functionality as currently exists.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

1. That Council endorses the recommendation to install interim pedestrian crossings, remove the front-to-kerb parking for the Council owned car park adjacent Charlton Street and provide an alternate parking treatment to improve pedestrian safety, with funding from existing FY26 operational budgets;
2. That Council endorse the removal of the shared zone in Charlton Street and submit an application to TfNSW for removal of the shared zone and associated speed zone change;
3. That Council endorses the preferred option (Option 3) so that a staged implementation to improve pedestrian safety, manage traffic, reduce ongoing maintenance and provide adequate parking can progress as funding becomes available and;
4. That Council supports the application for suitable grant funding to prioritise the remaining safety improvements once the shared relevant approval has been sought by TfNSW.

## **BACKGROUND**

Council officers presented a report on 17 of July 2024 addressing the safety and compliance concerns of the Cooper Street & Charlton Street intersection.

The options included:

1. Removal of the non-compliant shared zone (requiring a submission to TfNSW for approval).
2. Replacement of the existing flagstone pavers with a deep lift asphalt pavement.
3. Removal of the roundabout and management of priority movements by installing stop signs.
4. Installation of compliant pedestrian crossings and local area traffic management (LATM) devices.
5. Implementation of one-way traffic on Cooper Street (between Vincent St and Charlton St) and Charlton Street (between Cooper St and the Council car park entrance).

**Works and Infrastructure**

**Report No. WI1/2026**

**Works and Infrastructure**



This proposal aligned with the objectives of the CCPPDP 2017 and removed the modified shared zone to improve pedestrian safety.

The report was considered however the elected Council did not move the recommendation or make a decision on the report.

In August 2024, the former Local Traffic Committee considered community feedback regarding pedestrian safety along Charlton Street adjacent to the Council car park opposite Coles. The Committee recommended changes to regulatory parking signage, which were subsequently endorsed by Council in October 2024. The change required vehicles to park front-to-kerb only in the row adjacent to the pedestrian footpath. This measure addressed concerns that rear-to-kerb parking caused vehicles to overhang the footpath, compromising the available footpath space for safe passage by pedestrians. Other fixed obstacles such as streetlights and trees compounded the issue.

At the Council meeting of 20 August 2025, Councillor Jurd's notice of motion was considered and Council resolved:

**BN11/2025 Resolution**

- ***That the General Manager investigate options to remove the shared zone at the Cooper and Charlton Streets intersection and reinstate marked foot crossings to enhance pedestrian safety in the area.***

At the Council meeting of 15 October 2025, Councillor King's notice of motion was considered and Council resolved:

**BN16/2025 Resolution**

1. ***That Council revoke the new front to kerb parking rule recently changed on Charlton Street Cessnock.***
2. ***That Council seek alternative solutions to meet the intended purpose of the change.***

**REPORT/PROPOSAL**

Council officers investigated options to remove the shared zone from the previous resolutions of Council (BN11/2025) on Charlton Street and the need to provide adequate and safe footpath widths for pedestrians when removing the front-to-kerb parking restriction (BN16/2025). These matters are intrinsically linked. Considering both issues together within this report demonstrates how they can be achieved in a staged and coordinated way.

This report outlines the options investigated to address the pedestrian safety concerns and parking compliance issue raised by Council officers, elected officials, and the community, with the primary objective of prioritising pedestrian safety through cost-effective, long-term solutions.

Investigations include:

- Traffic Modelling (CBD Masterplan)
- Speed zone review for 30km/h implementation
- Pedestrian safety review within the footpath network and crossing points

Works and Infrastructure

Report No. WI1/2026

Works and Infrastructure



**Key Actions Proposed:**

- **Remove the existing shared zone (10 km/h speed limit):** Submit an application to TfNSW to remove the shared zone. This change is likely to result in an increased speed limit of 30 km/h.
- **Installation of pedestrian crossings:** Install pedestrian crossings at designated points to increase pedestrian safety.
- **Remove the front to kerb parking enforcement:** provide an alternate parking provision that accommodates a safe and compliant pedestrian footway for access adjacent to the carpark.
- **Replace failing flagstone pavement:** Remove the existing flagstone pavers from within the vehicular pavement and replace it with deep lift asphalt.

**OPTIONS**

For Council to progress an application with TfNSW it is required to provide an alternate future plan that meets the safety objectives for pedestrians once the shared zone is removed. Council officers have developed three options that address intersection treatments and improve pedestrian and vehicular safety:

**1. Install marked foot crossings and stop signs on Charlton Street.**

**Enclosure - Cooper & Charlton Street Intersection \_ Option 1**

Option 1 will provide the following key outcomes:

- Apply to remove the existing shared zone (10 km/h speed limit) on Charlton Street and set an appropriate speed zone that maintains safe vehicle speeds through the High Pedestrian Area (HPAA).
- Installation of pedestrian crossings at pedestrian desire lines within the HPAA precinct and implement soft barrier treatments to improve pedestrian safety at these locations.
- Install stop signs on Charlton Street to maintain priority along Cooper Street.
- Remove the front to kerb parking and associated enforcement signage. Installation of a wider and safer footpath free of obstacles and hazards and, reorientate parking to parallel.
- Replace failing flagstone pavement with a durable deep lift AC pavement within the vehicle travel path along Cooper and Charlton.
- Estimated Cost - **\$780,000**

Not recommended as this option has the potential to increase congestion at the Cooper & Charlton Street intersection and funding is not currently available to implement this option.

**2. Install marked foot crossings and stop signs on Cooper Street**

**Enclosure - Cooper & Charlton Street Intersection \_ Option 2**

Option 2 will provide the following key outcomes:

- Apply to remove the existing shared zone (10 km/h speed limit) on Charlton Street and set an appropriate speed zone that maintains safe vehicle speeds through the High Pedestrian Area (HPAA).
- Installation of pedestrian crossings at pedestrian desire lines within the HPAA precinct and implement soft barrier treatments to improve pedestrian safety at these locations.
- Install stop signs on Cooper Street to provide priority along Charlton Street and better manage vehicle movements and speed along Cooper Street.
- Remove the front to kerb parking and associated enforcement signage. Installation of a wider and safer footpath free of obstacles and hazards and, reorientate parking to parallel.
- Replace failing flagstone pavement with a durable deep lift AC pavement within the vehicle travel path along Cooper and Charlton.
- Estimated Cost - **\$780,000**

Not recommended as this option has the potential to increase congestion at the Cooper & Charlton Street intersection and funding is not currently available to implement this option.

**3. Implement one-way traffic on Cooper and Charlton Streets with stop signs and marked foot crossings (presented at the July 2024 Ordinary Council meeting).**

**Enclosure - Cooper & Charlton Street Intersection \_ Option 3**

Option 3 will provide the following key outcomes:

- Apply to remove the existing shared zone (10 km/h speed limit) on Charlton Street and set an appropriate speed zone that maintains safe vehicle speeds through the High Pedestrian Area (HPAA).
- Installation of pedestrian crossings at pedestrian desire lines within the HPAA precinct and implement soft barrier treatments to improve pedestrian safety at these locations.
- Install stop signs on the eastern approach in Cooper Street and the northern approach in Charlton Street. Implement one way on Cooper Street between Vincent Street and Charlton Street, and one way on Charlton Street adjacent to the Coles carpark. This will provide priority along the northern section of Charlton Street to accommodate freight and delivery movements to Woolworths and better manage vehicle movements and speed along Cooper Street.
- Remove the front to kerb parking and associated enforcement signage. Installation of a wider and safer footpath free of obstacles and hazards and, reorientate parking to parallel. The proposed one way along Cooper Street and Charlton Street may also provide additional alternate parking.
- Replace failing flagstone pavement with a durable deep lift AC pavement within the vehicle travel path along Cooper and Charlton.
- Estimated Cost - **\$788,000** (with staged implementation outlined below).

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**Preferred Option 3**

This option balances maintaining access for priority traffic movements at the intersection of Cooper and Charlton Streets, improves pedestrian safety at crossing desire lines and provides opportunities to offset parking spaces lost by reorientating the front-to-kerb parking. This option also demonstrates how it will support a HPAA once the shared zone is removed.

The existing flagstone pavers have continued to fail in multiple locations since they were installed. Council's maintenance team has replaced failed pavers with asphalt at an average cost of \$30,000 per year. Additionally, movement of individual pavers creates a trip hazard for pedestrians.

Any consideration of changes to vehicle movement controls should therefore include removal of the existing flagstone pavers within the pavement (vehicular surface only) and replacement with deep lift asphalt.

**IMPLEMENTATION**

Considering the significant cost and time associated to implement the proposed changes within the preferred option (Option 3), a more cost-effective solution is to stage the works and seek grant funding to reduce the impact on future Operational Plan priorities.

The following approach is recommended to implement the priority works in advance of the shared zone removal.

**Stage 1 – 25/26 Financial Year**

- Line mark carpark to revise parking arrangement;
- Widen footpath and install pedestrian ramp;
- Remove front to kerb regulatory signage;
- Install marked pedestrian crossings in Charlton Street;
- Submit documentation to Transport for NSW to remove the existing designated Shared Zone and associated speed zone change;
- Estimated cost \$15,000 – \$20,000 (to be funded by maintenance budget);

**Stage 2 – 26/27 Financial Year**

- On finalisation of Shared Zone removal and speed zone change commence communications (including dates) of proposed works associated with this change;
- Remove associated signage
- Install remaining pedestrian crossings;
- Estimated cost \$100,000 (to be considered for inclusion in 26/27 Operational Plan);

**Stage 3 – TBC**

- Subject to successful grant funding, complete pavement remediation (deep lift asphalt);
- Implement traffic changes and intersection improvements;
- Install local area traffic management devices (LATMs).
- Estimated cost \$650,000 to be included in future Operational Plan;
- 

The additional positive outcome the staged implementation provides is it achieves the simplest installation of the requested formally marked pedestrian crossings and allows significant time for broad community consultation before any adjustment is made to vehicular traffic movements.

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**CONSULTATION**

Council officers have met with the local public transport operator and major retailers (Coles and Woolworths) regarding the options outlined in this report.

Implementation of the revised intersection treatment will require review and consideration by the Local Traffic Forum. Due to Cooper Street being a public transport route this is a mandatory step as detailed by the Transport for NSW LTF guidelines. This forum includes representation from NSW Police, Transport for NSW, State Member and relevant Public Transport Operators.

**STRATEGIC LINKS**

**a. Delivery Program**

- Outcome 4 – Move, Action 4.2 Improve our Road Network

**b. Other Plans**

- Cessnock Traffic and Transport Strategy 2023
- Cessnock Commercial Precinct Public Domain Plan & Implementation Plan 2017
- Cessnock CBD Traffic Masterplan Study 2025 – Bitzios Consulting

**Note:** The traffic study noted above was specifically commissioned by Council in relation to the planned update of the CCPPDP 2017. The report was initially commissioned and did not specifically include the Cooper and Charlton Street intersection, however following the preparation of the previous report to Council the treatment recommended for implementation was added to the scope to be modelled and tested (This aligns with option 3 within this report).

**IMPLICATIONS**

**a. Policy and Procedural Implications**

N/A

**b. Financial Implications**

A review of the current Operational Plan and consultation with the Finance Business Unit confirmed that funding is not available within the existing plan to implement the total works. Funding will need to be considered for inclusion in future Operational Plans and assessed against competing priorities across the Local Government Area.

The inclusion of a project to implement the endorsed option (except for the interim stage 1 works) within the 26/27 Operational Plan will impact other planned priorities currently included within the road infrastructure program. At this point in time Council Officers are not able to determine exactly what projects may be impacted/delayed. Communication on this will be included in the normal Operational Plan planning process for Councils consideration.

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Chief Finance Officer Commentary

There is no capacity within the current Operational Plan to fully fund these works and the options are not included in the Long-Term Financial Plan. Progressing the project in its entirety would require explicit reprioritisation, resulting in the deferral of other committed roads projects that are considered of a higher priority in the Asset Management Plans.

The precise impacts cannot be confirmed until the 2026/27 Operational Plan is developed; however, other projects will be delayed. These trade-offs will be formally presented through the Operational Plan process for Council's decision.

**c. Legislative Implications**

The proposed improvements to the Cooper and Charlton Street intersection and associated footpath and parking improvements will be implemented as minor works under maintenance. Approval under part 5 of the legislation applies as the works and Council is the public authority under the Roads Act.

The speed zone change will be undertaken in accordance with the NSW Speed Zone Standard and is legislated and determined by Transport for NSW.

Council is the designated authority for enforcement and removal of timed parking and parking restrictions.

**d. Risk Implications**

The implementation of the endorsed intersection treatment and associated parking changes will improve both pedestrian and traffic safety.

The implementation of the endorsed pavement treatment will reduce the likelihood and severity of pavement failure and reduce the potential future costs associated with ongoing maintenance.

If there is no resolution to this matter and none of the proposed improvement options are endorsed by the elected Councilors:

**The pedestrian and traffic safety risk will remain unchanged.**

As previously noted, the budget for reactive maintenance is likely to increase due to accelerated failure of the flagstone paver wearing course and underlying pavement.

**e. Environmental Implications**

Nil

**f. Other Implications**

Temporary closure of sections of Cooper and Charlton Streets will allow works to be completed during normal business hours instead of having to be done as night works. A traffic management plan will be prepared and included as part of an extended communication plan for the proposed project.

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If night works were required an allowance on estimated project costs will be applied at 30%.

**CONCLUSION**

The Cooper and Charlton Streets intersection continues to present safety and maintenance issues due to the modified and non-compliant shared zone configuration and failure of the flagstone vehicular pavement.

The two issues in this report (BN11/2025 and BN16/2025) are intrinsically linked and to implement the preferred option there is a need for these two issues to be considered through the Local Transport Forum.

A significant amount of time has been spent to investigate options that increase safety, identify opportunities to offset the proposed loss of parking spaces and complete cost benefit analysis in relation to pavement improvement works. Option 3 is the recommended option to be implemented in a staged approach detailed in the previous section titled “Implementation”.

Based on investigations, technical advice, stakeholder feedback, and TfNSW requirements. This option proposes to establish priority movements from Cooper Street to Charlton Street, and implements one-way traffic movements with stop signs. It also replaces the failing flagstone pavers with deep lift asphalt within trafficable areas to reduce future maintenance. This option also best aligns with the objectives identified within the current CBP Masterplan.

**Option 3 Outcomes:**

- Provides a coordinated treatment that prioritises pedestrian safety, formalises vehicle movements, and reduces conflict points.
- Ensures compliance with TfNSW standards by removing the shared zone and allowing compliant pedestrian crossings.
- Addresses ongoing pavement failures with a durable, cost-effective asphalt solution, reducing maintenance risk.

**Alignment with Council Resolutions:**

- BN11/2025: All options support a submission to remove the shared zone and enables the installation of formal, marked pedestrian crossings in accordance with TfNSW standards—directly addressing the resolution to improve pedestrian safety and accessibility.
- BN16/2025: All options facilitate the revocation of the front-to-kerb parking requirement on Charlton Street and commits to identifying alternative measures (e.g., refined line-marking, kerb extensions/kerb nibs where feasible, adjusted parking bay depths, targeted signage, and localised footpath adjustments) that maintain pedestrian access while balancing parking functionality.

**ENCLOSURES**

- 1 ⇨ Cooper & Charlton Intersection \_ Option 1
- 2 ⇨ Cooper & Charlton Intersection \_ Option 2
- 3 ⇨ Cooper & Charlton Intersection \_ Option 3