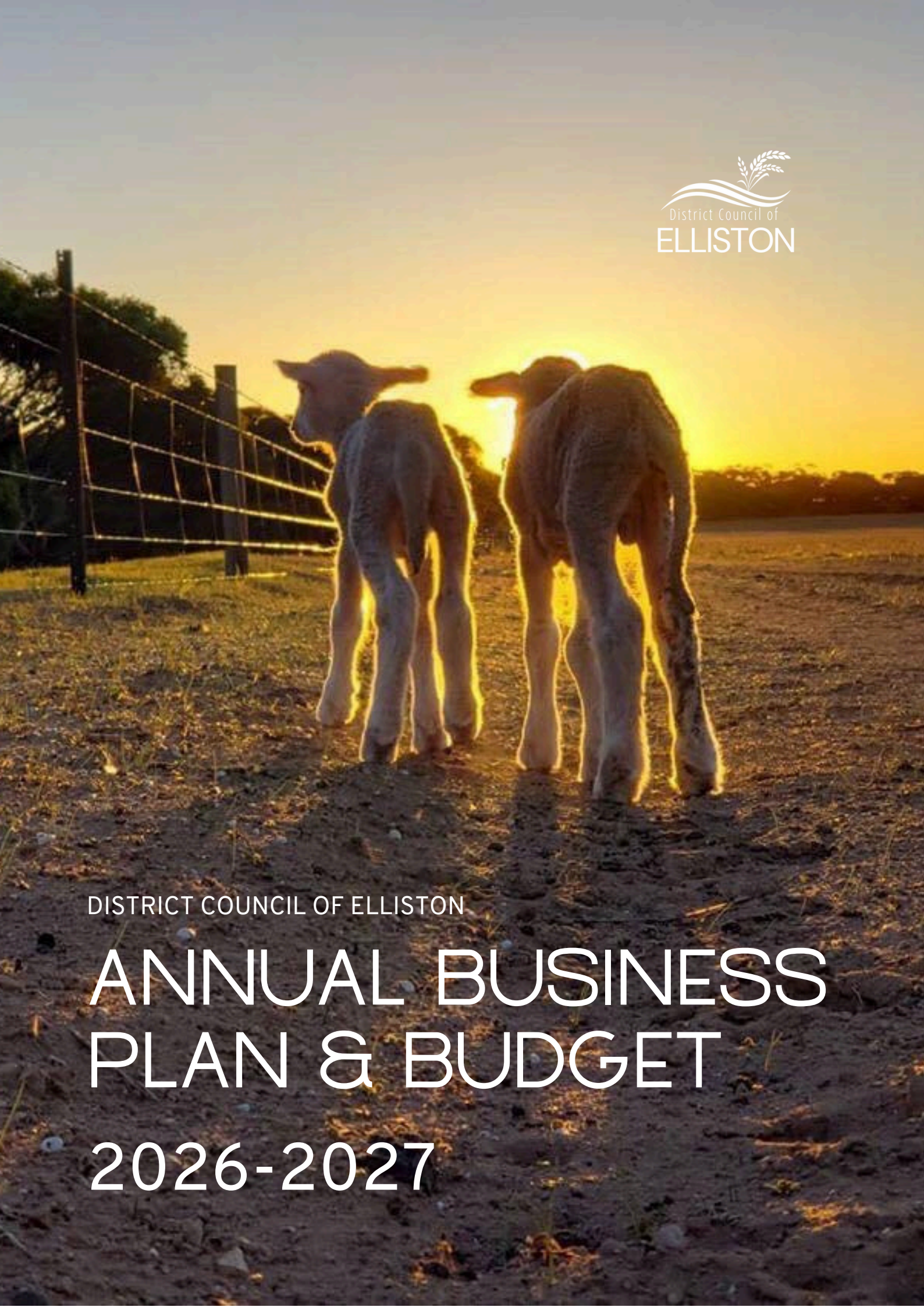


District Council of
ELLISTON

DISTRICT COUNCIL OF ELLISTON

ANNUAL BUSINESS PLAN & BUDGET

2026-2027

INTRODUCTION

This Annual Business Plan and Budget 2026–2027 outlines the District Council of Elliston's proposed services, programs and priorities for the financial year.

The Plan has been developed in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Act 1999 and forms a key part of Council's integrated planning and reporting framework.

It sets out Council's intended service delivery, planned projects and financial direction, and provides an opportunity for the community to review and provide feedback before the plan is finalised.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The District Council of Elliston acknowledges Nauo and Wirangu people as traditional owners and custodians of Country in our District.

We acknowledge the continuing connection Nauo, Wirangu and the surrounding first nations people have to the land and ocean within our District and pay respect to their cultures.

SNAPSHOT OF ELLISTON

2026-2027 at a glance

1,041
District Population

1,352
Rateable Properties

669,300ha
Total Council Area

68
Sealed Road km

1,087
Unsealed Road km

$3.6M
Rates Revenue

$9.7M
Operating Income

$7.6M
Operating Expenditure

$2.2M
Capital Works Propgram

Funding essential services, infrastructure and community priorities across the district

BUDGET AT A GLANCE
2026-2027

Council's 2026–2027 Annual Business Plan outlines a balanced and responsible approach to delivering services, maintaining infrastructure and supporting the community.

Key Financials

- Total Operating Income: **$9.7M**
- Total Operating Expenditure: **$7.6M**
- Adjusted Operating Deficit: **$0.1M**

Where the money comes from

- Rates Revenue
- Grants and Subsidies
- User Charges and Fees
- Other Income

$9.7M

Capital Investment

$3.6M
Rates Revenue

$2.2M
Total Capital Works Program

Where the money is spent

- Employee Costs
- Materials, Contracts and Services
- Depreciation
- Other Operating Expenses

$7.6M

Investment Priorities

Council will invest in key infrastructure and assets across the district, including:

- Road renewals and upgrades
- Plant and equipment replacement
- Building and facility improvements

Rates and Community Impact

Council recognises the impact of rates on the community and remains committed to balancing affordability with the need to maintain services and infrastructure.

The 2026-2027 budget reflects:

- Continued investment in essential services
- A focus on long term financial sustainability
- Responsible management of Council resources

Financial Sustainability

Council continues to monitor its financial performance against key indicators, including:

- Operating Surplus Ratio
- Asset Renewal Funding Ratio
- Net Financial Liabilities Ratio

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Annual Business Plan and Budget 2026–2027 outlines the services, priorities and planned activities of the District Council of Elliston for the year ahead.

The plan maintains Council's focus on delivering core services, maintaining and renewing infrastructure, and supporting the wellbeing and sustainability of the community.

Key priorities for 2026–2027 include:

- Maintaining and renewing infrastructure assets in line with Council's Infrastructure and Asset Management Plan
- Delivering targeted capital works and priority projects across the district
- Supporting community wellbeing, participation and local initiatives
- Strengthening internal systems, governance and financial sustainability

Council continues to operate in a constrained financial environment, with increasing cost pressures and ongoing demand for services. Careful financial management remains a priority to ensure Council can meet its obligations while minimising the impact on ratepayers.

This plan aligns with Council's Strategic Plan 2024–2028 and is supported by the Long Term Financial Plan and Infrastructure and Asset Management Plan, ensuring a balanced approach to current service delivery and future sustainability.

Community feedback is encouraged as part of the consultation process and will help inform the final plan.

MAYOR AND CEO MESSAGE

Over the past year, Council has continued to deliver essential services, progress key projects and support local initiatives, while managing increasing financial pressures.

Looking ahead to 2026–2027, the focus remains on maintaining service levels, investing in priority infrastructure and renewal of assets, and managing Council's resources responsibly to support the long term sustainability of the district.

Council recognises the importance of making informed and balanced decisions, particularly in a constrained financial environment. This plan reflects a practical approach to meeting current community needs while planning for the future.



Andrew McLeod
Mayor



Nikki Becker
Chief Executive Officer



THE YEAR AHEAD

The 2026–2027 financial year will see Council continue to focus on delivering essential services, maintaining infrastructure and supporting the communities across the district within a constrained financial environment.

Council will continue to build on the outcomes of the Essential Services Commission of South Australia review, maintaining a strong focus on financial sustainability and sound decision making in the best interests of ratepayers.

The Strategic Plan 2024–2028 continues to guide Council's direction, with an ongoing focus on adapting operations to respond to changing economic conditions.

Engagement with the community and collaboration with neighbouring councils and regional partners will remain a priority, supporting improved service delivery and opportunities for efficiency.

Council will continue to review service levels, operations and functions to ensure resources are used effectively and to support a responsible and sustainable budget position.

Council also continues to work with the Office for Regional Housing to progress aged care housing initiatives, subject to funding and design outcomes.

ACHIEVEMENTS 2025-2026

Council has delivered a range of projects, services and initiatives across the district during the 2025–2026 financial year, supporting the community and progressing key priorities.

Key achievements include:

People

- Progressed advocacy for affordable workforce, social and retirement housing across Elliston and Lock
- Commenced review and consultation on Council's Disability Access and Inclusion Plan
- Advocated for improved healthcare services and community wellbeing funding across the district
- Delivered and supported community events in partnership with local organisations
- Provided funding support for community facilities, including the Port Kenny Community Sports Centre upgrade
- Commenced development of a volunteer framework to support attraction and retention of volunteers

Place

- Continued road renewal and maintenance works across the district
- Undertook an engineering assessment of the Elliston Jetty and commenced a review of the Port Kenny Jetty
- Commenced work on a Coastal Hazard Adaption Plan
- Finalised the Venus Bay/Port Kenny Masterplan and the Elliston Town Centre Revitalisation Plan
- Continued advocacy for improved housing, infrastructure and telecommunications

Planet

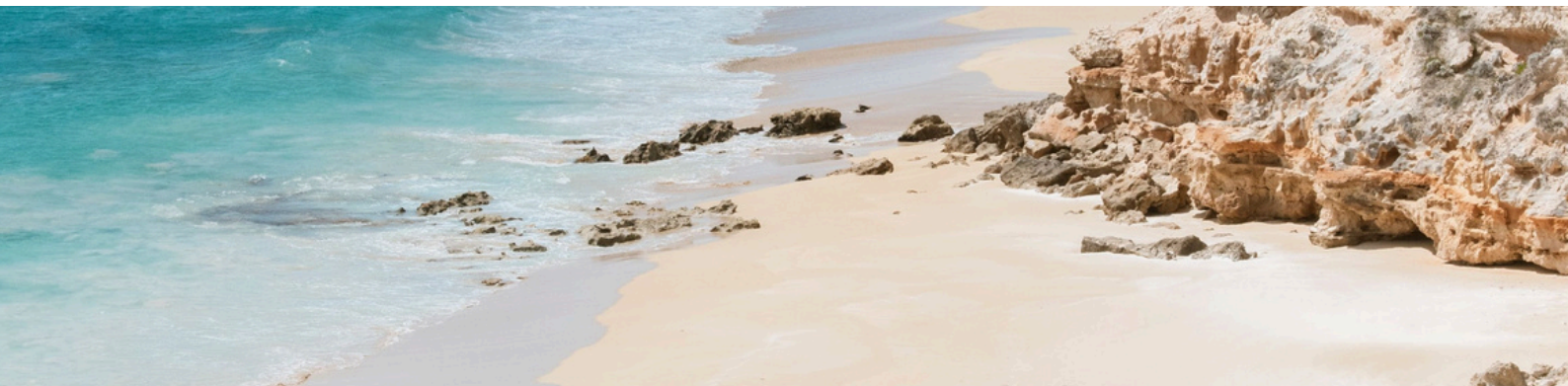
- Advocated for increased investment in coastal and environmental protection
- Progressed environmental and sustainability initiatives across the district

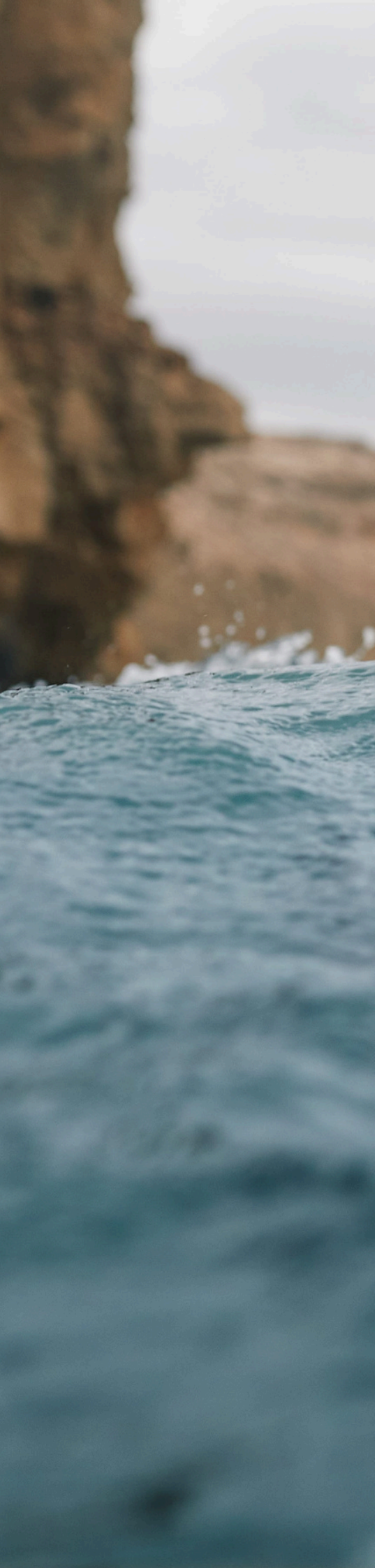
Prosperity

- Supported community and business engagement through regular newsletters and communication
- Continued collaboration with local groups and regional partners to support economic activity

Leadership

- Strengthened community engagement through improved communication and information sharing
- Continued to progress initiatives supporting long term financial sustainability and service delivery





STRATEGIC DIRECTION

Council's Strategic Plan 2024–2028 sets the long term direction for the district and guides the development of this Annual Business Plan.

The plan reflects the community's aspirations and is built around five key themes:

Our Community. Our People. Our Place.
Our Planet. Our Prosperity.

These themes provide a connected framework for decision making, linking community wellbeing, infrastructure, environment and economic development to support a strong, resilient and sustainable district.

Council continues to strengthen alignment between its strategic, financial and asset planning frameworks, ensuring decisions are informed, transparent and responsive to community needs.

OUR VALUES

Council's values guide how we work, make decisions and support our community.

Honesty
We honour the trust placed in us by our residents and staff, acting with empathy, integrity and transparency in everything we do.

Courage
We make bold, informed and considered decisions in the best interests of the district.

Creativity
We continuously look for practical and innovative ways to improve our services, ensuring they are inclusive, accessible and responsive to community needs.



INFLUENCES AND PRIORITIES

The 2026–2027 financial year continues to present a range of challenges and opportunities that influence Council's planning and decision making.

Council remains focused on delivering services and infrastructure in a financially responsible manner, while responding to changing community needs and external pressures.

Key influences on the development of this plan include:

- Cost of living pressures impacting residents and the broader community
- State and Commonwealth funding not keeping pace with rising costs
- The need to maintain and renew infrastructure assets, particularly the road network
- Council's current financial position and Long Term Financial Plan
- Workforce challenges, including attraction and retention of skilled staff
- Increasing demand for services and community expectations
- Growth in tourism and associated service pressures
- Ongoing challenges in waste management and improving waste outcomes
- The need to advocate for and maintain essential services across the district
- Council will continue to respond to these influences through careful planning, prioritisation of resources and a focus on long term financial sustainability.

RISKS AND EXCLUSIONS

In addition to the challenges and opportunities discussed, a number of risks and exclusions have also influenced Council's planning and decision making.

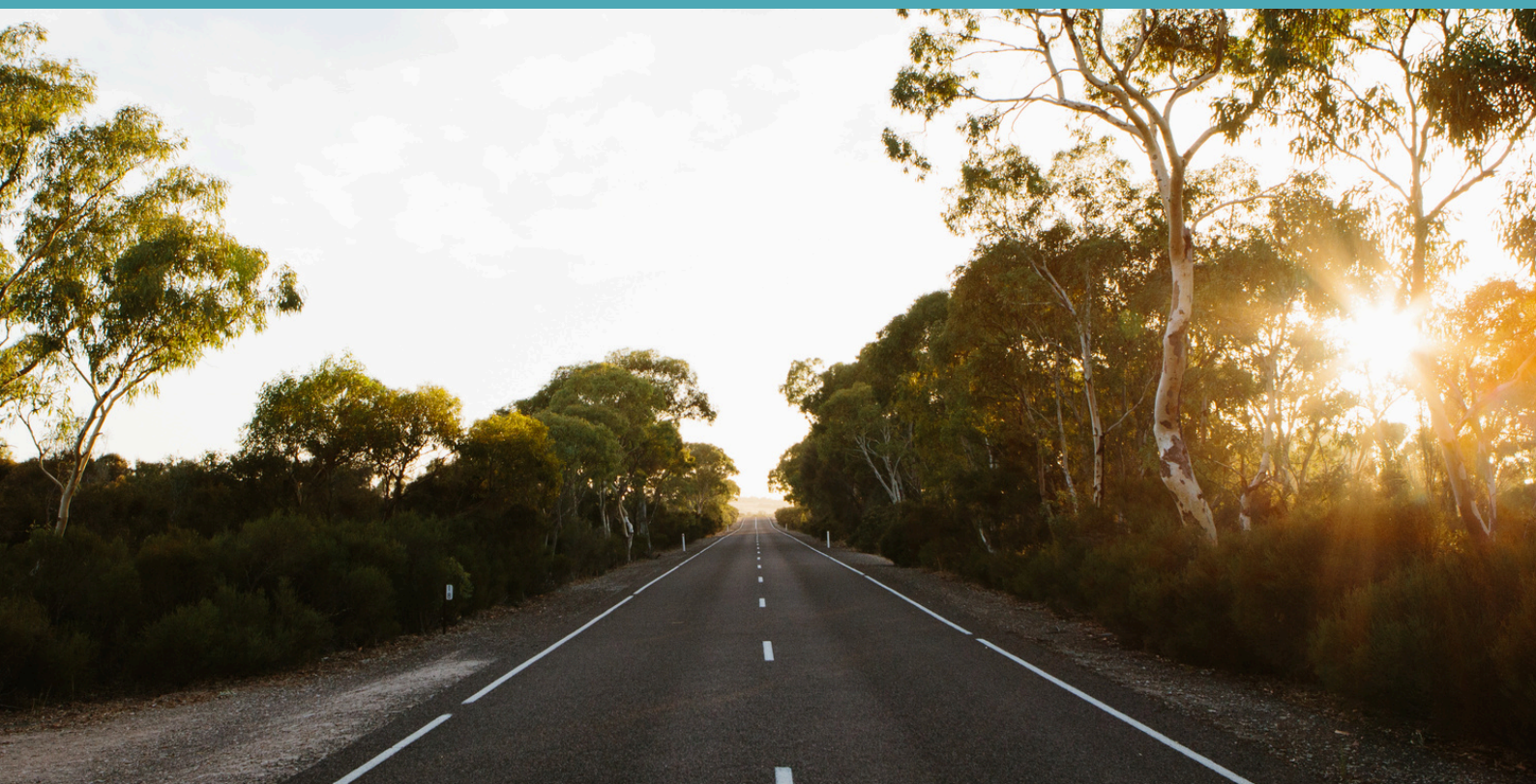
Key risks and exclusions identified during the development of this plan include:

Risks

- The conflict in the Middle East may result in a direct impact on fuel cost and availability, and indirectly it may impact the cost of transported goods and services, tourist park revenue and inflation rates
- Asset revaluations may impact future insurance costs
- Current market conditions may influence costs or availability of services impacting Council's capacity to deliver.
- Changes to State and Federal Government in terms of grant funding and cost shifting.
- The potential impact that adverse weather events may have on the asset base including new and existing infrastructure as well as Council maintenance and operations.
- Access to Grant Revenue.

Exclusions

- Asset condition assessments and valuations may have an impact upon renewal and maintenance expenditure as well as depreciation. Building & Structures, CWMS and Land & Land Improvements are scheduled for 2025-26.



ESSENTIAL SERVICES COMMISSION OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA (ESCOSA) LOCAL GOVERNMENT ADVICE

The Essential Services Commission of South Australia (ESCOSA) provides independent advice to councils on financial sustainability, long term planning and revenue.

In its 2025 Local Government Advice Report, ESCOSA assessed the District Council of Elliston's financial position as **sustainable**, recognising the progress made in strengthening Council's financial management and long term planning.

The report acknowledges Council's efforts to:

- Improve financial sustainability and long term planning
- Diversify revenue sources, including the acquisition of the Venus Bay Beachfront Tourist Park
- Engage with the community during the planning process

ESCOSA also identified areas for continued focus, including:

- Improving transparency and communication of financial information to the community
- Strengthening alignment between the Long Term Financial Plan and Infrastructure and Asset Management Plan
- Ensuring asset condition, service levels and depreciation are clearly defined and aligned
- Monitoring the financial performance of commercial activities
- Reviewing long term funding requirements for new and upgraded assets

Council has commenced work to address these areas and will continue to incorporate ESCOSA's advice into its planning and decision making processes.

This includes strengthening the alignment between strategic, financial and asset planning, improving reporting and transparency, and ensuring long term financial sustainability remains a key focus.

A copy of the full ESCOSA Local Government Advice Report is available as an attachment to this document with details of Council's progress against the identified areas for continued focus.



DELIVERING SERVCES AND PRIORITIES



How Council delivers essential services, infrastructure and community outcomes across the district.

Council delivers a broad range of services, infrastructure and programs to meet the needs of the community and support the long term sustainability of the district.

In response to the influences and priorities identified, Council has focused on maintaining core service delivery while directing investment toward areas of greatest need and impact.

This includes:

- Maintaining essential infrastructure, particularly the road network
- Delivering core services across all townships
- Supporting community wellbeing and participation
- Strengthening financial sustainability and internal systems
- Advocating for services and investment critical to the region

Council's services are delivered through a combination of direct service provision, partnerships and fee for service activities that support both community outcomes and revenue generation.

The following section outlines the key services provided by Council and how these contribute to meeting community needs.



SERVICES TO THE COMMUNITY

Council delivers a broad range of services to meet its legislative responsibilities and respond to the needs of the community.

These services support the day to day functioning of the district, contribute to community wellbeing and ensure essential infrastructure and facilities are maintained.

Core Responsibilities
Council is responsible for delivering essential services and infrastructure in accordance with the Local Government Act 1999 and other relevant legislation. These include:

- Regulatory functions and governance, including supporting the elected Council
- Setting rates, financial management and long term planning
- Maintenance of roads, footpaths, public open space and community wastewater systems
- Stormwater management and street lighting
- Waste collection, recycling and waste management
- Development assessment and planning, including building safety
- Environmental health services

Community Services and Facilities
In response to community needs, Council provides and supports a range of services and facilities that contribute to liveability and community wellbeing, including:

- Libraries
- Community halls and sporting grounds
- Parks and gardens
- Economic development initiatives
- Support for community events and local organisations

Fee for Service Activities
Council also operates a number of services and facilities on a fee for service basis. These provide important community benefits while supporting revenue generation to contribute to the delivery of services and infrastructure across the district. These include:

- Venus Bay Beachfront Tourist Park
- Lock Caravan Park
- Elliston Community and Visitor Information Centre
- Camping grounds
- Private infrastructure works
- Minor tree removal
- Water supply services

CAPITAL INVESTMENT PROGRAM

Investing in infrastructure and assets to support service delivery and community outcomes.

Council's Capital Investment Program outlines the infrastructure and asset investment planned for the 2026–2027 financial year.

The program focuses on maintaining and renewing existing assets, while delivering targeted upgrades that respond to community needs and support long term sustainability.

Investment is prioritised to ensure essential infrastructure is maintained, service delivery is supported and Council's assets continue to meet community expectations.

Key areas of investment include:

- Road renewals and upgrades across the district
- Replacement of plant and equipment to support service delivery
- Improvements to community buildings and facilities
- Investment in infrastructure that supports tourism and economic activity

The program has been developed in alignment with Council's Infrastructure and Asset Management Plan and Long Term Financial Plan, ensuring investment decisions are planned, prioritised and financially sustainable.

The following section outlines the Capital Works Program for 2026–2027.



CAPITAL WORK PROGRAM

CAPITAL EXPENDITURE	NEW ASSET BUDGET $'000	ASSET RENEWALS BUDGET $'000	TOTAL
Buildings and Other Infrastructure			
Elliston Gym Planning	50	-	50
Aged Care Homes	250	-	250
Venus Bay Water Supply	28	83	111
Fixed Playspace Equipment	65	-	65
Elliston Depot Relocation Project	60	-	60
Town Beautification Fund	50	-	50
Elliston Waste Transfer Station	26	149	175
Stormwater	10	55	65
Plant and Equipment			
2 x Utility Vehicles	-	110	110
Administration Vehicle	-	65	65
Unsealed Roads			
Palkagee Road - Seal*	200	300	500
Unsealed Road Program	150	560	710
TOTAL NEW ASSETS	**889**	**1,322**	**2,211**

- Work on Palkagee Road is subject to successful grant approval through the Special Local Roads Program.

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

Managing Council's finances to support current services and future needs.

Council is committed to maintaining long term financial sustainability while continuing to deliver essential services, infrastructure and community outcomes.

Financial sustainability is achieved by ensuring that, over time, Council's operating revenue is sufficient to meet operating expenses, while also maintaining and renewing infrastructure assets in line with the Infrastructure and Asset Management Plan.

Council's Long Term Financial Plan provides the framework to guide financial decision making and ensure resources are managed responsibly.

Council monitors its financial performance using key indicators, which provide a measure of financial health and sustainability.

Operating Surplus Ratio

This ratio measures whether Council is generating sufficient operating revenue to cover its operating expenses, including depreciation.

A positive result indicates that Council is able to meet its day to day costs from its operating income.

The forecast Operating Surplus Ratio for 2026–2027 is 22.0%, indicating that operating revenue exceeds operating expenses. When the ratio is adjusted for the Special Local Roads Program the ratio for 2026-2027 is 11.8%.

Asset Renewal Funding Ratio

This ratio measures whether Council is renewing and replacing its assets at a rate consistent with their consumption.

A result between 90% and 110% indicates that assets are being replaced in a timely manner.

The forecast Asset Renewal Funding Ratio for 2026–2027 is 100%, indicating that sufficient investment has been allocated to maintain Council's asset base.

Net Financial Liabilities Ratio

This ratio measures Council's level of debt and liabilities relative to its available revenue. A lower ratio indicates a stronger financial position and greater capacity to respond to future financial pressures.

The forecast Net Financial Liabilities Ratio for 2026–2027 is -17%, which exceeds the target range set in Council's Long Term Financial Plan. When the ratio is adjusted for the Special Local Roads Program the ratio for 2026-2027 is -19%.

Overall Financial Position

Based on these indicators, Council's financial position is considered sustainable for the 2026–2027 financial year.

Council will continue to monitor financial performance and adjust where required to ensure long term sustainability while maintaining service delivery and infrastructure investment.



NON-FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Measuring the outcomes that matter to our community.

Council's Annual Business Plan outlines not only what will be delivered, but the outcomes Council is working towards across the district.

These outcomes are aligned with Council's Strategic Plan and reflect the priorities of the community across key areas including people, place, environment, economy and leadership.

To support delivery, Council has identified a range of objectives and actions that will guide activities throughout the 2026–2027 financial year.

These measures focus on:

- Supporting a healthy, connected and inclusive community
- Maintaining and improving infrastructure and public spaces
- Protecting and enhancing the natural environment
- Strengthening the local economy and supporting tourism
- Ensuring strong governance and organisational performance

The following section outlines Council's objectives and actions across each strategic area.



NON-FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE MEASURES - OUR PEOPLE

Supporting a healthy, inclusive and connected community.

Outcome 1 - A diverse and inclusive community

OBJECTIVE	ACTION
Provide facilities and services to meet the needs of families and young children	Advocate for greater access to child care across the District
Provide and promote services and program that positively engage with and develop young people	Facilitate Vacswim Programs in Elliston, Venus Bay and Lock
	Advocate for more youth employment opportunities, including work experience, traineeships, apprentices, career development and business monitoring
	Facilitate the establishment of a Youth Advisory Committee in Elliston and Lock
Provide and promote services and program that support independence, connection and quality of life for older people	Facilitate and/or provide affordable social and retirement accommodation across Elliston and Lock
	Advocate and Partner with organisations to increase access to aged care programs and supports
	Provide the Elliston Men's Shed and Partner with other organisations to provide additional seniors' clubs and programs
Improve access and inclusion for people with a disability	Provide improved disability access to facilities and services across the District
Grow recognition and respect for local Indigenous cultures	Partner with Wirangu and Nauo Aboriginal Corporation to develop a Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan
	Provide and fund Sheringa street naming and signage to incorporate indigenous names

Outcome 2 - A happy, healthy and resilient community

OBJECTIVE	ACTION
Improve access to quality health facilities, services and programs to achieve good general and mental health in the community	Advocate for robust and sound healthcare solutions for the District
	Advocate for community wellbeing funding and programs
Improve access to sport, recreation and fitness facilities and program	Advocate for funding of the Elliston Gym Complex
	Partner with community groups and stakeholders to provide indoor and outdoor recreation programs that are inclusive and respond to participation barriers
Grow participation in art, culture and community events	Partner with community groups to deliver well planned and organised community events
	Fund community groups to provide high standard community facilities
Grow community capacity and belonging through volunteering	Facilitate initiatives to help community groups and services to attract and retain volunteers
	Partner with Progress Assocations in the District



Outcome 3 - A safe community

OBJECTIVE	ACTION
Improve community safety	Provide improved street lighting in townships
	Provide regular social media updates to raise awareness of crime prevention initiatives
	Facilitate a reduction in fire prevention inactivity by landholders through education, improvide signage, easier complaint reporting, easier processing of burn off permits, more timely investigation of complaints and fines
Encourage responsible animal management	Facilitate a reduction in nuisance dogs through education, improved signage, easier complaint reporting, more timely investigation of complaints and fines
	Facilitate a reduction in stray and wandering cats through education, cat registrations, more timely investigation of complaints and fines



NON-FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE MEASURES - OUR PLACE

Planning and maintaining safe, vibrant and accessible communities.

Outcome 4 - Responsible growth, development and renewal

OBJECTIVE	ACTION
Deliver contemporary land use planning that encourages and facilitates economic development, livability and sustainability	Advocate to the State and Federal Government, private sector and non-government organisations to help meet demand for diverse housing needs
	Facilitate environmental sustainability considerations in land use planning and development
Plan for adequate utilities to support responsible growth	Advocate for improved telecommunications
	Partner with organisations to identify opportunities for community operated power supplied, if funding can be found

Outcome 5 - Interesting, vibrant and welcoming places

OBJECTIVE	ACTION
Provide attractive, well maintained streetscapes, verges and trees	Provide integrated streetscape planning, in consultation with the community
Develop appealing, accessible and vibrant retail and service precincts across the District in support of local business activity	Facilitate design and implementation of precincts in Elliston and Lock
	Provide implementation of the Elliston, Lock and Port Kenny and Venus Bay Masterplans

Outcome 6 - Local history, heritage and character is preserved

OBJECTIVE	ACTION
Identify, preserve and showcase significant local history and heritage	Provide access to local history information and services and facilitate ongoing preservation of physical and digital historical material and collections
	Provide for the delivery of a 150th birthday celebration for Elliston

Outcome 7 - A safe, sustainable and efficient transport network

OBJECTIVE	ACTION
Improve road safety, connectivity and traffic flow	Advocate for increased funding for new and upgraded road infrastructure
	Provide long-term planning to improve road design and safety
	Partner with external parties to deliver a new way of monitoring road conditions
	Advocate for funding to upgrade state owned highways and main commodity and tourist routes
Improve access to marine, rail and aviation transport to support population growth, tourism and economic development	Advocate for funding to upgrade the jetty in Elliston
	Advocate for funding for the Port Kenny jetty
	Advocate for funding to upgrade the Anxious Bay Boat Ramp, including disability access

NON-FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE MEASURES - OUR PLANET

Protecting and enhancing our natural environment.

Outcome 8 - Sustainable management of natural areas

OBJECTIVE	ACTION
Conserve and enhance the region's natural environment	Provide a review of the Community Land Management Plan to identify areas that are suitable for recreational use and how trails and parks may safely accommodate mixed uses
	Provide trail construction and improvements stretching from Sheringa Beach to the South Head Walking Trail in Venus Bay, subject to grant funding
	Facilitate community education around safe and responsible use of shared trails and paths
Provide sustainable protection and enhancement of the coastline and wetlands	Advocate for increased investment in coastal and environmental protection within the District
	Provide pest management, including pigeons and mosquitos

Outcome 9 - A resilient community that can withstand, adapt to, and recover from, adverse weather events

OBJECTIVE	ACTION
Reduce water usage	Advocate with State and Federal Governments for retention and enhancement of essential water
	Facilitate a Water Management Plan and Program
	Provide water to the township of Port Kenny

Outcome 9 - A resilient community that can withstand, adapt to, and recover from, adverse weather events (continued)

OBJECTIVE	ACTION
Develop a sustainable, low waste, circular economy	Facilitate promotion and adaption of sustainable waste behaviours, including waste avoidance
Increase community readiness and resilience to adverse weather events	Partner to deliver fire education and risk mitigation programs to assist businesses and visitors to prepare, withstand and respond to bushfire emergencies
	Advocate for utility companies to protect their critical infrastructure at risk during adverse weather conditions



Outcome 10 - A strong, diverse and resilient economy with work opportunities for everyone

OBJECTIVE	ACTION
Attract, retain and support a diverse range of businesses and industries to grow the economy and create more jobs	Partner with EPLGA and RDAEP on the delivery of a regional plan
	Advocate in partnership with key stakeholders for growth and development in agricutural sectors
	Advocate in partnership with key stakeholders for growth and development in fishing and aquaculture sectors
	Partner with future industries interested in establishing work sites in the District
	Provide regular assessment and avaulation of the economic climate and business conditions
Facilitate access to quality education, training and work opportunities	Partner with training providers to deliver a range of community required courses in the District

Outcome 11 - A highly sought after tourist destination

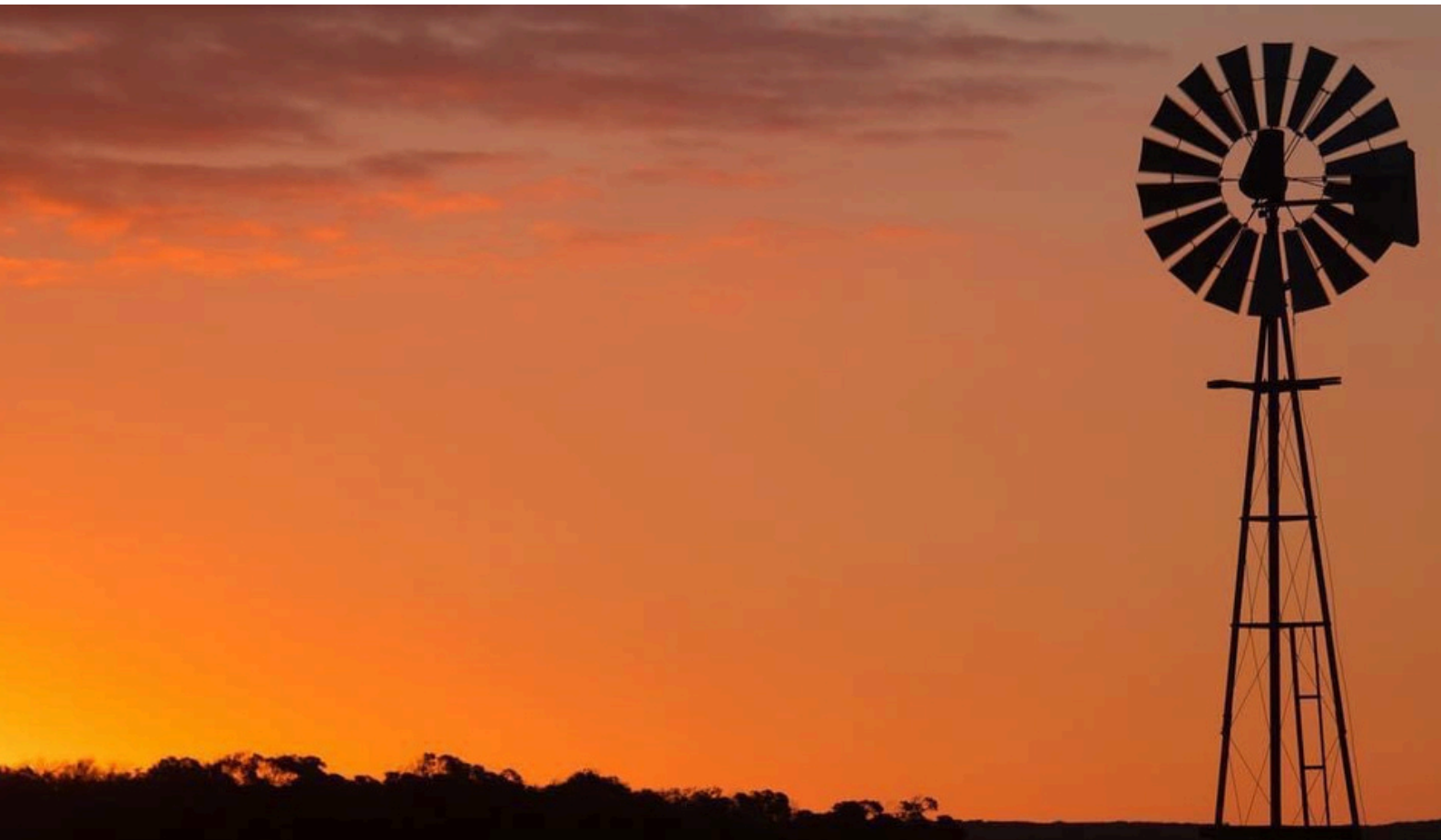
OBJECTIVE	ACTION
Create a competitive and sustainable tourism offering	Facilitate and redesign of the Council Economic Development and Tourism Strategy
	Partner with RDAEP on tourism campaigns
	Partner with stakeholders to build capacity in the tourism sector
	Facilitate a green tourism initiative, promoting the District as untouched and environmentally friendly

NON-FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE MEASURES - STRONG LEADERSHIP

Delivering effective governance and organisational performance.

Outcome 12 - Strong workplace culture and performance

OBJECTIVE	ACTION
Embrace innovation and best practice to improve business efficiences and customer experience	Provide an annual review of the Strategic Plan
	Provide an annual review of the Annual Business Plan and associated Budget
	Provide an annual review of the Infrastrucutre and Asset Management Plan and Long Term Financial Plan
	Provide business unit reviews to improve internal and external customer experience and identify business efficiencies
	Facilitate an increase in rates notices being delivered via electronic methods



Outcome 12 - Strong workplace culture and performance (continued)

OBJECTIVE	ACTION
Foster employee engagement and a positive workplace culture	Provide an annual employee survey to monitor workplace culture and identify actions for improvement
Maintain sound financial management, including robust long-term modelling	Provide opportunities to encourage and support new and existing businesses through Council regulations and procurement policies
	Provide monthly financial reports and quarterly budget reviews to Council for endorsement
	Provide efficiencfy measures and KPIs for Council performance



Outcome 13 - Proactive visionary leaders who are aligned with community needs and values

OBJECTIVE	ACTION
Provide strong, accountable leadership	Provide a campaign to communicate a clear vision for Council with regular progress reports on major projects
	Provide Elected Members and Audit and Risk Committee members appropriate training

Outcome 14 - A well informed and engaged community

OBJECTIVE	ACTION
Grow awareness, understanding and engagement in Council projects, activities and decisions	Provide an annual Communications Plan that specifies what needs to be communicated, when, how and to who, in order to meet the community's information needs and the Council's strategic objectives
	Facilitate community forums and information sessions
	Facilitate an increase in awareness of Council's social media channels as a source of information to the community
	Facilitate regular business and community group newsletters

FUNDING THE BUSINESS PLAN

Council funds its services, infrastructure and operations through a combination of revenue sources, including rates, user charges, statutory charges and grants.

For the 2026–2027 financial year, total forecast revenue is $9.6M, with $3.6M proposed to be raised from general and other rates.

Council continues to focus on maintaining a balanced and sustainable revenue mix, reducing reliance on rates where possible through diversification of income sources.

An operating surplus of $2.1M is forecast for 2026–2027, consistent with Council's Long Term Financial Plan and financial sustainability objectives.

These figures are provided as part of the Plan and are subject to change following community consultation and final Council adoption.

GRANT FUNDING

Local Government receives grant funding from a range of Federal and State Government programs, which support the delivery of infrastructure, services and community outcomes. The main types of grant funding received by Council include:

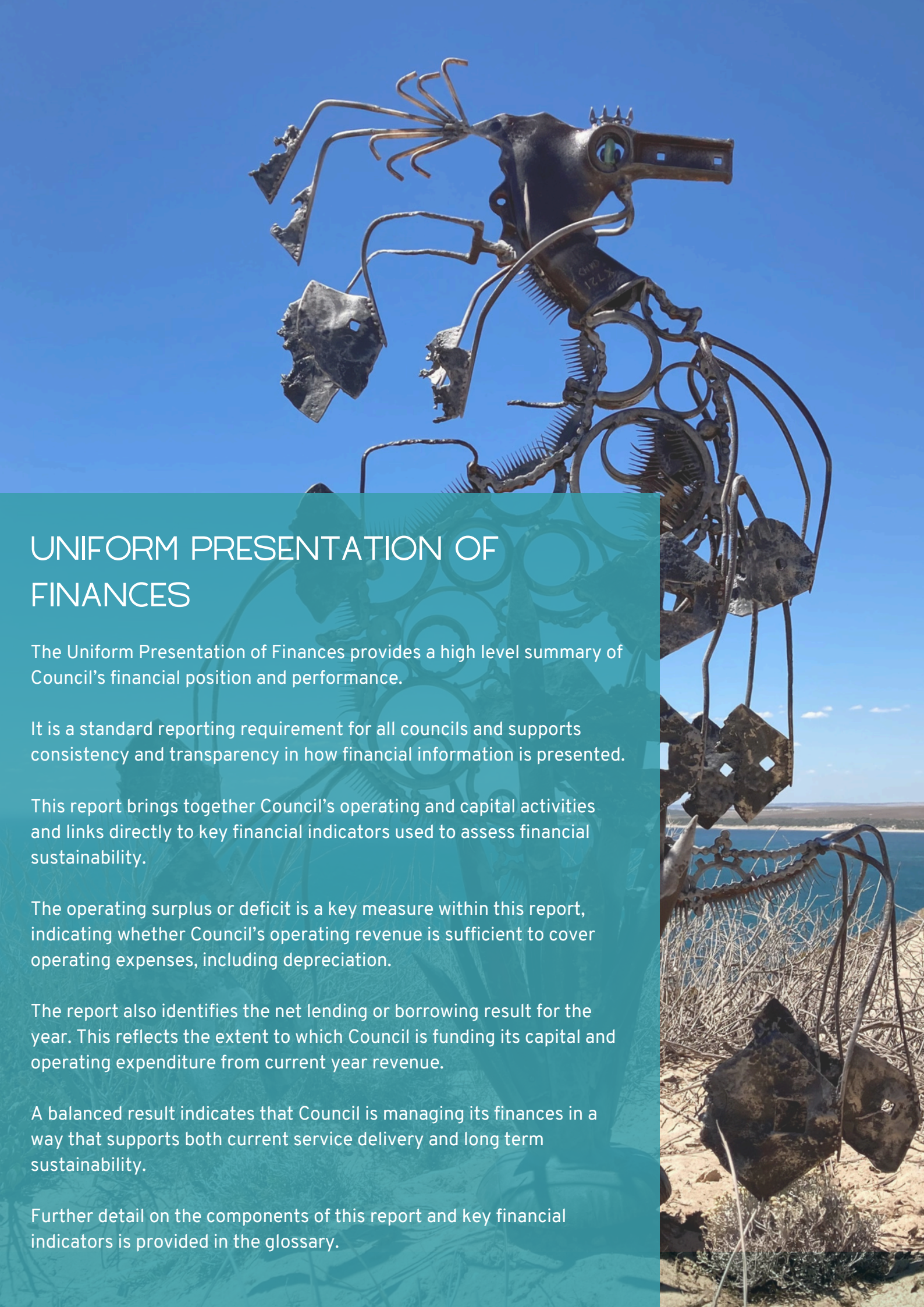
Financial Assistance Grants (Federal)
General Purpose and Local Roads funding is provided by the Australian Government and can be used at Council's discretion to support service delivery and infrastructure across the district.

Council's 2026–2027 budget assumes that quarterly instalments of these grants will be received during the financial year.

Roads to Recovery and Supplementary Local Roads (Federal)
These grants are specifically allocated for road related projects. Council determines how the funding is applied, including maintenance, renewal or upgrade of the road network.

Grant funding plays an important role in supporting Council's ability to deliver infrastructure and services while reducing reliance on rate revenue.

Source	Budget 2026-27 $'000
Financial Assistance Grants	1,833
Special Local Roads Program	1,121
Roads to Recovery	1,146
Other	1
TOTAL OPERATING GRANTS	**4,101**



UNIFORM PRESENTATION OF FINANCES

The Uniform Presentation of Finances provides a high level summary of Council's financial position and performance.

It is a standard reporting requirement for all councils and supports consistency and transparency in how financial information is presented.

This report brings together Council's operating and capital activities and links directly to key financial indicators used to assess financial sustainability.

The operating surplus or deficit is a key measure within this report, indicating whether Council's operating revenue is sufficient to cover operating expenses, including depreciation.

The report also identifies the net lending or borrowing result for the year. This reflects the extent to which Council is funding its capital and operating expenditure from current year revenue.

A balanced result indicates that Council is managing its finances in a way that supports both current service delivery and long term sustainability.

Further detail on the components of this report and key financial indicators is provided in the glossary.

District Council of Elliston

Budget - Uniform Presentation of Finances

for the Year Ending 30 June 2027

	Forecast 2025-26 $000	Budget 2026-27 $000
INCOME		
Rates	3,409	3,600
Statutory Charges	47	43
User Charges	1,655	1,808
Grants, Subsidies and Contributions - Capital	600	2,267
Grants, Subsidies and Contributions - Operating	1,931	1,834
Investment Income	9	12
Reimbursements	23	20
Other Income	150	147
Total Income	**7,823**	**9,731**
EXPENSES		
Employee Costs	2,220	2,113
Materials, Contracts & Other Expenses	3,595	3,521
Depreciation, Amortisation & Impairment	1,741	1,933
Finance Costs	31	27
Total Expenses	**7,588**	**7,594**
OPERATING SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)	**235**	**2,138**
Less: Grants, Subsidies and Contributions - Capital	(600)	(2,267)
ADJUSTED OPERATING SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)	**(365)**	**(129)**
Net Outlays on Existing Assets		
Capital Expenditure on renewal and replacement of Existing Assets	(1,131)	(1,322)
add back Depreciation, Amortisation and Impairment	1,741	1,933
Grants, Subsidies and Contributions - Capital Renewal	600	2,267
add back Proceeds from Sale of Replaced Assets	25	0
	1,235	**2,878**
Net Outlays on New and Upgraded Assets		
Capital Expenditure on New and Upgraded Assets	(153)	(889)
Grants, Subsidies and Contributions - Capital New / Upgraded	0	0
add back Amounts Received Specifically for New and Updgraded Assets	152	50
Add back proceeds from sale of surplus assets	0	0
	(1)	**(839)**
Net Lending / (Borrowing) for Financial Year	**869**	**1,910**

BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT

Council has considered the impact of rates on all sectors of the community, including businesses and primary production.

In doing so, Council has taken into account:

- The equitable distribution of rates across different classes of ratepayers
- The level of services provided to each sector
- Current local, state and national economic conditions
- Council's role in supporting local economic activity, including the use of local suppliers where appropriate

Council aims to balance the need to fund essential services and infrastructure with the capacity of businesses and the broader community to absorb cost increases.

COUNCIL'S REVENUE RAISING POWERS

Under the Local Government Act 1999, all land within the Council area is rateable, except for land specifically exempt under the Act.

Council is authorised to raise revenue through a general rate applied to all rateable properties, or through differential general rates based on land use and or locality.

Council may also impose separate rates or service charges for specific services or prescribed areas.

In addition to rates, Council generates revenue through fees and charges, which are set with consideration to the cost of providing the service and principles of equity.

METHOD USED TO VALUE LAND

Council uses Capital Value as the basis for valuing land within the Council area.

This method is considered the most equitable approach to distributing the rate burden across ratepayers, as it reflects the relative value of each property.

In applying this method, Council recognises that:

- The equity principle of taxation supports that ratepayers of similar property value contribute at a similar level, while those with higher value properties contribute more
- Capital value provides a reasonable indicator of overall property value and capacity to contribute

The distribution of property values across the district supports a fair and balanced allocation of rates across the community.

ADOPTION OF VALUATIONS

Council adopts the most recent valuations provided by the Valuer-General at the time of adopting the Annual Business Plan and Budget.

If a ratepayer is dissatisfied with the valuation made by the Valuer-General, you may object to the valuation referred to on the rate notice within 60 days after the date of service of receiving the notice of valuation.

Note:

1. If you have previously received a notice under the Local Government Act 1999 referring to the valuation and informing you of a 60 day objection preiod, the objection period is 60 days after service of the first notice;
2. You may not object to the valuation if the Valuer-General has already considered an objection by you to that valuation.

The Valuer-General may extend the 60 day objection period where it can be shown there is reasonable cause to do so by a person entitled to make an objection to a valuation.

A written objection to a valuation must set out the full and detailed grounds for objection. Objections can also be submitted via an online form at http://www.sa.gov.au/landservices and enter ***Objecting to a Valuation*** in the search field. Differential rates (and/or charges) imposed by rates (and/or charges) are still due and payable by the due date evenue if an objection has been lodged.

Objections can be forwarded to:
Email: OVGobjections@sa.gov.au
Website: www.valuergeneral.sa.gov.au
Office of the Valuer General, GPO Box 1354, ADELAIDE SA 5001
In person: Land Services SA - Level 9, 101 Grenfell Street, ADELAIDE SA 5000

Phone: 1300 653 346



GENERAL RATES

Council has, during the 2025 to 2026 financial year, undertaken a review of its rating system. This review has informed the development of a revised Rating Policy. The review document and policy are provided as Appendix 2.

The review identified three proposed changes, being an increase in general rates on vacant land to encourage development and address housing shortages across the region, changes to simplify the Waste Service Charge by basing the charge on bin numbers rather than waste collection volumes, and an expansion of the Employment (Bulk Handling) rating category to include properties within the Rural Zone with a Land Use of Commercial Other.

The largest component of rates levied is the component that is calculated by reference to the value of the property.

Each year, Council declares a rate in the dollar, which is applied to the capital value of rateable land to determine the amount payable.

Under the Local Government Act 1999, Council may apply differential general rates, where different rates in the dollar are set based on the use and or location of land (for example residential, commercial or primary production).

Property values reflect, among other things, the level of access to Council services and infrastructure across the district.

Council has adopted differential general rates based on land use and locality to ensure a fair and equitable distribution of the rate burden.



Statement on Expected Rate Revenue

Expected Rates Revenue

	2025/26 (as adopted)	2026/27 (estimated)		Change	Comments
General Rates Revenue					
General Rates (existing properties)	$2,954,169	$3,163,019	*(a)*		Full audit of rateable properties completed during 2025/26. This identified 130 properties that were previously identified as non-rateable rather than with a 100% mandatory rebate.
General Rates (new properties)		$12,071	*(b)*		
General Rates (GROSS)	**$2,954,169**	**$3,175,091**	*(c)*	**7.5%**	
Less: Mandatory Rebates	($29,931)	($107,741)	*(d)*		
General Rates (NET)	**$2,924,238**	**$3,067,350**	*(e)*	**4.9%**	
		(e)=(c)+(d)			
Other Rates (inc. service charges)					
Regional Landscape Levy	$132,198	$133,070	*(f)*		The Regional Landscape Levy is a State tax, it is **not retained** by council.
Waste collection	$283,026	$291,011	*(g)*		
Water supply	$17,929	$18,765	*(h)*		
CWMS	$51,980	$55,104	*(i)*		
	$3,409,371	$3,565,300			
Less: Discretionary Rebates			*(l)*		
Expected Total Rates Revenue	**$3,277,173**	**$3,565,300**	*(m)*	**8.8%**	Excluding the Regional Landscape Levy and minus Mandatory & Discretionary Rebates.
		(m)=(e)+(g)+(h)+(i)+(j)+(k)+(l)			

Estimated growth in number of rateable properties

Number of rateable properties	**1,345**	**1,480**	*(n)*	**10.0%**
	Actual	*Estimate*		

'Growth' is defined in the regulations as where new properties have been created which has added rateable properties to council's ratepayer base. Growth can also increase the need and expenditure related to infrastructure, services and programs which support these properties and residents.

Estimated average General Rates per rateable property

Average per rateable property	**$2,196**	**$2,145**	*(o)*	**-2.3%**
		(o)=(c)/(n)		

Councils use property valuations to calculate each rateable property's contribution to the required rate revenue total. Councils do not automatically receive more money because property values increase but this may alter how rates are apportioned (or divided) across each ratepayer (ie. some people may pay more or less rates, this is dependent on the change in value of their property relative to the overall valuation changes across the council area).
The total General Rates paid by all rateable properties will equal the amount adopted in the budget.

Notes

(d) Councils are **required** under the Local Government Act to provide a rebate to qualifying properties under a number of categories:

Health Services - 100 per cent
Community Services - 75 per cent
Religious purposes - 100 per cent
Public Cemeteries - 100 per cent
Royal Zoological Society of SA - 100 per cent
Educational purposes - 75 per cent

The rates which are foregone via Mandatory Rebates are redistributed across the ratepayer base (ie. all other ratepayers are subsidising the rates contribution for those properties who receive the rebate).

(e) Presented as required by the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 2011* reg 6(1)(ea)

Please Note: The percentage figure in *(e)* relates to the change in the total amount of General Rates revenue to be collected from all rateable properties, not from individual rateable properties (ie. individual rates will not necessarily change by this figure).

(f) Councils are required under the *Landscape South Australia Act 2019* to collect the levy on all rateable properties on behalf of the State Government. The levy helps to fund the operations of regional landscape boards who have responsibility for the management of the State's natural resources.

(i) Community Wastewater Management Systems

(l) A council **may** grant a rebate of rates or service charges in a number of circumstances. The rates which are foregone via Discretionary Rebates are redistributed across the ratepayer base (ie. all other ratepayers are subsidising the rates contribution for those properties who receive the rebate).

(m) Expected Total Rates Revenue excludes other charges such as penalties for late payment and legal and other costs recovered.

(n) 'Growth' as defined in the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 2011* reg 6(2)

Statement on Expected Rate Revenue

Please note: These figures represent a considered estimate of Expected Rate Revenue based on the most current information available at the time of going out to consultation on the DRAFT Annual Business Plan and Budget (ABP&B). This information is updated regularly and therefore these figures may be subject to confirmation at the time of actual adoption of the ABP&B.

Expected Rates Revenue

Total expected revenue				No. of rateable properties		Average per rateable property				Percentage Increase	Cents in the $
	2025/26	2026/27	Increase %	2025/26	2026/27	2025/26	2026/27				2026/27
Land Use (General Rates - GROSS)											
Residential	$697,310	**$764,356**	**10%**	524	**534**	$1,331	$1,431	*(p)*	**$101**	**7.6%**	**0.292724**
Commercial - Shop	$6,379	**$6,626**	**4%**	9	**9**	$709	$736		**$27**	**3.9%**	**0.292724**
Commercial - Office	$0	**$0**	**0%**	0	**0**						**0.292724**
Commercial - Other	$32,347	**$38,814**	**20%**	42	**47**	$770	$826	*(p)*	**$56**	**7.2%**	**0.292724**
Industry - Light	$7,117	**$7,660**	**8%**	12	**12**	$593	$638		**$45**	**7.6%**	**0.292724**
Industry - Other	$991	**$1,724**	**74%**	5	**3**	$198	$575	*(p)*	**$377**	**190.0%**	**0.292724**
Primary Production	$1,952,518	**$1,979,811**	**1%**	452	**455**	$4,320	$4,351		**$32**	**0.7%**	**0.292724**
Vacant Land	$141,033	**$184,021**	**30%**	271	**285**	$520	$646	*(p)*	**$125**	**24.1%**	**0.439086**
Other	$4,426	**$4,478**	**1%**	30	**135**	$148	$33	*(p)*	**-$114**	**-77.5%**	**0.292724**
Total Land Use	**$2,842,121**	**$2,987,489**	**5.1%**	**1,345**	**1,480**	**$2,113**	**$2,019**	*(p)*	**-$95**	**-4.5%**	
Locality (General Rates - GROSS)											
Employment (Bulk-Handling)	$94,306	**$79,860**	**-15%**	7	**4**	$13,472	$19,965	*(p)*	**$6,493**		**1.300726**
Total Locality	**$94,306**	**$79,860**	**-15.3%**	**7**	**4**	**$13,472**	**$19,965**	*(p)*	**$6,493**		
GRAND TOTAL (GROSS)	**$2,936,427**	**$3,067,350**	**4.5%**	**1,352**	**1,484**	**$2,172**	**$2,067**	*(p)*	**-$105**		

Fixed Charge

	Total expected revenue				Charge			
	2025/26	2026/27	Change		2025/26	2026/27		Change
Fixed Charge	$413,000	**$467,895**	**13%**		$350	**$367**	*(q)*	**$17**

This revenue amount is **included** in the General Rates GROSS figure at *(c)*.

Adopted valuation method

Capital Value

Council has the option of adopting one of two valuation methodologies to assess the properties in its area for rating purposes:
Capital Value – the value of the land and all improvements on the land; or
Annual Value – a valuation of the rental potential of the property.

The Council has elected to continue using Capital Value as the methodology to assess the properties in its area for rating purposes.

Notes

(p) Average per rateable property calculated as General Rates for category, including any fixed charge or minimum rate (if applicable) but excluding any separate rates, *divided* by number of rateable properties within that category in the relevant financial year.

(q) A fixed charge can be levied against the whole of an allotment (including land under a separate lease or licence) and only one fixed charge can be levied against two or more pieces of adjoining land (whether intercepted by a road or not) if they are owned by the same owner and occupied by the same occupier. Also if two or more pieces of rateable land within the area of the council constitute a single farm enterprise, only one fixed charge may be imposed against the whole of the land.

(r) Where two or more adjoining properties have the same owner and are occupied by the same occupier, only one minimum rate is payable by the ratepayer.

FIXED CHARGE

Council has adopted a fixed charge of $367.00. The fixed charge is levied against the whole of the allotment (including land under a separate lease or license). Only one fixed charge is levied against two or more pieces of adjoining land, whether intercepted by a road or not, if they are owned by the same owner and occupied by the same occupier. The reasons for imposing a fixed charge is the Council considers it appropriate that all rateable properties make a contribution to the cost of creating and maintaining the physical infrastructure that supports each property.

EYRE PENINSULA LANDSCAPE LEVY

The Eyre Peninsula Landscape Levy is a State Government initiative under the Landscape South Australia Act 2019 to provide funding to help take care of natural resources such as water, soil, animal and plant control sustainably developing and protecting natural resources for the benefit of communities and future generations living in the District.

Council levies an amount against each rateable property to collect the amount determined by the State Government. For 2026-2027, Council's annual contribution to the Eyre Peninsula Landscape Board is $138,004.

The Eyre Peninsula Landscape Levy is applied on a fixed charge basis, but it does differ dependent on the land use of the property, as such:

- Residential, Vacant and Other - $96.78
- Commercial and Industrial - $145.17
- Primary Production - $193.55



SERVICE CHARGES

COMMUNITY WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS - SERVICE CHARGE

Pursuant to Section 155 of the Local Government Act 1999, the Council adopt an annual service charge for the financial year ending 30 June 2027, in respect of the prescribed service of effluent waste disposal on all land to which the Council provides or make available the services within the Lock township.

The Council will recover this cost through an annual service charge of $540.24 per property. Where the service is provided to non-rateable land, a service charge is levied against the land.

PORT KENNY WATER SUPPLY - SERVICE CHARGE

Pursuant to Section 155 of the Local Government Act 1999, the Council adopt an annual service charge for the financial year ending 30 June 2027, in respect of the prescribed service of the provision of water to the Port Kenny township.

The Council will recover this cost through an annual service charge of $180.43 per property. Where the service is provided to non-rateable land, a service charge is levied against the land.

WASTE MANAGEMENT - SERVICE CHARGE

Pursuant to and in accordance with Section 155 of the Local Government Act 1999, in respect of the 2026-2027 financial year, the Council impose an annual service charge based on the level of usage of the service and, on all land to which the Council provides or makes available the prescribed service of the collection, treatment or disposal of waste via Council's waste management services as follows:

- 1 bin - $394.42 per annum
- 2 bins - $788.85 per annum
- 3 bins or greater - $1,185.37 per annum

Provided on the basis that the sliding scale provided for in Regulation (13) of the Local Government (General) Regulations will be applied to reduce the service charge payable, as prescribed.

POSTPONEMENT OF RATES - SENIORS

Ratepayers who hold a State Seniors Card (or who are eligible to hold a State Seniors Card and have applied for one) are able to apply to Council to postpone payment of rates on their principal place of residence. Postponed rates remain as a charge on the land and are not required to be repaid until the property is sold or disposed of. Interest (at the rate prescribed in the Local Government Act 1999) will be charged and compounded monthly on the total amount postposed, until the debt is paid.

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

District Council of Elliston
Budget - Statement of Comprehensive Income
for the Year Ending 30 June 2027

	Forecast 2025-26 $000	Budget 2026-27 $000	Movement $000
INCOME			
Rates	3,409	3,600	192
Statutory Charges	47	43	(4)
User Charges	1,655	1,808	154
Grants, Subsidies and Contributions - Capital	600	2,267	1,667
Grants, Subsidies and Contributions - Operating	1,931	1,834	(97)
Investment Income	9	12	3
Reimbursements	23	20	(3)
Other Income	150	147	(3)
Total Operating Income	**7,823**	**9,731**	**1,908**
EXPENDITURE			
Employee costs	2,220	2,113	(107)
Materials, contracts & other expenses	3,595	3,521	(74)
Depreciation, amortisation & impairment	1,741	1,933	192
Finance costs	31	27	(5)
Total Operating Expenditure	**7,588**	**7,594**	**5**
OPERATING SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)	**235**	**2,138**	**1,902**
Asset disposal and fair value adjustments	25	0	(25)
Amounts received for new& upgraded assets	152	50	(102)
Physical resources received free ofcharge	0	0	0
NET SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)	**412**	**2,188**	**1,776**
OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME			
Changes in revaluation surplus - I,PP&E	0	1,889	1,889
Total Other Comprehensive Income	**0**	**1,889**	**1,889**
Total Comprehensive Income	**412**	**4,076**	**3,665**
ADJUSTED OPERATING SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)	**(365)**	**(129)**	**235**
Excluding capital grants			

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

District Council of Elliston
Budget - Statement of Financial Position
for the Year Ending 30 June 2027

	Forecast 2025-26 $000	Budget 2026-27 $000	Movement $000
ASSETS			
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash & cash equivalents	1,038	3,019	1,981
Trade & other receivables	432	460	28
Inventories	106	108	3
Total Current Assets	**1,576**	**3,587**	**2,011**
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Infrastructure, property, plant & equipment	75,852	78,019	2,166
Total Non-Current Assets	**75,852**	**78,019**	**2,166**
TOTAL ASSETS	**77,428**	**81,606**	**4,177**
LIABILITIES			
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Trade & other payables	1,069	1,256	187
Borrowings	90	99	9
Provisions	97	100	2
Total Current Liabilities	**1,257**	**1,455**	**199**
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Borrowings	435	336	(99)
Provisions	65	66	2
Total Non-Current Liabilities	**500**	**402**	**(98)**
TOTAL LIABILITIES	**1,757**	**1,858**	**101**
NET ASSETS	**75,672**	**79,748**	**4,076**
EQUITY			
Accumulated Surplus	14,592	16,780	2,188
Asset Revaluation Reserves	60,651	62,539	1,889
Other Reserves	429	429	0
TOTAL EQUITY	**75,672**	**79,748**	**4,076**

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

District Council of Elliston

Budget - Statement of Cash Flow

for the Year Ending 30 June 2027

	Forecast 2025-26 $000	Budget 2026-27 $000
CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
RECEIPTS		
Rates	3,383	3,573
Statutory Charges	47	43
User Charges	1,655	1,808
Grants, Subsidies and Contributions - Operating	1,931	1,834
Investment Income	9	12
Reimbursements	23	20
Other Income	150	147
PAYMENTS	0	0
Payments to Employees	(2,216)	(2,109)
Payments for Materials, Contracts & Other Expenses	(3,607)	(3,337)
Finance Payments	(31)	(27)
Net Cash Provided By (or Used In) Operating Activities	**1,343**	**1,964**
CASH FLOW FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
RECEIPTS		
Amounts Received Specifically for New / Updgraded Assets	152	50
Grants, Subsidies and Contributions - Capital	600	2,267
Repayments of Loans by Community Groups	0	0
Sale of Replaced Assets	25	0
Sale of Surplus Assets	0	0
PAYMENTS	0	0
Expenditure on Renewal / Replacement of Assets	(1,131)	(1,322)
Expenditure on New / Upgraded Assets	(153)	(889)
Net Cash Provided By (or Used In) Investing Activities	**(507)**	**107**
CASH FLOW FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES		
RECEIPTS		
Proceeds from Borrowings	0	0
PAYMENTS		
Repayment of Borrowings	(90)	(90)
Net Cash Provided By (or Used In) Financing Activities	**(90)**	**(90)**
Net Increase (Decrease) in Cash Held	**746**	**1,981**
Cash & Cash Equivalents at the Beginning of Period	292	1,038
Cash & Cash Equivalents at the End of Period	**1,038**	**3,019**

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY

District Council of Elliston

Budget - Statement of Changes in Equity

for the Year Ending 30 June 2027

	Forecast 2025-26 $000	Budget 2026-27 $000
ACCUMULATED SURPLUS		
Balance at end of previous reporting period	14,180	14,592
Net result for year	412	2,188
Transfer from reserves	0	0
Balance at end of period	**14,592**	**16,780**
ASSET REVALUATION RESERVE		
Balance at end of previous reporting period	60,651	60,651
Gain on revaluation of property, plant & equipment	0	1,889
Balance at end of period	**60,651**	**62,539**
OTHER RESERVES		
Balance at end of previous reporting period	429	429
Transfers to accumulated surplus	0	0
Balance at end of period	**429**	**429**
TOTAL EQUITY AT END OF REPORTING PERIOD	**75,672**	**79,748**





CONSULTATION

Council welcomed feedback from our community on the proposed activities and funding arrangements. Community consultation ran from 22 May 2026 to 12 June 2026.

Community Drop-In Sessions were held in Elliston, Lock and Port Kenny in the week beginning 1 June 2026.

APPENDIX 1 - ESCOSA REPORT

In 2024-5, the District Council of Elliston was part of the third tranche of Councils in the State to be reviewed by ESCOSA. In February 2025, ESCOSA provided advice on the financial position of the Council, which outlined some challenges to achieving and maintaining financial sustainability. Council is actively working to address the recommendations raised. We aim to ensure that our operations remain sustainable while continuing to provide the necessary and highly valued services for our community.

Council provides a full copy of ECOSA's advice and a response to the 10 ESCOSA recommendations in the Annual Business Plan and Budget.

1. INFLATION EXPECTATIONS AND ASSUMPTIONS

ESCOSA Recommendation	Council Response
Provide details of the Council's assumptions regarding inflationary expectations and other assumptions, and how they are applied, relative to the size and timing of increases in income and expenses in the Long-Term Financial Plan.	The Long Term Financial Plan document has been produced for 2026-2036 with clear assumptions, treasury management principles, that is linked to the Asset Management Plan summary.

2. OPERATING SURPLUS RATIO

ESCOSA Recommendation	Council Response
Review forecast rates charges to aim for an Operating Surplus Ratio that takes into consideration any intended expenditure on new assets, risks of the commercial business operation and affordability for ratepayers.	Forecast rate charges have been calculated to ensure all asset renewals can be undertaken in an optimal manner. New assets will be modelled through the Long Term Financial Plan on an annual basis, as opportunities are identified. Council will ensure rate rises are kept to a minimum to ensure affordability for our ratepayers.

3. EXPENSE GROWTH RESTRAINTS

ESCOSA Recommendation	Council Response
Develop and report annually on efficiency measures, targets and achievements, to restrain the growth in expenses to within those forecast in the Budget and Long- Term Financial Plan.	Council is currently maintaining expenses within those forecast in the Budget and Long-Term Financial Plan. Further work is to be done on identifying additional efficiency measures to decrease expenditure.

APPENDIX 1 - ESCOSA REPORT

4. COMMERICAL ACTIVITY FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

ESCOSA Recommendation	Council Response
Actively monitor the financial performance of the Council's commercial activities to ensure they remain on track.	Financial performance for the Venus Bay Tourist Park and Elliston Community and Visitor Information Centre is reported to council monthly.

5. NEW PROJECT FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

ESCOSA Recommendation	Council Response
Consider conducting sensitivity analyses regarding proposed new significant projects, to assess the potential impact of the project and its funding options on financial sustainability.	Council is committed to modelling all proposed new significant assets through the Long Term Financial Plan, including identifying opportunities for debt financing where appropriate. Council will model the proposed Aged Care Homes through the Plan in the coming 12 months.

6. TREASURY MANAGEMENT

ESCOSA Recommendation	Council Response
In consultation with the community, review the requirements for cash holdings over the term of the Long-Term Financial Plan, consider whether debt could be utilised to fund any planned new or upgraded assets, and incorporate any planned new projects in the Long-Term Financial Plan.	Debt requirements have been considered in the Long Term Financial Plan.

7. AMP SUMMARY

ESCOSA Recommendation	Council Response
Ensure that the Long-Term Financial Plan accurately accounts for the community's expected service standards and accurately reflects the capital expenditure and depreciation projections in the Infrastructure and Asset Management Plan.	Document produced for 2026-2036 is aligned with the Asset Management Plan Summary. It should be noted that the condition assessments and asset valuations for the Buildings and Structures and CWMS asset classes are scheduled to be undertaken in 2025-26. The impact is not known at this stage whilst indexation has been included in the Plan there is a risk that depreciation may be higher than planned.

APPENDIX 1 - ESCOSA REPORT

8. FUNDING OF NEW PROJECTS

ESCOSA Recommendation	Council Response
Include in the Long-Term Financial Plan a provision for funding new projects that the Council intends to undertake over the forecast period, to better assess their impact upon financial performance and to provide transparency to the community.	Council has not yet identified new projects for funding over the life of the Long Term Financial Plan. Costings for the proposed Elliston Sporting Facility and Aged Care Homes will be identified during the 2026-27 financial year, and modelled through the Plan when appropriate.

9. ASSET REVALUATIONS

ESCOSA Recommendation	Council Response
Revise and improve the Infrastructure and Asset Management Plan to accurately reflect asset conditions, remaining useful lives, expected service standards and ensure that it meets community expectations.	Impacts of FY 2024 and FY 2025 revaluations have been reflected in the Annual Business Plan and Budget, Long Term Financial Plan and Asset Management Plan Summary documents.

10. PROJECTED RATE LEVELS

ESCOSA Recommendation	Council Response
Consider increasing rates at a rate below forecast inflation over the forecast period to reduce any potential affordability risk unless funds are required for capital expenditure that was not identified in the Long-Term Financial Plan and there is a community preference to limit debt.	Council is not adverse to the use of debt financing, as long as it is appropriate for the asset type. Rates are currently modelled to reflect forecast CPI rates, however, the opportunity exists, if no further capital projects are identified, to decrease the rate rise as appropriate.

Advice

Local Government Advice

District Council of Elliston

February 2025

Enquiries concerning this advice should be addressed to:

Essential Services Commission
GPO Box 2605
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The Essential Services Commission is an independent statutory authority with functions in a range of essential services including water, sewerage, electricity, gas, rail and maritime services, and also has a general advisory function on economic matters. For more information, please visit www.escosa.sa.gov.au.

District Council of Elliston
AT A GLANCE

OVERVIEW

The Essential Services Commission finds the District Council of Elliston's current and projected financial performance **sustainable**. Although the Council delivered a small operating deficit in 2023-24, it forecasts a return to operating surpluses over the entire forecast period. The Commission notes that pending any grant funding becoming available, the Long-Term Financial Plan (**LTFP**) does not include any provision for capital expenditure on new and upgraded assets for the nine years to 2033-34. This leaves open a risk to the Council's operating performance if new projects are undertaken. Although future capital expenditure may be under-estimated, this risk is in part offset by relatively high cash holdings projected in the plans. There is some potential to reduce rates, depending upon community expectations and the Council's LTFP for significant asset renewals or new and upgraded infrastructure.

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE



Past 10 years
Sustainable



Current
Sustainable



Projected
Sustainable

RISKS IMPACTING SUSTAINABILITY

⚠ While the Council's overall position as documented appears sustainable, the Council's strategic documents are not sufficiently transparent for the community to assess this.

⚠ The pace at which cash is accumulated over the forecast period might represent an undue burden on ratepayers.

⚠ The asset management plan does not provide an adequate assessment of the condition of assets, their estimated remaining lives or expected service standards, and depreciation is misaligned with the asset management plan.

⚠ The revaluation of some assets 2023-24 is not reflected in the current LTFP, affecting the accuracy of depreciation and the operating surplus ratio.

⚠ **The** Long-Term Financial Plan is silent on the Council's intended expenditure on new and upgraded assets over the nine years to 2033-34, so it is not possible to assess the potential impact on sustainability.

KEY FACTS

▶ Population in 2023 was **1,041**

▶ Council covers **6,742 square kilometres**

▶ **1,340** rateable properties in 2022-23

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1 Executive summary

1.1 Summary of observations

The Essential Services Commission of (Commission) finds the District Council of Elliston's financial position sustainable, although the Commission notes that the Council has not included in its Long-Term Financial Plan its planned capital expenditure on new and upgraded assets for the nine years to 2033-34. Although the Council delivered a small operating deficit in 2023-24 which is related to the purchase of an income-producing asset, it forecasts that it will achieve a surplus over the entire 10-year forecast period.

The Council has historically relied heavily upon both income from rates and grants as sources of its operating income. Over the forecast period, however, the Council is planning to increase its reliance upon user charges, with income from the Venus Bay Beachfront Tourist Park.

The Council took advantage of the opportunity to purchase the Venus Bay Tourist Park in 2023-24, both to support the local economy and to create a new source of income and decrease the Council's reliance on rates.

Although this expenditure was not planned (ie funded in the 2023-24 Budget), the Council demonstrated its agility by taking advantage of the opportunity when it arose, did its due diligence and borrowed to purchase an income-producing asset. The Council forecasts that it will repay the loan by 2029-30, while delivering operating surpluses for every year of the forecast period.

The Council is also planning to deliver the Lock Short Term Workers Accommodation project, subject to grant funding[1], to meet an outstanding need for local short-term accommodation.

The Council is to be commended for its efforts to engage the community in consultations during its planning cycle and for encouraging the community to attend council meetings. In the Commission's view, there is opportunity for the Council to further engage with the community. This includes considering the community's expectations for service levels and potential new and upgraded assets, the pace of accumulation of cash relative to long-term asset renewal requirements (that is, by reducing rates) and whether the community might prefer some debt for long-term asset renewal or any new assets that are not grant-funded.

Although the Council addresses the renewal and replacement of assets in its Asset Management Plan and Long-Term Financial Plan, the Commission is concerned that it has not scoped or included the requirements for expenditure on new/upgraded assets that might arise over the forecast period or identified the amount or sources of funding for them. This omission creates a risk that community priorities have not been adequately identified, nor have the means to deliver them.

[1] The preliminary design work has been completed for the Lock project and the Council is finalising the grant agreement with the South Australian government, with 70.0 percent funding for the project to be provided by the Department for Primary Industries and Regions Enabling Infrastructure Fund. See District Council of Elliston, Annual Business Plan and Budget 2024-25 p. 13.

1.2 Summary of Recommendations

The Commission recommends that the District Council of Elliston:

1. **Provide** details of the Council's assumptions regarding inflationary expectations and other assumptions, and how they are applied, relative to the size and timing of increases in income and expenses in the Long-Term Financial Plan.
2. **Review** forecast rates charges to aim for an Operating Surplus Ratio that takes into consideration any intended expenditure on new assets, risks of the commercial business operation and affordability for ratepayers.
3. **Develop** and report annually on efficiency measures, targets and achievements, to restrain the growth in expenses to within those forecast in the Budget and Long-Term Financial Plan.
4. **Actively monitor** the financial performance of the Council's commercial activities. to ensure they remain on track.
5. **Consider** conducting sensitivity analyses regarding proposed new significant projects, to assess the potential impact of the project and its funding options on financial sustainability.
6. In consultation with the community, **review** the requirements for cash holdings over the term of the Long-Term Financial Plan, consider whether debt could be utilised to fund any planned new or upgraded assets, and incorporate any planned new projects in the Long-Term Financial Plan.
7. **Ensure** that the Long-Term Financial Plan accurately accounts for the community's expected service standards and accurately reflects the capital expenditure and depreciation projections in the Infrastructure and Asset Management Plan.
8. **Include** in the Long-Term Financial Plan a provision for funding new projects that the Council intends to undertake over the forecast period, to better assess their impact upon financial performance and to provide transparency to the community.
9. **Revise and improve** the Infrastructure and Asset Management Plan to accurately reflect asset conditions, remaining useful lives, expected service standards and ensure that it meets community expectations.
10. **Consider** increasing rates at a rate below forecast inflation over the forecast period to reduce any potential affordability risk unless funds are required for capital expenditure that was not identified in the Long-Term Financial Plan and there is a community preference to limit debt.

2 About the advice

2.1 Background

The State Parliament has tasked the Commission, South Australia's independent economic regulator and advisory body, to provide advice on material changes proposed by local councils in relation to elements of their Strategic Management Plans (**SMP**), and on the proposed revenue sources, including rates, which underpin those plans.[2]

A primary purpose of the Local Government Advice Scheme (**Advice** or **the Scheme**) is to support councils to make financially sustainable strategic decisions in their annual business plans and budgets, in the context of their Long-Term Financial Plans (**LTFP**) and Infrastructure and Asset Management Plans (**IAMP**)[3]. IAMP are commonly referred to as Asset Management Plans (**AMP**). The LTFP and the IAMP are both required as part of a council's SMP.[4] Financial sustainability encompasses intergenerational equity,[5] program (service level) and rates stability in this context.[6] The other main purpose is for the Commission to consider ratepayer contributions in the context of all revenue sources, as outlined in the LTFP.[7] In addition, the Commission has discretion to provide advice on any other aspect of a council's LTFP or IAMP it considers appropriate, having regard to the circumstances of that council.[8]

The first cycle of the scheme extends over four years from 2022-23 to 2025-26, and the Commission has selected 17 councils for advice in the third year (2024-25) of the Scheme, including the District Council of Elliston.

This report provides the Local Government Advice for the Council in 2024-25.

The Council is obliged under the *Local Government Act 1999* (**LG Act**) to publish this advice and its response, if applicable, in its 2025-26 Annual Business Plan (including any draft Annual Business Plan) and in subsequent plans until the next cycle of the Scheme.[9] The Council is not compelled under the LG Act to follow the advice.

The Commission thanks the Council for meeting with Commission staff and for providing information to assist the Commission in preparing this advice.

2.2 The Commission's approach

In providing its Advice for the Council, the Commission has followed the approach it previously explained in the Framework and Approach – Final Report (**F&A**).[10]

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2 Amendments to the *Local Government Act 1999* (**LG Act**) (s122(1c) to (1k) and (9)) specify the responsibilities for the Commission and local councils for the Local Government Scheme Advice. The Commission must provide advice to each council in accordance with the matters outlined in s122(1e), (1f) and (1g).

3 Commonly referred to as asset management plans.

4 The objectives of the advice with reference to a council's LTFP and IAMP are presented under LG Act, s122(1g). LG Act s122(1) specifies the requirements of a council's SMP, including the LTFP and IAMP.

5 'Intergenerational equity' relates to fairly sharing services and the revenue generated to fund the services between current and future ratepayers.

6 Commission, *Framework and Approach – Final Report*, August 2022, pp. 2-3, available at www.escosa.sa.gov.au/advice/advice-to-local-government.

7 LG Act s122(1f)(a) and (1g)(a)(ii).

8 LG Act s122(1f)(b) and (1g)(b).

9 LG Act s122(1h).

10 Commission, *Framework and Approach – Final Report*, August 2022, available at www.escosa.sa.gov.au/advice/advice-to-local-government.

The Commission has considered the Council's SMP documents (set out in the box below), with a particular focus on its performance and outlook against three financial indicators: the Operating Surplus Ratio (OSR), the Net Financial Liabilities Ratio (NFLR) and the Asset Renewal Funding Ratio (ARFR).[11] Analysis of these three indicators captures financial and service sustainability, cost control and affordability risk.[12]

Table 1: Strategic Management Documents

- District Council of Elliston, Annual Business Plan & Budget 2024-2025 (adopted 18 June 2024)
- District Council of Elliston, 2025-2034 Infrastructure and Asset Management Plan (adopted 16 July 2024)
- District Council of Elliston, 10 Year Renewal Program
- District Council of Elliston, Long-Term Financial Plan 2025-34 (adopted 16 July 2024)
- District Council of Elliston, Annual Report 2023-2024 (adopted 15 October 2024)
- District Council of Elliston, Strategic Plan 2024-2028
- District Council of Elliston, Audit Committee Meeting Minutes 7 June 2024
- District Council of Elliston, Audit Committee Meeting Minutes 8 May 2024
- District Council of Elliston, Public Minutes 20 August 2024
- District Council of Elliston, Public Minutes 17 September 2024
- District Council of Elliston, Ordinary Council Meeting Minutes, Tuesday 19 March 2024
- District Council of Elliston, Annual Report 2016-17
- District Council of Elliston, Annual Report 2017-18
- District Council of Elliston, Annual Report 2021-22

The Commission notes that most of the Council's infrastructure asset base is covered by its existing AMP (with condition assessments and asset valuations for those assets). Some of the recent updates to its AMP are not fully reflected in the Council's current LTFP (as presented in this Advice), as they were completed after the LTFP was adopted. Additionally, the Council advised that some of its assets were revalued in 2023-24 and this uplift is also not reflected in its LTFP 2024-2033 but is reflected in the LTFP 2025-2034.[13]

Given that the Commission must, in providing its advice, have regard to the objective of the Council maintaining and implementing their IAMP and LTFP,[14] it has also considered the Council's performance

[11] The three financial indicators are specified in the Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 2011. Since 2011, each council has been required to refer to these three indicators in its plans, annual budget, mid-year budget review and annual financial statements. The councils can adopt their own target range for each ratio, but the Commission has adopted the previously suggested Local Government Association (LGA) target ranges as a basis for its analysis, which were established and agreed during the development of the LGA Financial Sustainability Papers (2006-2011).

[12] The F&A listed 29 analytical questions that the Commission has answered in assessing the Council's performance against these indicators to determine affordability, cost control and other sustainability risks.

[13] Depreciation expenses increased by $0.7 million or 5.4 percent over the common nine-year period of the LTFP 2025-34 and the LTFP 2024-33.

[14] LG Act s122(1g)(a)(i).

in that context. Findings regarding the content of the Council's AMP, and the alignment between its LTFP and AMP,[15] are discussed in section 5.

The Commission has also reviewed the Council's template data, which include its 2024-25 LTFP forecasts for 2024-25 to 2033-34, as well as its 2023-24 LTFP forecasts, historical financial data, the number of rateable properties and Council staff (Full Time Equivalent or **FTE**) numbers from 2013-14 onwards.[16] The charts and tables in this Advice are primarily sourced from these datasets. In addition, the Commission has reviewed the Council's audit committee reports, and other public information, as appropriate.

The Commission has reported estimates in nominal terms, for consistency with the Council's plans and actual rate levels, but it has compared estimated inflation impacts to these trends as a guide to identify 'real' rather than 'inflationary' effects. In the charts, the Consumer Price Index (**CPI**) line shows the cumulative growth in the CPI (Adelaide) series from 2013-14, and then projections of this series from 2024-25 based on the Reserve Bank of Australia (**RBA**) (Australia-wide) inflation forecasts to the December quarter 2026, and the midpoint of the RBA target range (2.5 percent) thereafter.

Finally, in formulating this Advice, the Commission has had regard to all discussions and engagement with the Council, including the face-to-face onsite meeting at the Council offices and the individual circumstances of the Council, consisting of:

- its location as a regional council
- its income level ($6.3 million in 2022-23), and
- the size of its rates base (around 1,340 ratepayers[17]).

Throughout this Advice, the Commission has identified several key points and assigned the following risk category to those points:

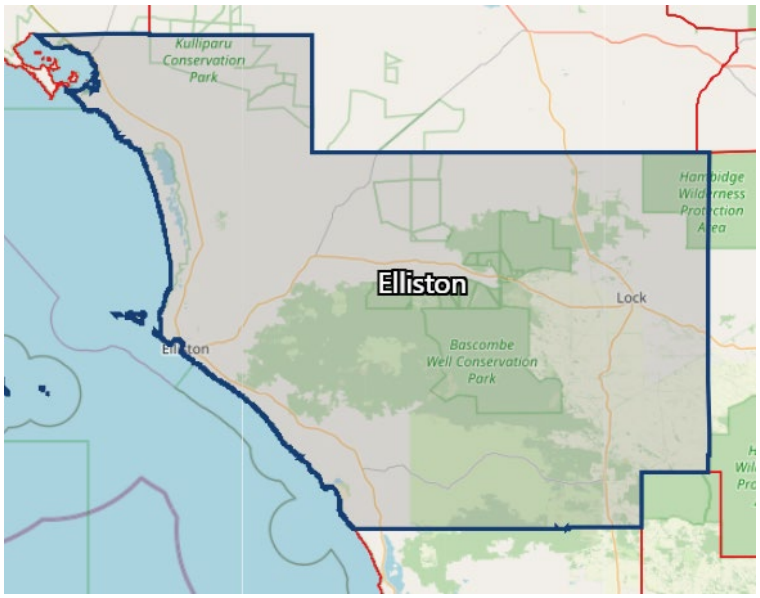
Legend: Low-risk Moderate-risk High-risk

[15] As required under s122(1b) of the LG Act.
[16] The Council's estimates for the 2023-24 financial year, relied on at the time of preparing this advice, were unaudited.
[17] Based on the estimated number of property assessments in 2022-23.

3 Council profile

The District Council of Elliston is classified by the Commission as a 'Rural Agricultural: Small and Medium' council and is one of 19 in this category in South Australia.[18] The Council is in the Western Eyre Peninsula of South Australia, comprising 6,742 square kilometres.[19] It has an estimated resident population of 1,041(at 30 June 2023),[20] and 1,340 rateable properties (at 30 June 2023).[21]

The Council seat is at Elliston and the district also encompasses Lock, Port Kenny and Venus Bay, as well as several smaller towns and localities, including Bramfield, Colton, Coolillie, Kappawanta, Mount Joy, Mount Wedge, Murdinga, Palkagee, Polda, Sheringa, Talia, Tooligie and Ulyerra, as well as part of Hambridge and Mount Damper.



The Council region also has the following attributes:

- stable number of rateable properties, with growth of approximately 0.4 percent per annum[22]
- population density of 0.2 persons per square kilometre[23]
- 1,155 kilometres of sealed and unsealed roads of which 94.2 percent are unsealed roads[24]

[18] Commission, *Fact Sheet - Local Government Advice Scheme – Schedule of Councils*, May 2023, available at https://www.escosa.sa.gov.au/ArticleDocuments/21947/20240731-Advice-ScheduleOfCouncils-FactSheet.pdf.aspx?Embed=Y.

[19] Refer to Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Data by region*, available at https://dbr.abs.gov.au/region.html?lyr=lga&rgn=41750.

[20] Refer to Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Data by region*, available at https://dbr.abs.gov.au/region.html?lyr=lga&rgn=41750.

[21] Based on the Council's Financial Reporting template provided to the Commission.

[22] Based on the Council's Financial Reporting template provided to the Commission.

[23] Refer to Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Data by region*, available at https://dbr.abs.gov.au/region.html?lyr=lga&rgn=41750.

[24] Refer to the Department of Infrastructure and Transport - Local Government Grants Commission, *2022-23 Database Reports*, available at: https://www.dit.sa.gov.au/local-government/grants-commission/publications#database.

- its largest employment sectors are in agriculture (47.2 percent), and healthcare and social assistance (12.6 percent),[25] and
- a median population age of 43.3 years.[26]

[25] Refer to Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Data by region*, available at https://dbr.abs.gov.au/region.html?lyr=lga&rgn=41750.

[26] Refer to Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Data by region*, available at https://dbr.abs.gov.au/region.html?lyr=lga&rgn=41750.

4 Material plan amendments in 2024-25

The Council has made various amendments to its 2024-25 budget and forward projections, partly for inflation and partly for other revenue and spending initiatives. The material amendments to some of its main financial forecasts are listed in the table below (in nominal terms).[27] To ensure a comparable analysis of estimates between the 2023-24 and 2024-25 LTFP, the Commission has reviewed the nine common years' statistics: 2024-25 to 2032-33 and identified material amendments accordingly.

The Commission notes that it is likely that the material amendments are overstated because the 2023-24 LTFP includes indexation of income and expenses for inflation over the term of the plan, whereas the previous LTFP and IAMP were based on data in real terms. The Commission has not rebased the 2023-24 LTFP into nominal terms because of insufficient information on the Council's approach to inflation.

4.1 Key points

Table 2: Historical and forecast financial items

Selected Financial Item	Sum of 2024-25 to 2032-33 estimates in 2023-24 LTFP ($ million)	Sum of 2024-25 to 2032-33 estimates in 2024-25 LTFP ($ million)	Change in 2024-25 estimates ($ million)	Change in 2024-25 estimates (percent)
Total operating income	48.4	76.9	+28.4	+58.7
Total operating expenses	48.0	62.2	+14.2	+29.5
Operating surplus / (deficit)	0.4	14.7	+14.3	+3297.0
Capital expenditure on renewal of assets[28]	13.6	16.9	+3.4	+24.9
Capital expenditure on new and upgraded assets[29]	3.0	1.1	(1.8)	(64.8)

4.2 Changes to operating performance

The Council budgeted for an improvement in its operating performance over the period of the LTFP that results in a cumulative operating surplus of $14.7 million over the common nine-year period, compared to a cumulative operating surplus of $0.4 million in the 2023-24 LTFP. This is an improvement in the operating result of $14.3 million for the period.

Some of the changes to operating performance over the term of the LTFP include:

- an increase of $14.5 million (from $1.8 million to $16.3 million) in user charges due to income generated by the Venus Bay Beachfront Tourist Park

[27] This table shows only selected financial items to demonstrate the material amendments made by the Council in its 2023-24 estimates. It excludes various financial items and individual items do not sum to totals.

[28] The capital expenditure estimates are based on the 2022-23 LTFP estimates provided by the Council to the Commission (in an Excel template).

[29] See footnote 10.

- an increase in employee costs due to an increase in staff numbers due to the acquisition of the Venus Bay Beachfront Tourist Park
- an increase in 'materials, contracts and other' expenses of $8.6 million or 42.5 percent arising from the purchase of the Venus Bay Beachfront Tourist Park and adjusting to nominal values for the LTFP
- an increase in finance costs of $0.3 million incurred on borrowings to purchase the Venus Bay Beachfront Tourist Park
- increases in income and expenditure due to the LTFP 2025-34 presenting data in nominal terms, rather than real terms in the previous LTFP, with an increase of $4.6 million or 16.2 percent in income from rates, and
- an increase of $9.0 million or 51.2 percent in income from grants, subsidies and contributions.

4.3 Indexation adjustments

The Council stated that it uses the RBA's CPI forecasts for its forecast increases in rates in the LTFP.[30] Although the Council states how the CPI applies to increases in rates for 2024-25,[31] it does not provide details of how the RBA forecasts for the CPI apply to the Council's forecasts for variables other than rates each year.

1. Provide details of the Council's assumptions regarding inflationary expectations and other assumptions, and how they are applied, relative to the size and timing of increases in income and expenses in the LTFP.

4.4 Increase to capital expenditure estimates

The Council revised its estimates for expenditure on the replacement and renewal of assets by $3.4 million, or an increase of 24.9 percent over the common nine-year period, following its purchase of the Venus Bay Beachfront Tourist Park in April 2024 and the review of its Strategic Plan, LTFP and IAMP in June 2024, which included adjustments for inflation over the term of the LTFP.

The Council also revised downwards its estimates for expenditure on new and upgraded assets by $1.9 million or negative 64.8 percent following its review of the IAMP. These estimates of asset values were adjusted for inflation, in line with RBA forecasts[32] and the values over the period reflect the Council policy to acquire new assets only when grant funding is available.[33]

The Council's outlook for capital expenditure is discussed further in Section 6.3.

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30 See District Council of Elliston, Long-Term Financial Plan 2025-34, p. 7 for the sources of data used to calculate increases in income and expenses, including investment income and interest expense, over the term of the LTFP. The Council does not, however, present a year-by-year table or list of the indexation applied.

31 See District Council of Elliston, Long-Term Financial Plan 2025-2034, p. 6 for an explanation of the Council's financial strategy and p. 7 for the key assumptions underlying the LTFP, which includes the use of the RBA forecasts, although the Council does not reference the latest ABS value of the CPI or the date the RBA forecasts were issued, eg RBA Statement of Monetary Policy – May 2024 Outlook at https://www.rba.gov.au/publications/smp/2024/may/outlook.html or the values of the annual CPI forecasts applied.

32 The Council advised in the Financial Template that the previous LTFP included real values for materials, contracts and other expenses over the 10-year period, while the current (2024-25) LTFP uses the real value for 2024-25 and nominal values (ie, adjusted for inflation) for the remaining nine years of the forecast period.

33 This policy does not facilitate effective long-term planning to meet capital expenditure requirements and has a potential impact on long-term financial sustainability if projects are only partly funded by grants.

4.5 Changes between 2023-24 LTFP and annual business plan (ABP)

Year 1 of the LTFP is based upon the 2023 - 24 Budget Review #3[34] and the ABP and Budget, adopted on 16 June 2024.[35]

The LTFP was approved on 16 July 2024, including the CEO Statement of Financial Sustainability on p. 5 of the LTFP 2025-2034.

[34] See District Council of Elliston, Long-Term Financial Plan 2025-34, p. 4.
[35] See District Council of Elliston, Long-Term Financial Plan 2025-34, p. 6.

5 Financial sustainability

5.1 Operating performance

5.1.1 Key points

- The Council delivered an average OSR of 6.2 percent over the historical period, which lies within the LGA target range of zero percent to 10.0 percent
- Income from user charges is forecast to increase from 1.8 percent of total income over the forecast period to 21.2 percent over the forecast period.
- The Council is generating new sources of income in addition to rates, leading to OSR that average 18.7 percent over the forecast period. This raises the concern that growth in rates might be higher than necessary, unless the Council has plans for additional expenditure to reduce the accumulated surpluses, with the agreement of its community.
- The Council is forecasting that the income from grants will increase by a CAGR of 3.1 percent, which is 0.5 percentage points above forecast inflation. If this level of grant revenue is not achieved, then the Council might need to consider reductions in expenditure or generating income from other sources to deliver an average OSR over the forecast period within the LGA target range of zero percent to 10.0 percent.
- Total expenses are forecast to increase at a CAGR of 2.1 percent, or 0.5 percentage points below average inflation, over the 10-year forecast period.
- The Council has not indicated that it has undertaken a sensitivity analysis to assess the potential impact on the Council's financial sustainability from undertaking priority projects such as the Elliston Aged Care Homes.

Over the 10-year historical period 2012-13 through 2022-23, the Council operated sustainably, with an average OSR of 6.2 percent for the period. Although the annual values were volatile over the historical period and ranged both above and below the target range,[36] the average annual value lies within the LG target range of zero to 10 percent. (See Figure 1)

After the decline in the ratio value to negative 7.0 percent (unaudited) in 2023-24, below the lower target of zero percent due to the special circumstances.[37] the Council is forecasting a return to financial sustainability over the forecast period, with an average value for the OSR of 18.7 percent, well above the upper LGA target of 10 percent, due to the Council's approach to provide a buffer for unforeseen expenses.[38] The use and size of the buffer is discussed further in section 5.2. The Commission notes that the forecast level of cash reserves may mean projected increases in rates over the forecast period

[36] Over the 10-year historical period, the value of the operating surplus ratio ranged from negative 19.8 percent in 2013-14 to positive 25.5 percent in 2017-18.

[37] Due to the Council's purchase of the Venus Bay Beachfront Tourist Park in 2023-24 as an income-generating asset, combined with a drop in income from grants in 2023-24 (ie income from grants of only $1.8 million in 2023-24, compared to the historical annual average income from grants of $2.5 million), which is approximately the size of the deficit in 2023-24.

[38] See District Council of Elliston LTFP 2025-34 p. 9. Although it might be appropriate for a small council that is undertaking a range of commercial activities to maintain a buffer for contingencies, the forecast average ratio value for the OSR of 18.7 percent sits well above the LGA upper target of 10 percent.

are too high relative to the Council's requirements, and this places a burden upon ratepayers, who have alternative uses for their funds.

Figure 1: Operating surplus ratio – historical and forecast

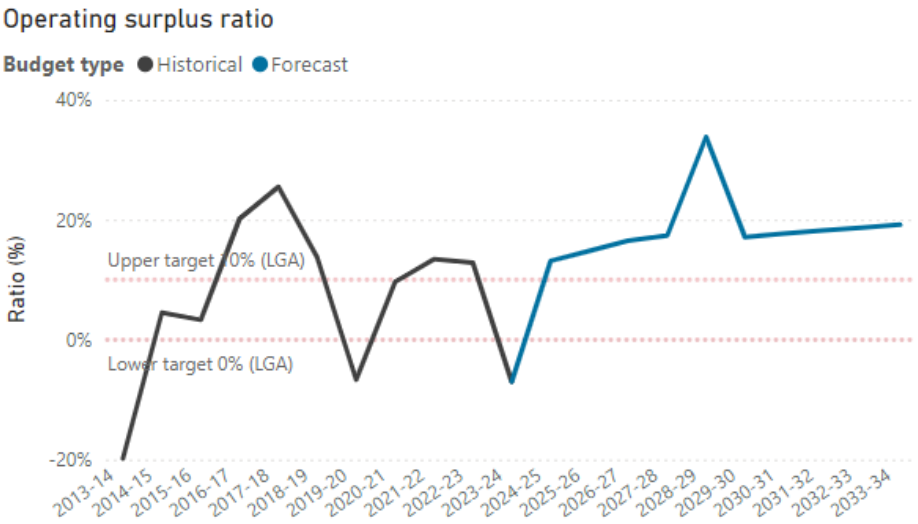
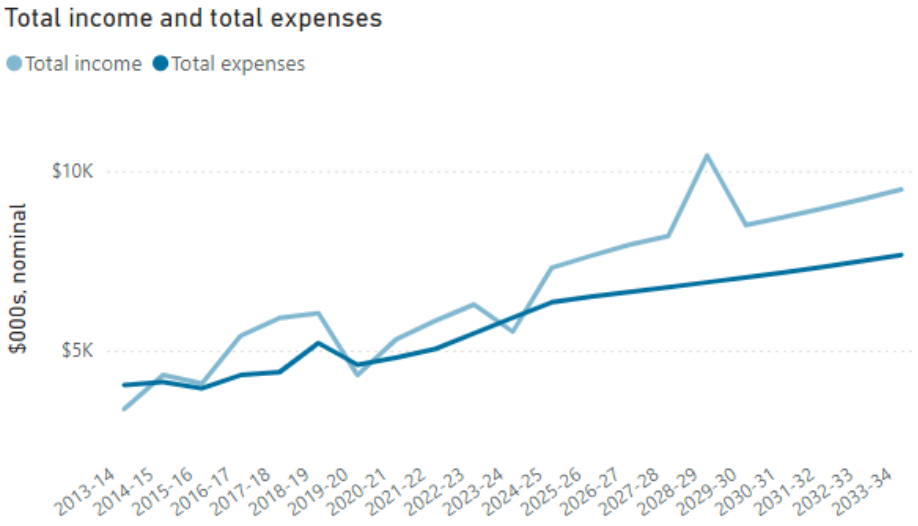


Figure 2: Total income and expenses – historical and forecast



5.1.2 Income

Over the 10-year historical period from 2012-13 to 2022-23, the Council's total income grew by a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 7.1 percent, substantially higher than average annual inflation at 2.6 percent. This is primarily due to the surge in income from grants over the period, which funded many of the road infrastructure projects undertaken.

The largest contribution to the Council's income over the period was made by grants, subsidies and contributions, which comprised 48.2 percent of total Council income over the 10-year period. Income from grants increased at a CAGR of 13.0 percent and, due to both the relative size and timing of the receipt of the income, was the basis for the volatility in the OSR.

Over the historical period, the income from rates increased at a CAGR of 3.8 percent. Although the income from rates increased at nearly 50.0 percent more than average inflation of 2.6 percent over the

period, the contribution of rates to total income declined from 59.7 percent of total income in 2013-14 to 45.0 percent of total income in 2022-23, due to the large increase in income from grants.

The income from all other sources, including statutory charges and user charges[39] increased at a CAGR of only 1.0 percent and was the source of only 5.7 percent of the Council income over the historical period.

Over the 10-year forecast period, total income is forecast to increase at a CAGR of 2.9 percent, which is 0.3 percentage points above the rate of forecast inflation of 2.6 percent. (see Figure 2)

The income from rates is forecast to increase at a CAGR of 2.7 percent, also above forecast inflation. This is due to the Council's strategy to increase rates by 2.0 percentage points above the CPI in the 2024-25 financial year, to enable it to deliver an operating surplus in 2024-25.[40] This is followed by increases in rates at the forecast rate of inflation for the remaining nine years of the forecast period, which ensures that it is able to continue to deliver a surplus over the period.[41]

The income from grants is forecast to increase at the CAGR of 3.1 percent over the forecast period, or 0.5 percentage point above forecast inflation, and to comprise 34.2 percent of total income. This represents a significant decline from 48.2 percent of income over the historical period. This is due, primarily, to the decline in total capital expenditure (at a CAGR of 22.9 percent), discussed further in section 5.3.

The income from user charges is forecast to increase by $1.2 million (274.0 percent) in 2024-25, the first year of the forecast period, and by a CAGR of 2.7 percent over the entire forecast period, due to:

- the income from the Venus Bay Beachfront Tourist Park[42]
- income from leasing the Lock Aquatic and Fitness Centre, and
- after 2024-25, income from short-term workers accommodation.[43]

In consequence, income from user charges is forecast to increase from 1.8 percent of total income over the historical period to 21.2 percent over the forecast period, which decreases the Council's dependence upon the income from rates and grants.

It will be important for the Council to actively monitor the financial performance of its commercial activity, to ensure that it continues to provide adequate profits to benefit the community.

[39] User charges increased by 143.8 percent in 2023-24, primarily due to income from the Lock Aquatic and Fitness Centre.

[40] The Council had an operating deficit in 2023-24, when it purchased the Venus Bay Tourist Beachfront Tourist Park.

[41] The Council had an operating surplus ratio of negative 7.0 percent in 2023-24 (unaudited), due to their purchase of the Venus Bay Beachfront Tourist Park in 2023-24 - see District Council of Elliston, Long-Term Financial Plan 2025-34, p. 6.

[42] The Council purchased the Venus Bay Beachfront Tourist Park as a low risk, income-producing asset in 2023-24 – see District Council of Elliston Annual Report 2023-24, p. 4.

[43] The Council budgeted to spend $1.0 million on the short-term workers' accommodation in 2024-25, generating income after completion over the remaining years of the LTFP.

5.1.3 Expenditure

Figure 3: Expenses by category – historical and forecast

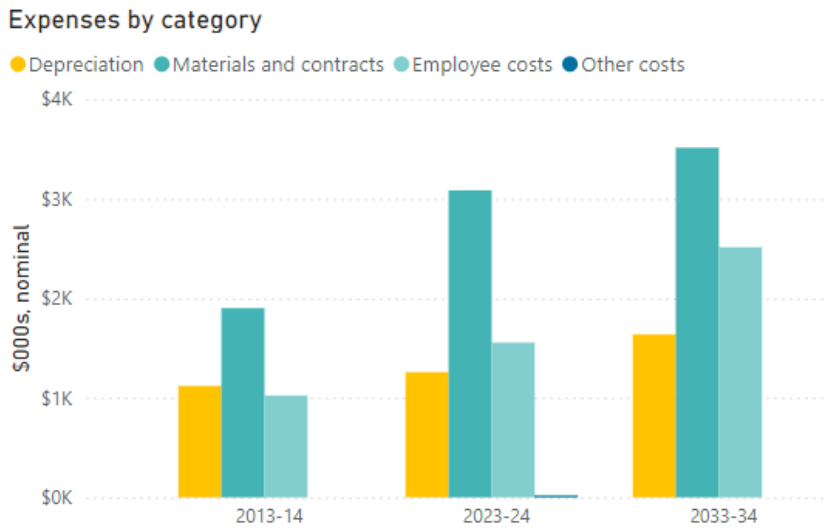
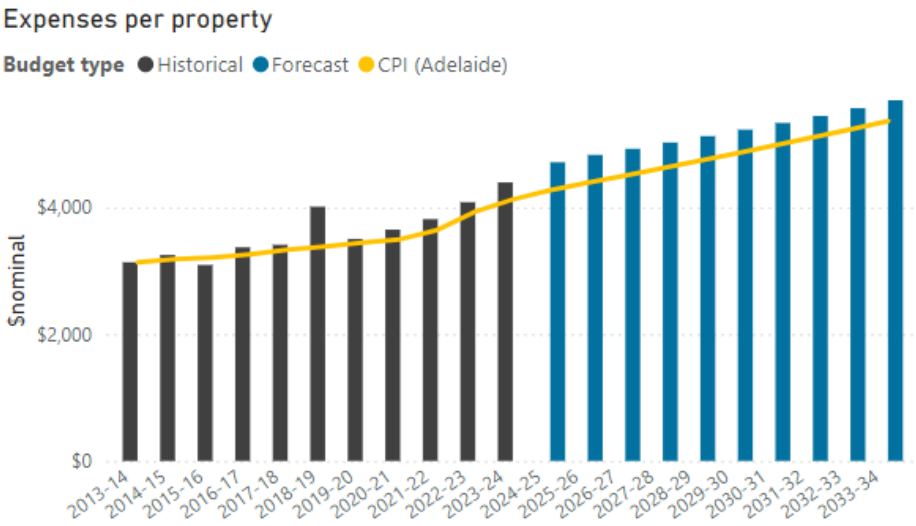


Figure 4: Expense by rated property - historical and forecast



Over the 10-year historical period, total expenses increased at a CAGR of 3.4 percent, or 0.8 percentage points above average inflation of 2.6 percent. (See Figure 3 for a breakdown of expenses by category)

Materials, contracts and other expenses constituted 46.7 percent of expenses over the historical period and increased at a CAGR of 4.3 percent or 1.7 percentage points above the average historical rate of inflation of 2.6 percent. The size of the increases was primarily due to increases in expenditure on new and upgraded assets, including road assets, at a CAGR of 44.2 percent over the period.

Employee costs, which comprised 28.3 percent of total expenses over the historical period, increased at a CAGR of 4.3 percent, reflecting the increase in FTE over the period[44] and enterprise agreement adjustments.[45]

Depreciation expenses comprised 24.9 percent of total expenses and increased at a CAGR of 0.5 percent over the historical period. Although the rate is low relative to historical inflation of 2.6 percent, it aligns with the rate of historical expenditure on the renewal and replacement of assets over the period.

Over the 10-year forecast period, total expenses are forecast to increase at a CAGR of 2.1 percent, or 0.5 percentage points below average annual forecast inflation.

Materials, contracts and other expenses are forecast to increase at a CAGR of 2.0 percent, or 0.6 percentage point below average inflation over the forecast period. This is a fall in expenditure in real terms and is consistent with the decline in capital expenditure forecast over the period. Despite this lower rate of growth, these expenses comprise 46.8 percent of total forecast expenses, slightly more than over the historical period.

Employee costs comprise 31.7 percent of total expenses over the forecast period and are forecast to increase at a CAGR of 2.7 percent over the period, just above forecast average inflation of 2.6 percent, with no change in the number of FTEs (ie, 24).

Depreciation, amortisation and other expenses, are forecast to increase at a CAGR of 2.5 percent and comprise 21.0 percent of expenses. There is a concern, however regarding the basis of the depreciation profiles, since it is unclear whether depreciation is being calculated at fair value.

Over the historical period, expenses per property increased at a CAGR of 2.9 percent, compared to the average annual rate of inflation of 2.6 percent. This represents an increase in expenses per property of $147above that attributed to inflation.

Over the forecast period, expenses per property are forecast to increase at a CAGR of 2.1 percent per annum (see Figure 4), in line with the rate of increase in total expenses.[46]

5.1.4 Commission's recommendations on operating performance

To ensure the Council achieves best practice in line with the LGA targets, the Commission recommends that the Council:

2. **Review** forecast increases in rates to aim for an Operating Surplus Ratio that takes into consideration any intended expenditure on new assets, risks of the commercial business operation and affordability for ratepayers.
3. **Develop** and report annually on efficiency measures, targets and achievements, to restrain the growth in expenses to within those forecast in the Budget and Long-Term Financial Plan.
4. **Actively monitor** the financial performance of the Council's commercial activities. to ensure they remain on track.
5. **Consider** conducting sensitivity analyses regarding proposed new significant projects, to assess the potential impact of the project and its funding options on financial sustainability.

[44] From 13 to 18 FTE, or an increase of 38.5 percent.
[45] FTEs increased at a CAGR of 3.7 percent over the historical period.
[46] The number of rateable properties is forecast to remain constant at 1,345 over the forecast period.

5.2 Net financial liabilities

5.2.1 Key points

Key Points:

- Between 2013-14 and 2022-23, the net financial liabilities ratio averaged negative 34.4 percent, which is below the lower target of 0 percent.
- Between 2024-25 and 2032-33, the net financial liabilities ratio is forecast to average negative 67.1 percent, which is below the lower target of zero percent.
- The Council borrowed funds to purchase an income producing asset in 2023-24 and plans to repay the loan by 2029-30.
- The Council is forecasting that its cash and cash reserves at year end will increase at a CAGR of 52.3 percent over the forecast period.

The net financial liabilities ratio (NFLR) was negative for the entire historical period, with an annual average of negative 34.4 percent, which sits below the lower target value of zero percent, indicating that the Council had the capacity to meet its financial obligations from its operating income.

The NFLR had a positive value of 34.5 percent in 2023-24,[47] which is within the target range of zero percent to 100 percent, and the value of the ratio remains within the target range over the first two years of the forecast period (ie 2024-25 and 2025-26). From 2026-27 onwards, the Council's net financial liabilities decrease as loans are repaid (see figure 6), and the value of the ratio becomes negative. As a result, the average of the NFLR for the 10-year forecast period is negative 49.6 percent, well below the lower end of the target range of zero percent.[48] (see Figure 5) This suggests that the Council has the capacity to undertake new projects without risk to its financial sustainability.

Over the 10-year forecast period, this decline in the annual value of the NFLR is accompanied by an increase in the level of cash and cash equivalents at a CAGR of 52.3 percent, while total borrowings decline from a peak of $1.6 million in 2023-24, when the Council purchased the Venus Bay Beachfront Tourist Park, to zero from 2030-31 through 2033-34 as the debt is repaid. (see Figures 7 and 8)

The Council's reliance upon debt to purchase this asset is prudent and promotes intergenerational equity,[49] because it was willing to incur debt to purchase a low-risk, income-producing asset and spread the repayments over a period when the income from this asset contributed to reducing the debt, rather than relying on increases in rates to finance the purchase.

Over the forecast period, however, the Council is projecting that it will increase its cash holdings at a CAGR of 52.3 percent, from $0.3 million in 2024-25 to $12.3 million in 2033-34. (see Figure 8) Although the Council has made ample provision to fund asset renewal expenditure over the forecast period, it is

[47] The Council purchased the Venus Bay Beachfront Tourist Park in 2023-24, which increased the annual value of the ratio.

[48] The NFLR continues to decline below the lower target value of zero percent to a value of negative 131.1 percent in 2033-34.

[49] The income from user charges increased by 174 percent in 2024-25 over that for 2023-24, largely due to income from the Venus Bay Beachfront Tourist Park, and user charges are forecast to increase at a CAGR of 2.7 percent over the forecast period, which enables the Council to finish repaying its borrowings in 2030-31.

planning to continue to build its cash holdings to fund 'asset renewal required after the 10-year period covered by this LTFP'.[50]

Since planned asset renewal expenditure is adequately funded over the forecast period, there is an opportunity for the Council to review, in consultation with its community, the pace of its accumulation of cash and the potential for a level of debt, so that funds are available closer to when future asset renewal is due, thereby avoiding an undue burden on ratepayers.

The Commission notes that the LTFP does not include any expenditure on new or upgraded assets over the forecast period. If any new or upgraded assets are planned, then it would be more transparent for these to be included in the LTFP, along with plans for the required funding, noting that these projects would only be undertaken if adequate grant funding were to become available.

Figure 5: Net financial liabilities ratio – historical and forecast

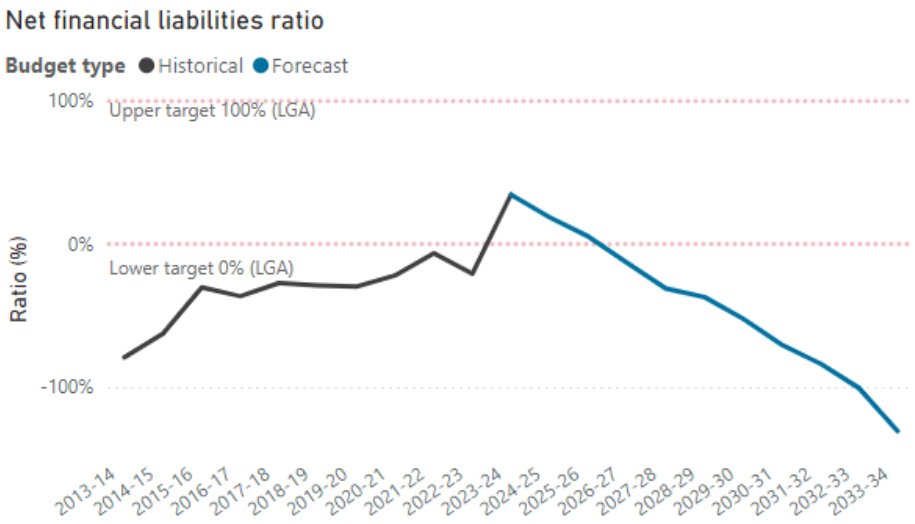
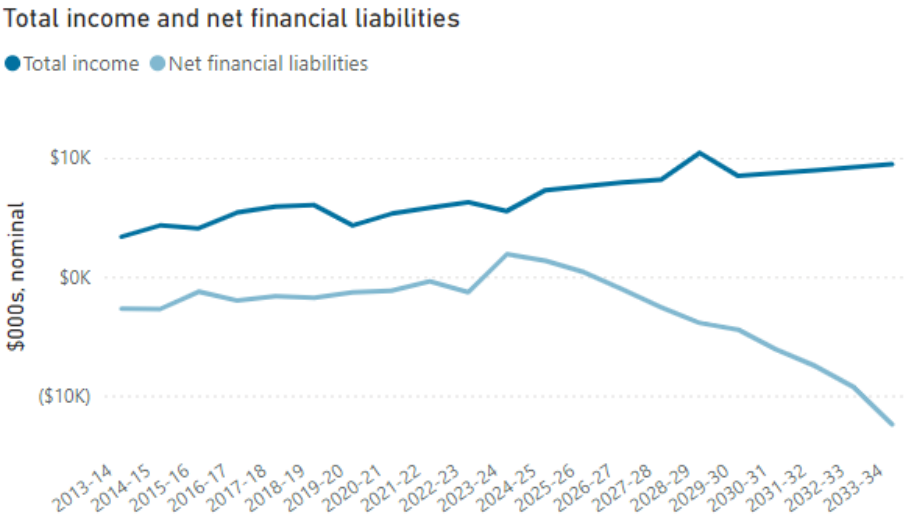
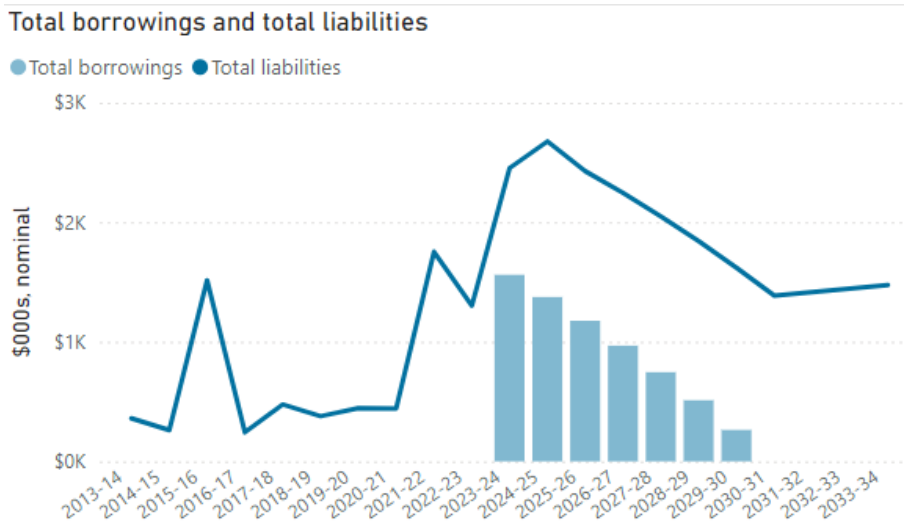


Figure 6: Total income and net financial liabilities – historical and forecast



[50] For a statement on the Council's approach, see District Council of Elliston, LTFP 2025-34, p. 10.

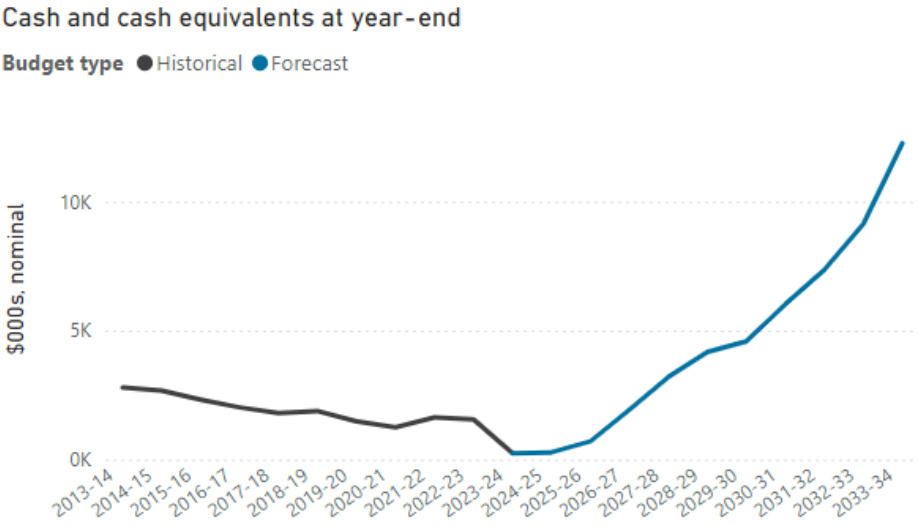
Figure 7: Total borrowings and total liabilities – historical and forecast



The Council plans to repay its borrowings associated with the purchase of the Venus Bay Beachfront Tourist Park before 2030-31 and has no plans for any further borrowings. (see Figure 7)

Given the Council's strong financial position, shown by both the OSR and NFLR, as well as the increasing cash holdings over the forecast period, it is well placed to undertake new projects over the forecast period, for example, the Elliston Aged Care Homes, using either cash and/or borrowings. Good planning for this significant proposed project would include scenario analysis and consultation with the community about development options, scope and funding options.

Figure 8: Cash and cash equivalents at year end – historical and forecast



5.2.2 The Commission's recommendations on financial liabilities

The Commission recommends that the Council:

6. In consultation with the community, **review** the requirements for cash holdings over the term of the LTFP, consider whether debt could be utilised to fund any planned new or upgraded assets, and incorporate any planned new projects in the LTFP.

5.3 Asset renewals expenditure

5.3.1 Key points

- The historical average value of the ARFR (renewal expenditure gross – IAMP based) was 99.5 percent over the last seven years of the historical period. This is within the target range.[51]
- The Council forecasts that it will achieve an ARFR (renewal expenditure gross – IAMP based) of 100.0 percent over the forecast period.
- Expenditure on the renewal and replacement of assets is forecast to decline at a CAGR of 19.3 percent over the forecast period, although depreciation increases at a CAGR of 2.5 percent. This indicates that planned asset renewal expenditure and depreciation values are not aligned.
- The Council does not provide transparency regarding the impact of potential expenditure on new and upgraded assets on its projected financial sustainability in its LTFP.
- The IAMP needs further development, including improved assessment of asset condition, useful asset lives and service delivery standards.
- The average annual values of the ARFR – depreciation based over the historical period of 124.4 percent and the forecast period of 119.2 percent both sit above the upper target value of 110.0 percent, which indicates that the Council should consider whether depreciation values and IAMP expenditure projections are sufficiently aligned.

Over the historical period, total capital expenditure grew at a CAGR of 5.4 percent. The size of the increase was due to the expenditure on new and upgraded assets, which increased by a CAGR of 44.2 percent and comprised 29.1 percent of total capital expenditure.[52] Expenditure on the renewal and replacement of assets increased by a CAGR of only 0.5 percent, however, and comprised 70.9 percent of total capital expenditure.[53]

The Council is forecasting that the expenditure on new and upgraded assets will be zero from 2025-26 onwards, in line with the Council's policy of including expenditure on new and upgraded assets in the LTFP only after grant funding has been secured.[54] Although the principal behind this approach is to

[51] Historical IAMP values are only available for the period 2016-17 through 2022-23.

[52] Which includes expenditure on new assets of $1.6 million in 2015-16, including $1.4 million on the Elliston Coastal Trail and $88,400 for blinds for the BBQ area for the on Memorial Drive (see District Council of Elliston, Annual Report 2016-17, p. 7) and $2.0 million on stormwater assets infrastructure and Samphire Wetlands in 2021-22 (see District Council of Elliston, Annual Report 2021-22, p. 36.

[53] The major items of historical asset renewal expenditure were road renewals at $2.3 million in 2017-18.

[54] The Council explained their planning for expenditure on new and upgraded assets as follows: 'Expenditure on new assets and services in the capital works program will be accommodated in the long-term financial plan but only to the extent of the available funds'. See District Council of Elliston, Infrastructure and Asset Management Plan, p. 10.

show only expenditure commitments related to funding that has been secured, it does not provide adequate transparency to stakeholders regarding the range or impact of proposed priority projects, such as the Elliston Aged Care Homes project.[55] Another approach the Council could adopt in this situation would be to include an allocation to undertake the project, subject to grant funding, in the LTFP, to facilitate consultation with the community on the impact to rates, design and delivery options, and the Council's financial sustainability should the project eventuate. Over the forecast period, total capital expenditure is forecast to decrease at a CAGR of 22.9 percent. This reduction in total capital expenditure is due to decreases in both expenditure on the renewal and replacement of assets, which is forecast at a CAGR of negative 19.3 percent, and expenditure on new and upgraded assets, which is forecast to decline to zero.[56] (see Figure 14)

The Council's IAMP 2025-2034 was updated and approved on 17 July 2024. It includes the asset management plans associated with transportation, buildings and other structures and plant and equipment,[57] but does not include details for CWMS, stormwater or other Council assets. It also sets some expected customer service level standards but does not provide for customer consultations.[58] The IAMP is aligned with the LTFP, Annual Business Plan and Budget 2024-25.[59]

Asset valuations in the IAMP are 'valued at fair value at cost to replace service capacity'.[60] The IAMP values are given in real dollars, with the IAMP values in the LTFP adjusted for inflation[61] in line with the RBA forecasts for CPI.[62]

The IAMP includes a data confidence classification system, which considers the data to be reliable[63] and based on sound records, procedures, investigations and analysis, but the Improvement Plan[64] shows that many improvements remain outstanding.

The IAMP has a life of four years and is due for a complete revision and updating within two years of each general Council election, as required by the LG Act. The Council states that it also intends to update the IAMP annually to ensure it reflects current service levels, asset values, projected maintenance, capital renewal and replacement, capital upgrade/new and asset disposal expenditure and projected expenditure values that are incorporated into the LTFP.[65]

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55 The Council provided $52,000 in the 2024-25 Budget for the design and construction work, including any required land mediation work, for the Elliston Aged Care Homes project, which it considers a priority project to address a critical shortage of accommodation in the district. Although the Council stated that it intends to apply for grant funding for the project, it has not made provision in the LTFP to deliver it – see District Council of Elliston, Annual Business Plan and Budget 2024-25, p. 12.

56 Expenditure on new and upgraded assets over the forecast period is forecast to decline from $1.1 million in 2024-25 to zero from 2025-26 onwards.

57 Roads, plant and equipment account for approximately 80 percent of the Council's total asset renewal expenditure - see District Council of Elliston, Long-Term Financial Plan 2025-34, p. 76.

58 Although it has plans to do so - see District Council of Elliston, Infrastructure and Asset Management Plan, p. 11.

59 See District Council of Elliston, Infrastructure and Asset Management Plan Sections 8.1 and 8.2.

60 See District Council of Elliston, Infrastructure and Asset Management Plan, p. 11.

61 There appears to be some inconsistency or confusion in the Council's use of 'real' and 'nominal' in the LTFP, p. 8.

62 See District Council of Elliston, Long-Term Financial Plan, p. 7 for key assumptions for LTFP income and expenditure.

63 See District Council of Elliston, IAMP, p. 13 for the confidence grades, which states that the 'reliable' confidence grade has data with minor shortcomings and a confidence level of +/- 10 percent.

64 See District Council of Elliston, IAMP Section 8 Plan Improvement and Monitoring, p. 13.

65 See District Council of Elliston, IAMP p. 14.

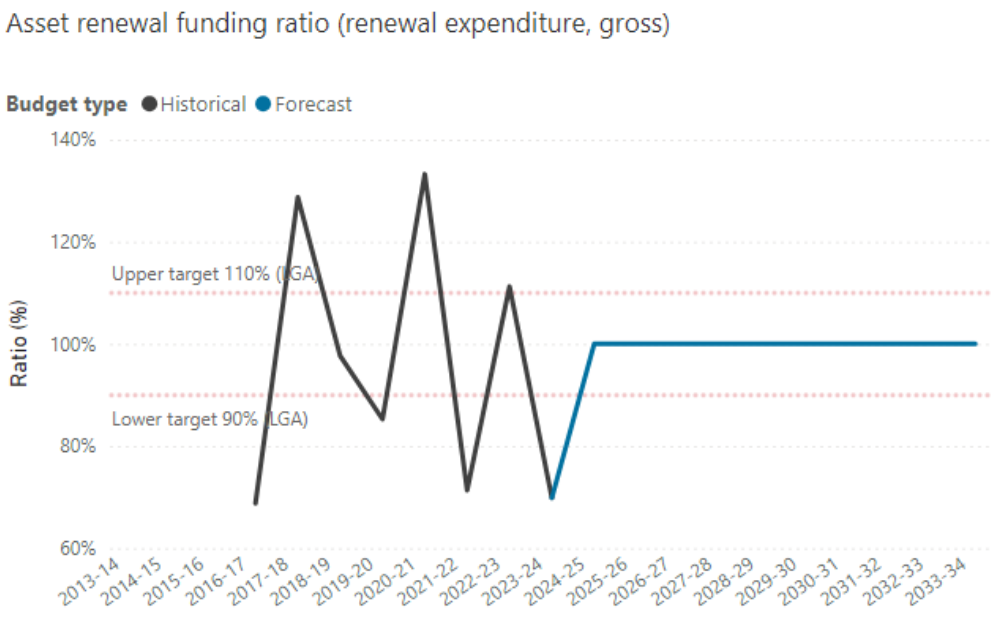
The IAMP is a core asset management plan but does not provide sufficient information about the condition and service levels required of assets, and the extent to which asset planning has occurred based on detailed asset information that has been gathered about individual assets.

For example, the IAMP is based on the underlying assumption that current service standards are adequate to meet community expectations and conducts no scenario analysis to determine increases or decreases in costs associated with increased or decreased service levels.

The development of the next IAMP offers an opportunity for the Council to engage the community more effectively to define and measure community expectations for service standards and the range of assets. Although the Council currently has a webpage to facilitate feedback on Council decisions[66] and has adopted a consultation policy,[67] the scope of consultations could be expanded to encompass new or upgraded projects to be undertaken over the forecast period.

Over the forecast period, expenditure on the renewal and replacement of assets is forecast to decrease at a CAGR of 19.3 percent and comprise 94.2 percent of total capital expenditure. The values for IAMP expenditure over the period are uneven, which could be related to the Councils size and requirements, but the annual value declines from $2.1 million in 2024-25 to only $0.3 million in 2033-34. (see Figure 12) This decline raises a question whether planned expenditure is adequate to meet service delivery standards, especially when the standards have not been adequately defined in the IAMP.

Figure 9: Asset renewal funding ratio (renewal expenditure gross) – historical and projected



Over the forecast period, the asset renewal funding ratio - IAMP based (gross) has an average value of 100 percent for the ten years, in the middle of the target range, which indicates that the Council is forecasting that it will renew its assets at the rates specified in the IAMP. (see Figure 9)

[66] See https://www.elliston.sa.gov.au/your-council/requests,-compliments,-complaints, which also provides access to the Complaints Policy and review procedure.

[67] See https://www.elliston.sa.gov.au/council-documents/council-policies for the Council's Consultation policy adopted 17 January 2023.

Although the average ARFR value over the historical period sits within the target range, the annual value for the ratio does so for only one of the seven years (ie 2018-19),[68] with all other values either above or below the target range, due to the uneven pattern of expenditure on the renewal and replacement of assets.[69] This reflects both the asset renewal requirements and the availability of resources to undertake them.

The ARFR – IAMP based (net) had an average value of 95.1 percent, which lies within the target ratio of 90 percent to 110 percent, while the average value over the forecast period is 99.7 percent, also within the target range. (see Figure 10)

The historical values of the ARFR - depreciation based - also have a volatile pattern over the historical period with a value, for example, as high as 255.9 percent in 2017-18.[70] The average value of the ratio over the period was 124.4 percent, which is well above the upper target of 110 percent.[71]

Over the forecast period, the ARFR– depreciation based - has an average value of 119.2 percent, which is again well above the upper target of 110 percent. (see Figures 10 and 11) The annual values follow an irregular pattern, following values in the depreciation schedule, and only two of the annual values are forecast to lie within the target range of 90 percent to 110 percent during the 10-year forecast period.[72]

The values of the forecast ARFR – depreciation-based[73] do not align with the ARFR – IAMP based (gross) or the ARFR – IAMP based (net) over the period, because depreciation values are not aligned with asset values or the expected remaining lives of their assets over the period, because depreciation is calculated using a different method than the IAMP expenditure. (see Figure 10)

68 The annual value of the ratio sits below the lower target value of 90 percent in three of the seven years for which data is available (ie 2016-17, 2019-20 and 2021-22 and above the upper target value of 110 percent in three of the seven years (ie 2017-18, 2020-21 and 2022-23).

69 For example, expenditure on the renewal and replacement of assets increased by over 130 percent in 2017-18, resulting in a ratio value of 128.7 percent, which is well above the upper target value of 110 percent.

70 This includes a ratio of 133.05 percent in 2015-16, 128.0 percent in 2018-19 and 114.7 percent in 2020-21.

71 The average asset renewal ratio for the nine years excluding 2017-18 sits within the target range at 109.8 percent.

72 The annual values sit above the target range of 90 percent to 110 percent in 2024-25, 2025-26, 2028-29, 2029-30 and 2031-32 and below the target range in 2026-27, 2030-31 and 2033-34.

73 Of note is the decline in forecast asset renewal expenditure to only $0.3 million in 2033-34, which is only 16.4 percent of the average annual planned expenditure over the first nine years of the forecast period.

Figure 10: Net asset renewal expenditure and depreciation – historical and forecast

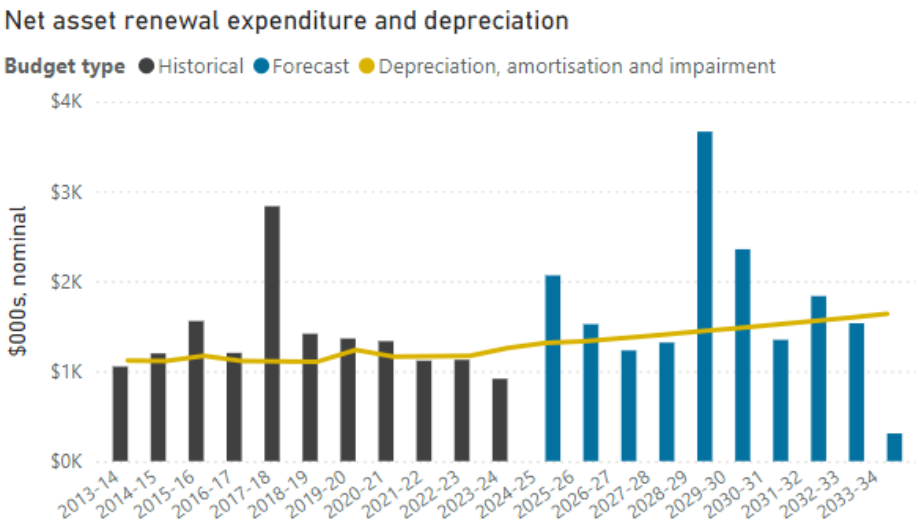


Figure 11 Asset renewal funding ratio (depreciation based) – historical and forecast

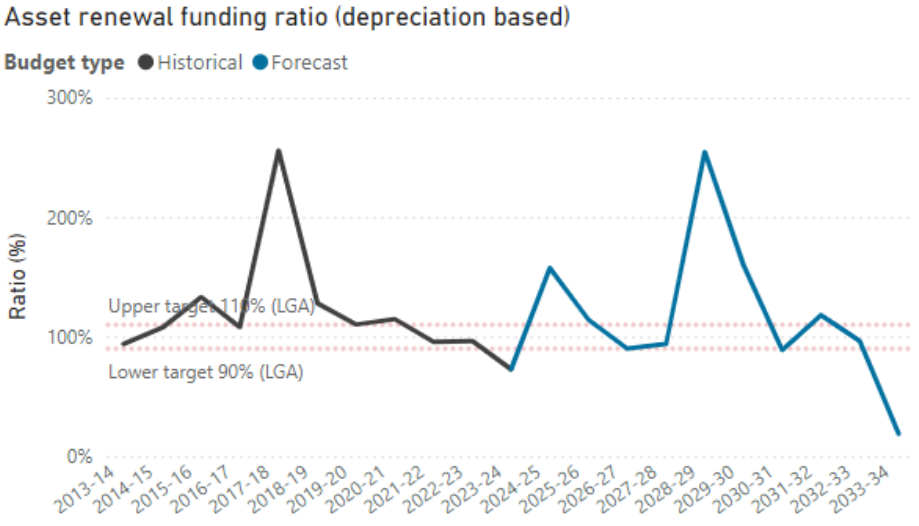


Figure 12: Net asset renewal and IAMP renewal expenditure – historical and projected

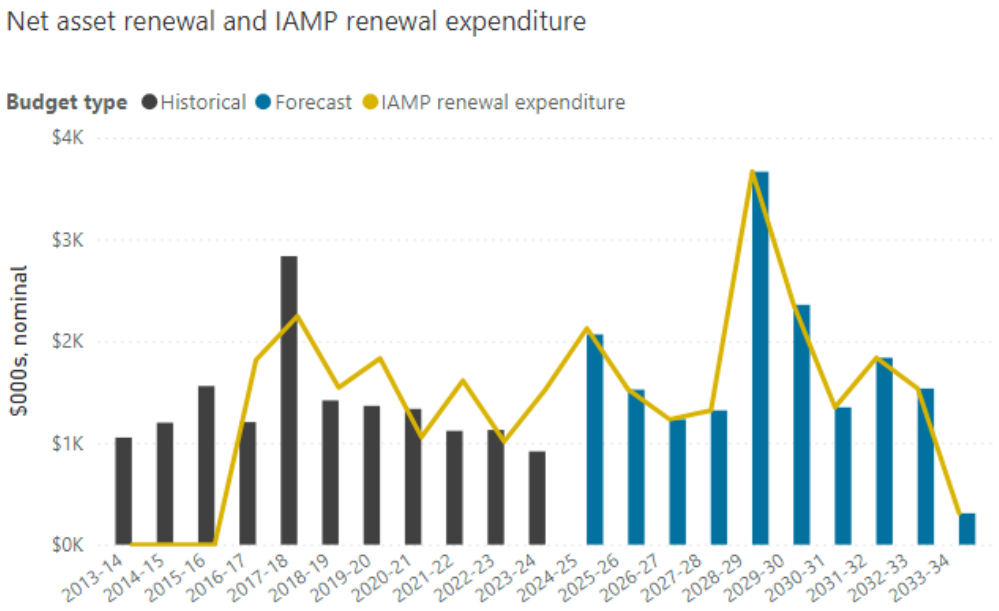
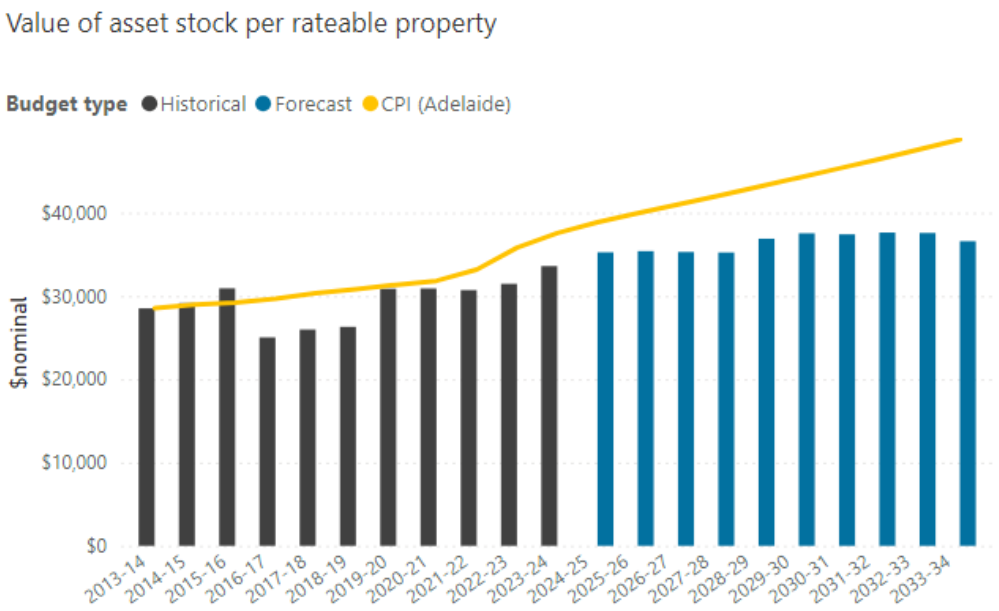


Figure 13: Value of asset stock per rateable property – historical and projected

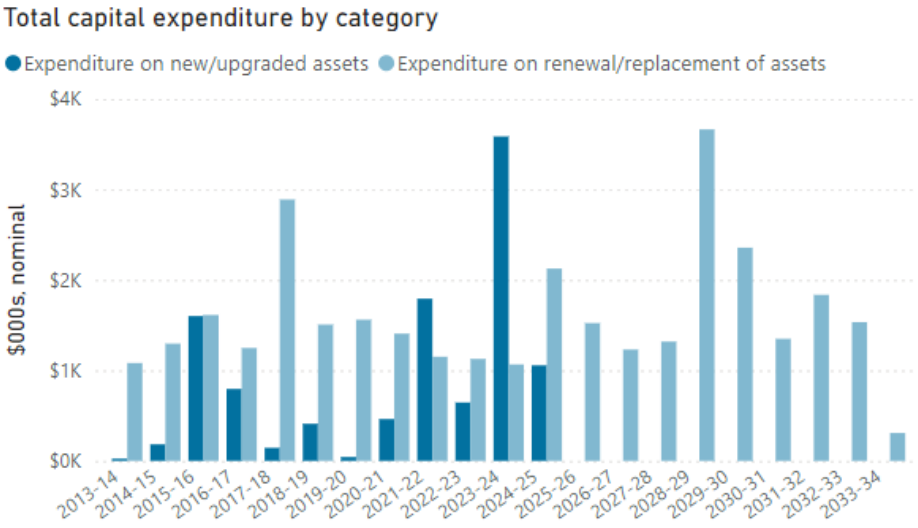


The value of asset stock per rateable property increased at a CAGR of 1.1 percent or from $28, 521 per property to $31,465 over the historical period, due primarily due to the expenditure on new and upgraded assets increasing at a CAGR of 44.2 percent, which included the Venus Bay Beachfront Tourist Park. (see Figure 12)

Over the forecast period, however, the rate of increase slows to only a CAGR of 0.9 percent, because the expenditure on asset renewal declines and expenditure on new and upgraded assets is forecast to drop to zero from 2025-26 through to the end of the period.

This forecast means that the asset stock per rateable property increases from $35,252 in 2024-25 to $36,588 in 2033-34, at a CAGR of only 0.9 percent, compared to average inflation of 2.6 percent. This means that the value of the asset stock per rateable property is declining in real terms over the forecast period. (see Figure 13)

Figure 14: Total capital expenditure by category – historical and projected



5.3.2 The Commission's recommendations re asset renewals expenditure

Over the forecast period, the Council is planning to renew assets in line with the IAMP, but more than indicated relative to depreciation. This indicates that depreciation values are not aligned with asset values or the remaining useful lives of assets in the IAMP.

The Commission recommends that the Council:

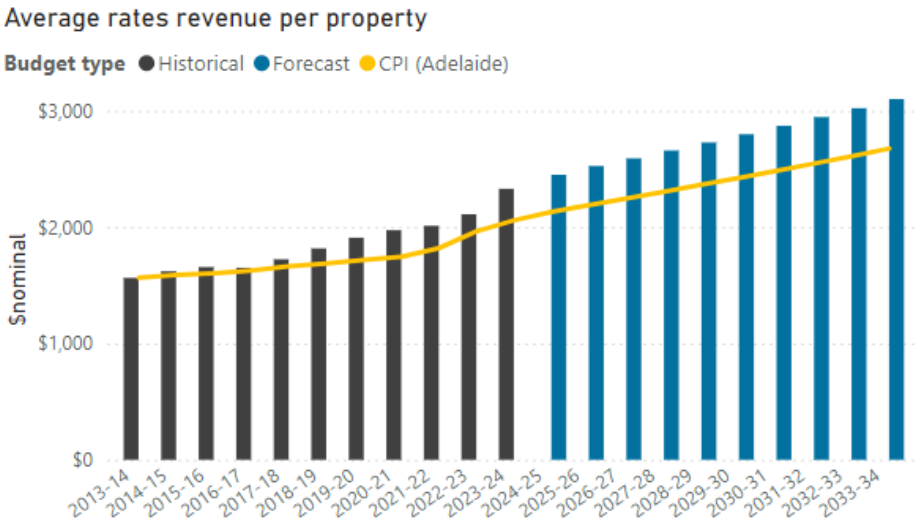
7. **Ensure** that the LTFP accurately accounts for the community's expected service standards and accurately reflects the capital expenditure and depreciation projections in the IAMP.
8. **Include** in the LTFP a provision for funding new projects that the Council intends to undertake over the forecast period, to better assess their impact upon financial performance and to provide transparency to the community.
9. **Revise and improve** the IAMP to accurately reflect asset conditions, remaining useful lives, expected service standards and ensure that it meets community expectations.

6 Advice on current and projected rate levels

6.1 Key points

- The Council increased the average rates per property at a rate 0.8 percentage points higher than inflation over the historical period.
- The Council increased rates in 2024-25 by 2.0 percentage points above inflation to achieve an operating surplus in the current financial year.
- The Council plans to increase rates in line with forecast inflation from 2025-26 to 2033-34.

Figure 15: Average rates revenue per property – historical and projected



Over the historical period, the number of rateable properties increased at a CAGR of 0.4 percent[74] and the rates income per property increased at a CAGR of 3.4 percent, which is 0.8 percentage points above average inflation over the period.

The impact of this differential means that on average, each property paid an average of $147 or 7.5 percent more than if rates had increased only at the rate of inflation by the end of the period. (see Figure 15)

The average rates per residential property in the Council (excluding CWMS rates) were $1,447 in 2022-23, which is lower than the State average of $1,727 per property.[75] This below-average level of rates appears reasonable, because it aligns with the Council area's SEIFA index for disadvantage of

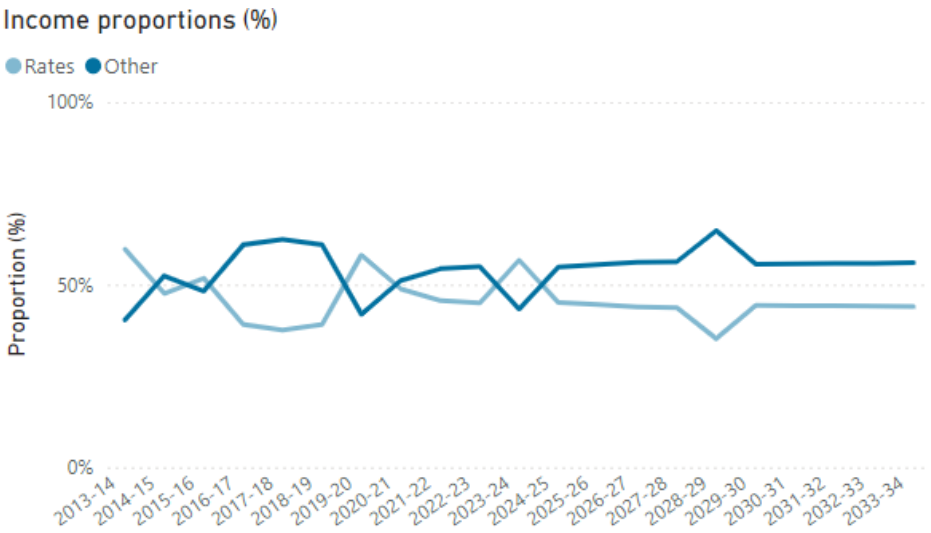
[74] Which means that only 0.4 percentage points of the average annual increase in rates income is attributable to an increase in the number of properties, while 2.6 percentage points are related to inflation, and the balance of 0.8 percent to a real increase in rates per property.

[75] See SA Local Government Grants Commission 2022-23 Database Reports at Publications - Department for Infrastructure and Transport - South Australia.

959, with a rank of 27 out of 68 Councils in the state,[76] which indicates that residents have a lower than average ability to pay average rates.

Rates revenue for the forecast period averages 43.1 percent of total operating income,[77] compared to the state average for all Councils of 70.1 percent of operating income.[78] The Council's total rates income in FY 2022-23 was 82.9 percent of total rates income for similar Councils in the state and 9.1 percent of the statewide average Council rates income.[79] (see Figure 16 for historical reliance on rates for income)

Figure 16: Income proportions (%)



6.2 Proposed rate increases for 2024-25

After running a deficit in 2023-24, the Council increased rates by the CPI plus 2.0 percent for the year ending 30 June 2025 to ensure that the Council would deliver an operating surplus in 2024-25.

6.3 Projected further rate increases

The Council plans to increase the rates per property by a CAGR of 2.7 percent over the 10-year forecast period, which includes an increase of 3.1 percent in 2025-26, followed by increases in rates income of 2.6 percent for the remaining eight years of the period. This is slightly above average forecast inflation of 2.6 percent and also above forecast increases for total expenses in the LTFP, at a CAGR of 2.1 percent for the period.

[76] SEIFA data for the Council is available at Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA), Australia, 2021 | Australian Bureau of Statistics and https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/32dcbb18c1d24f4aa89caf680413c741/page/IRSD/#data_s=id%3AdataSource_14-187da8855b1-layer-7%3A2310.

[77] See SA Local Government Grants Commission Database report 2022-23 at Publications - Department for Infrastructure and Transport - South Australia.

[78] See SA Local Government Grants Commission Report 2 – Sources of Operating Income by Council for 2021-22 Financial Year.

[79] See https://councilsinfocus.sa.gov.au/councils/district_council_of_elliston.

6.4 Affordability risk

Affordability risk among the community for these further increases in rates appears to be low, on balance, when considering:

- the Council's planned increases in rates income per property reflect a CAGR of 2.7 percent over the forecast period, which is 0.1 percent above average forecast inflation
- the Council's below-average rank in the socio-economic indexes for areas (SEIFA) economic resources[80]
- the risk that income growth might be constrained in the district due to potentially low agricultural yields resulting from low rainfall in 2024
- the ability to contain increases in income from rates due to increases in income from other sources, and
- the current relatively low average rates (across most ratepayers) at 83.8 percent of the average for the state.

6.4.1 The Commission's advice re affordability risk

The Commission recommends that the Council:

10.	Consider increasing rates at a rate below forecast inflation over the forecast period to reduce any potential affordability risk unless funds are required for capital expenditure that was not identified in the LTFP and there is a community preference to limit debt.

[80] The District Council of Elliston is ranked 63 among 71 South Australian '*local government areas*' (including Anangu Pitjantjatjara and Maralinga Tjarutja Aboriginal community areas and 'unincorporated SA') on the Australian Bureau of Statistics SEIFA Index of Economic Resources (2021), where a lower score (eg 1) denotes relatively lower access to economic resources in general, compared with other areas, available at Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA), Australia, 2021 | Australian Bureau of Statistics (abs.gov.au).

7 The Commission's next advice and focus areas

In the next cycle of the scheme, the Commission will review and report upon the Council's:

- Improved transparency and thorough reporting in the strategic documents of assumptions and strategic intentions.
- ongoing performance against its current LTFP estimates
- achievements against the operating surplus ratio targets
- identification and reporting of opportunities for cost savings and efficiencies
- updating, alignment and implementation of its strategic management plans
- planned asset renewal and replacement expenditure versus actual expenditure
- the extent to which the commercial business activities are achieving the expected financial returns, and
- efforts to minimise any emerging affordability risks.

8 Appendix: Glossary of terms

Item	Explanation
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
AMP	Asset management plan (also called an IAMP)
ARFR	Asset Renewal Funding Ratio Since 2013, the asset renewal funding ratio has been defined as: Asset Renewal Expenditure ÷ IAMP Renewal Expenditure Where IAMP Renewal Expenditure is that required according to the IAMP.
Commission	Essential Services Commission, established under the *Essential Services Commission Act 2002*
CPI	Consumer Price Index (Adelaide, All Groups)
Council	District Council of Elliston
CWMS	Community Wastewater Management System
ESC Act	*Essential Services Commission Act 2002*
F&A	Local Government Advice: Framework and Approach – Final Report
FTE	Full Time Equivalent
IAMP	Infrastructure and asset management plan (also called an AMP)
LG Act	*Local Government Act 1999*
LGA SA Financial Indicators Paper	Local Government Association of South Australia, Financial Sustainability Information Pa per 9 - Financial Indicators Revised May 2019
LTFP	Long-term financial plan
NFLR	Net Financial Liabilities Ratio Net Financial Liabilities are defined as: Total Liabilities LESS Current Assets (Cash and Cash Equivalents) LESS Current Assets (Trade and Other Receivables) LESS Current Assets (Other Financial Assets) LESS Non-Current Assets (Financial Assets - excluding equity accounted investments in council businesses) The net financial liabilities ratio is: Net financial liabilities ÷ Total Operating Income
OSR	Operating Surplus Ratio The Operating Surplus (Deficit) is defined as:

Item	Explanation
	Total Operating Income LESS Total Operating Expenses The Operating Surplus Ratio is defined as: Operating Surplus (Deficit) ÷ Total Operating Income
Regulations	*Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 2011*
RBA	Reserve Bank of Australia
SEIFA	Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas
SMP	Strategic management plan
The scheme or advice	Local Government Advice Scheme

The Essential Services Commission
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APPENDIX 2 - RATING REVIEW REPORT AND RATING POLICY

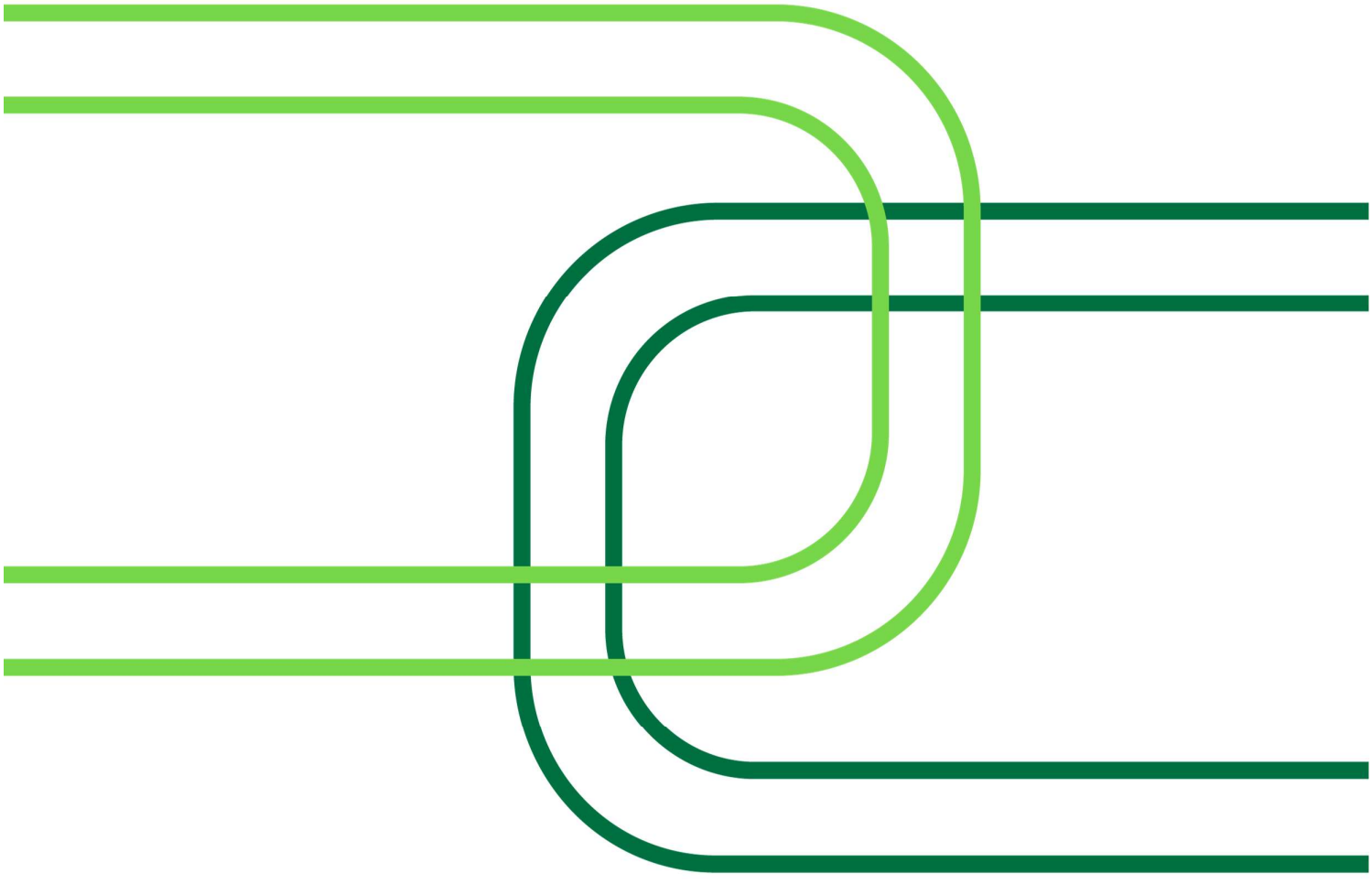
In 2025 to 2026, the District Council of Elliston undertook a review of its rating system and Rating Policy to ensure the fair and equitable distribution of rates.

UHY Haines Norton

A Review of the Basis of Rating Consultation Paper

District Council of Elliston

February 2026

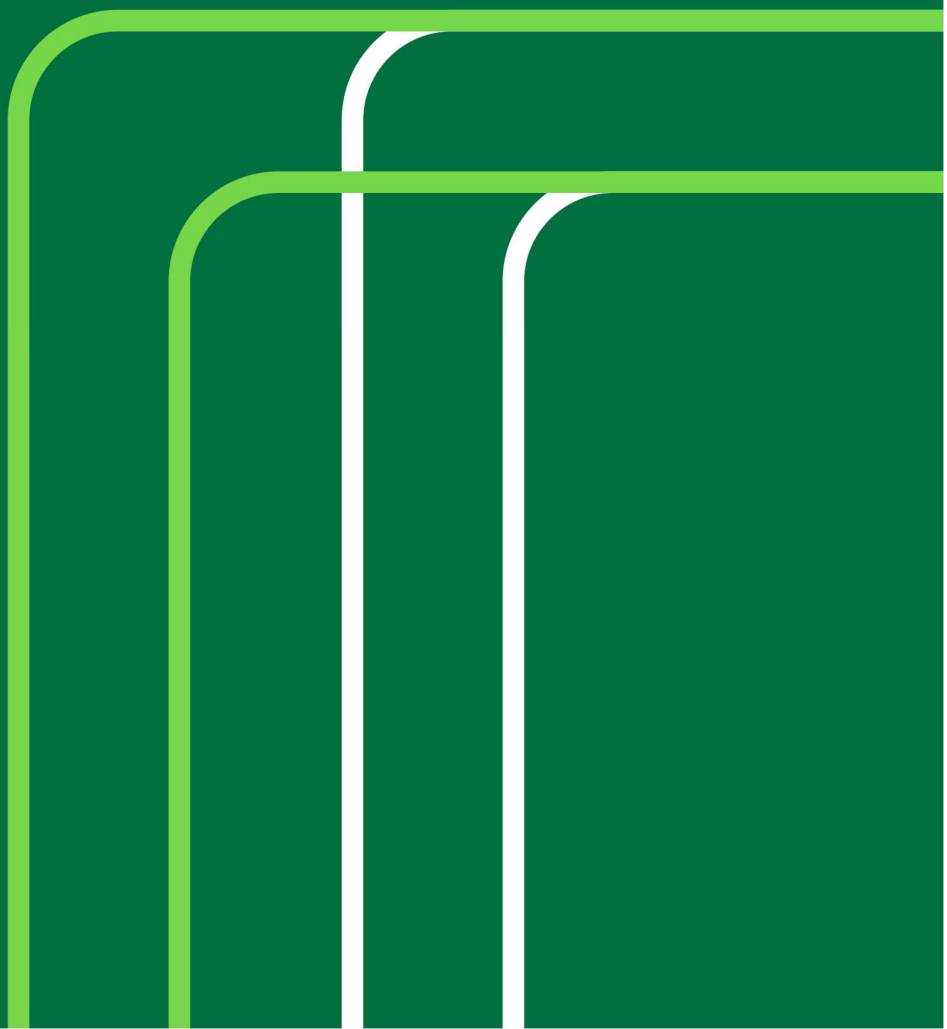


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1. Introduction

Councils are responsible for delivering a broad range of services to their communities. Each community is unique and has its own distinct priorities. Councils receive income from several sources to fund their services, with rates being the largest.

The District Council of Elliston (DCE) is considering making changes to the basis upon which rates are charged. When considering changes to the basis for setting rates, a council must undertake a rating review and determine the best way to distribute the rate burden among properties within its community.

Section 151(5) of the Local Government Act 1999 (Act) requires that the Council must produce a public report that addresses the following when considering changing their basis of rating, and to follow their public consultation policy:

- The reasons for the proposed change.
- The relationship of the proposed change to the Council's overall rates structure and policies.
- As far as practicable, the likely impact of the proposed change on ratepayers.
- Issues concerning equity within the community.
- Any other issues that the Council considers relevant.

This Consultation Report provides the background information of:

- Proposed Changes and reasons.
- An overview of Rating and options that councils can consider
- Information about the District Council of Yankalilla
- Comparisons of rating with other councils
- The options that the Council considered and those that the Council determined they wished to send to the community to consult upon.
- Modelling of proposed changes and the likely effect on ratepayers
- Information about the
    - Consultation process
    - Information Session/Public Meeting that will be held for the community to ask questions and provide submissions.
    - How the Community can provide the Council with submissions.

2. Proposed Changes to Rates

The Elected Members have considered the information contained in this paper over several workshops. The available rating methods, proposed changes, and likely impacts are detailed in this paper and are now available for public consultation.

Note: The changes in this paper are proposed changes. The Council will make a decision after receiving community feedback. The proposed changes may be revised after the Council considers the feedback.



The changes proposed in this paper are:

- Change the Waste Charge based on the volume of waste to the number of bins
- Increase the Differential for Vacant Land to 150% compared to the Rate in the Dollar (RID) for Residential properties.
- Expand the current rating category of Employment (Bulk Handling) Zone to include properties that are in the Rural Zone with the Land Use of Commercial Other.

The likely effect on Ratepayers of these changes is included in Section 13.

3. Reasons for Proposed Changes

Reasons for Adjusting the Waste Charge

Currently, the Council levies the waste charge based on volume. All other councils that levy a waste charge, levy this by the number of bins. This is much easier to understand.

This change will not affect ratepayers, as the charge per bin will remain the same as in the previous volume-based charge range.

Reasons for Increasing the Differential for Vacant Land

There is concern within the community about the availability of housing, including long-term rental housing. This is a concern in many councils. One strategy is to increase Vacant Land rates to discourage Land Banking and encourage owners to either build on their properties or sell them to others for development. A council's infrastructure still has to be built and maintained regardless of whether properties have housing or are vacant.

Currently, the Differential for Vacant Land is the same as the Rate In the Dollar (RID) for Residential properties. The Council proposes increasing this Differential to 150% of the Residential RID

Reasons for Expanding the Employment (Bulk Handling) Zone

Some years ago, the Council sought to charge larger businesses, such as Silos, higher rates to reflect both their greater capacity to pay and their potential to affect services such as roads.

Setting up a separate Rating Category for those properties in the Employment (Bulk Handling) Zone did not capture all of these businesses.

Expanding this rating category to those properties within the Employment (Bulk Handling) Zone to include those properties in the Rural Zone that also have the Land Use of Commercial Other, rates more of these businesses appropriately.

4. Support for Ratepayers

Changes to the way the Council sets its rates will result in some ratepayers paying higher rates than they currently do, while others will pay lower rates.

There is assistance available to ratepayers who need help paying their rates, due to these changes or for any other reason. The following support is available:

- Payment Plans for ratepayers who need to spread their payments out over a period of time



- Seniors can postpone a portion of rates. The postponed portion would not require payment until a property is sold. Interest would still apply.
- Residents experiencing financial hardship may be eligible for further support based on the recommendation of a financial counsellor, whose services are available free of charge.

5. Consultation

It is important for the Council to receive community feedback when making decisions that affect ratepayers. The Council is required to consult when reviewing the basis of its rating, and your comments are very useful in helping the Council understand the community and make decisions that soundly affect your current and future needs.

Note that the changes in this paper are proposed changes. The Council will decide after receiving community feedback. The proposed changes may be altered after the Council considers feedback received.

Consultation will be from the 24th April to the 15th May 2026. There will be drop-in sessions in Lock, Port Kenny and Venus Bay during the consultation period.

6. The Purpose of this Consultation Paper

The purpose of this consultation paper is to provide the community with information concerning the following, which the Council has considered as background to the proposed changes:

- Why Councils collect rates.
- Council's current rating methodology.
- The legislative framework for setting Council rates.
- Rating options available.
- The proposed option for the Council and Community
- Consultation Requirements.

7. Rating – An Overview

Why Councils Collect Rates

Councils are responsible for delivering a broad range of services to the community. The range of services continues to grow. To support the provision of services and improve the quality of life for the community, whether residential or business, Councils provide significant infrastructure, including roads, drainage, buildings, parks, and recreation facilities. This infrastructure needs to be maintained and replaced. Councils also provide a vast range of other services to their communities.

Each Council provides unique services for their communities, as different communities have different priorities. Councils are therefore faced with the challenges of:

- Establishing a level of infrastructure and services for its community
- Equitably distributing revenue-raising that provides funding for infrastructure and services.

As each Council faces different circumstances and provides diverse services to its community, its revenue requirements likely differ from those of its neighbours. The capacity of each Council to raise revenue, and how ratepayers will share in providing that revenue, will also differ among councils.

Nature of Council Rates

Taxation is the primary source of revenue for Governments. Councils are responsible for raising their revenue through property taxation (Rates) and user charges as prescribed by legislation. Councils also receive Government grant funding.

Rates are a tax on the value of a property. The principle is that the more property, or the higher the property's value, the more you should pay. Many ratepayers will question the value they personally receive from their rates; however, rates are raised as a form of taxation to fund services for the whole community.

One problem with property tax is that someone who owns a high-value property may not have the income to pay a higher level of taxation. To address this, Councils have hardship policies that assist ratepayers who find it difficult to pay their rates.

Principles of Taxation

When setting taxes, Governments and Councils need to be mindful of the principles of taxation. The principles are:

- Equity – taxpayers with the same income pay the same tax (horizontal equity), and wealthier taxpayers pay more tax (vertical equity). With rating, this means those with higher-valued properties pay higher rates.
- Benefit – taxpayers should receive some benefit from paying tax, but not necessarily to the extent of the tax paid. The community should receive the benefit from the tax.
- Ability-to-pay – In levying taxes, the ability of the taxpayer to pay the tax must be considered.
- Efficiency – if a tax is designed to change consumers' behaviour and the behaviour changes, the tax is efficient (e.g., tobacco taxes). If a tax is intended to be neutral in its effect on taxpayers and it changes taxpayers' behaviour, the tax is inefficient.
- Simplicity – the tax must be understandable, hard to avoid and easy to collect.

To some extent, these principles conflict with each other. Governments and Councils must balance the application of the principles, the policy objectives of taxation, the need to raise revenue and the effects of the tax on the community.

Legislative Framework for Setting Council Rates

The legislation that sets out the framework for councils for rating can be accessed at **www.legislation.sa.gov.au** and includes the following:

- *Local Government Act 1999 (*the Act)
- *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 2011*
- *Local Government (General) Regulation 2013*

The key legislation in the Act is as follows:

Chapter 10 – Rates and Charges

- Part 1 – Rates and charges on land
  - Division 1 - Preliminary

- Division 2 – Basis of Rating
- Division 3 – Specific characteristics of rates and charges
- Division 4 – Differential rating and special adjustments
- Division 5 – Rebates of rates
- Division 6 – Valuation of land for the purpose of rating

Section 151(2) of the Act sets out that the value of the land for the purpose of rating is its capital value.

Non-Rateable Properties

Section 147 of the Act sets out the land which is exempt from rates as being:

- Crown Land
- Land held by the Crown or an instrumentality of the Crown for a public purpose.
- Land occupied by a university.
- Land exempt from rates and taxes under the Recreation Grounds Rates and Taxes Exemption Act 1981
- Land occupied by the Council except where under a lease or licence.
- Land occupied by a subsidiary.
- Land occupied or held by an emergency service organisation.
- Land exempt from Council rates by another Act

Non-rateable properties will still incur Service Rates and Charges.

Rate Rebates

The Act requires Councils to rebate the rates payable for certain Land Uses ('Mandatory' Rate Rebates):

- Section 160 – Health Services
- Section 161 – Community Services
- Section 162 – Religious Purposes
- Section 163 – Public Cemeteries
- Section 164 – Royal Zoological Society of SA
- Section 165 – Educational Purposes

Councils also have a general power to grant discretionary rebates and remissions in accordance with Sections 166 & and 182 of the Local Government Act 1999. The exercise of this power allows for the following:

- Local discretion
- The pursuit of local policy objectives
- Assistance to community organisations
- Assistance to local businesses
- Assistance in the case of hardship

Councils can provide Rate Rebates for many reasons, including to assist ratepayers:

- To support certain activities
- Where there are significant increases in valuations for only some properties, resulting in substantial increases in rates.
- Where there is a change in the basis of rating, some ratepayers may face significant rate increases.

Councils may use S166(m)(ii) to provide rebates where the council considers it would be appropriate to provide relief in order to avoid what would otherwise constitute a liability that is unfair or unreasonable. Councils can also apply their Hardship Policies to provide relief in unusual circumstances that might affect a ratepayer's ability to pay their rates.

Such unusual events might be natural disasters or emergencies such as:

- Fire
- Flood
- Drought
- Pandemic
- Algae Bloom

The Council must be mindful that, when providing rebates, the same rate level is still required for the Council's budget. If some ratepayers receive rebates, the other ratepayers will need to pay more.

Postponement of Rates

Hardship

Councils can wholly or partially postpone rates based on hardship in accordance with Section 182 of the Act.

Businesses

Councils can grant rate postponements to assist or support a business in their area.

Seniors

Ratepayers who hold a Seniors Card can apply to the Council to postpone payment of the portion of rates on their principal place of residence that exceeds $500. A Council may reject an application for a postponement if the amount postponed exceeds 50% of the capital value of the land. Postponed rates remain a charge on the land and must be repaid only when the property is sold or disposed of.

Interest accrues on the amount affected by the postponement in accordance with the prescribed interest rate.

How Rates are Calculated

A council can choose to apply either a Minimum Rate or a Fixed Charge, and the rates are calculated differently depending on the option selected.

Note that a council cannot choose to apply a Fixed Charge to some properties and a Minimum Rate to others.

Contiguous Land provisions within the Act provide that only one Minimum Rate or Fixed Charge is payable across adjoining properties occupied by the same ratepayer.

Only one Minimum Rate or Fixed Charge is payable across properties that make up a Single Farm Enterprise.

The effect of applying a Minimum Rate compared to a Fixed Charge is:

- A Minimum Rate generally has a higher rate in the dollar, so higher-valued properties pay more than they would with a Fixed Charge, and lower-valued properties pay less.
- A Fixed Charge generally has a lower rate in the dollar, so high-valued properties pay less than they would with a Minimum Rate and lower-valued properties pay more.

These are generalised effects and depend on the level of Minimum Rate or Fixed Charge set.

Minimum Rate

Where a council sets a Minimum Rate, the total value of all rateable properties in the council is divided by the rates the council needs. This results in a Rate in the Dollar (RID). The value of each property is multiplied by the RID to calculate the amount of rates each property must pay. If the calculated rates are below the Minimum Rate, the Minimum Rate applies.

The RID calculation is adjusted for varying differentials and rebates.

The Act stipulates that no more than 35% of properties can be on the Minimum Rate.

Fixed Charge

Where a council sets a Fixed Charge, the Fixed Charge is levied against all rateable properties. The amount from the Fixed Charge is deducted from the total rates required, leaving a balance that will be raised via the RID. The total value of all rateable properties is divided by the amount of rates still to be raised, yielding a RID.

The rates for each property will be the Fixed Charge + the (RID multiplied by the value of the property).

The RID calculation is adjusted for varying differentials and rebates.

The Act stipulates that no more than 50% of the Rate Revenue can come from the Fixed Charge.

Valuation Options Available

A Council can use two different valuation methods to determine the value of property within its Council.

- Capital Valuation – the value of land and all of the improvements on the land
- Annual Value – a valuation of the rental potential of the property.

All Councils in South Australia, except for the City of Adelaide, use the Capital Valuation Method.

8. Rating Options Available

Several alternative rating options are available under the Act. The options that can be considered are:

- A General Rate
- A Differential Rate
- Separate Rates
- Service Charges

All rating options offer different methods for distributing the Council's operating costs among ratepayers. Councils need to consider their communities' profiles and issues and determine the most appropriate method for distributing the tax burden.

General Rate

All properties are charged the same RID, regardless of Land Use or Locality. This is very simple to administer, but it lacks the flexibility to adjust ratings strategically or address specific issues within the community.

Differential Rate

This means that different RIDs are assigned to different property categories. A Council can use either Land Use, Locality (Zones), or a combination. Differentiating properties based on Locality and Land Use is described below.

A differential rate allows a Council to structure its rating strategy more closely with its community's needs and profile and to use rating as a tool to help achieve the Council's strategic goals.

Locality

Rating by Locality is a rating system based on a property's location. The Development Zone determines the location categories.

Land Use

This is where the RID is set, depending on the property's use. The Land Use types in accordance with the Local Government Regulations and as determined by the Valuer General are:

- Residential
- Commercial (Shop)
- Commercial (Office)
- Commercial (Other)
- Industrial (Light)
- Industrial (Other)
- Primary Production
- Vacant Land
- Other
- Marina Berths

Differential rates based on Land Use can help a Council understand which factors affect different types of ratepayers and how different rating strategies affect them.

Differentials can also be applied based on Locality and Land Use combinations, and Councils that use these combinations may have more complex rating structures.

Differential rates allow a Council to set policy direction regarding their rating, such as:

- A Lower RID to assist or encourage a specific type of Land Use.
- A higher RID to deter a specific type of land use or as an acknowledgement that a particular land use group needs to pay a higher contribution to the rate burden for the community.

Separate Rates

A Council can set a Separate Rate for the whole or part of an area for planning, carrying out, making available, supporting, maintaining, or improving an activity that is of particular benefit to the occupiers of the land within that area.

Service Rates and Charges

A service charge is raised where a service is provided. Councils often raise service charges for the following:

- Treatment of water
- Collection of domestic waste, i.e., Mobile Garbage Bin Collection
- Provision of Water

The legislation requires that Service Rates and Charges must cover the costs of the services provided and cannot be used for other Council activities.

9. District Council of Elliston

Community Profile

The Index of Relative Socio-Economic Advantage and Disadvantage (IRSAD) is one of the Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA). This Index measures indicators of advantage and disadvantage. Some of the advantage measures are education levels, employment type, and income; some of the disadvantage measures are unemployment, low income, poor English proficiency, and single-parent families.

The information is sourced from the Australian Bureau of Statistics' 2021 Census.

Although 4 years old, this information still indicates the community's financial capacity.

The census data is from the resident population. However, not all residents are ratepayers, and not all ratepayers live in the area. The map below shows that Elliston is in the middle of the range on this index.

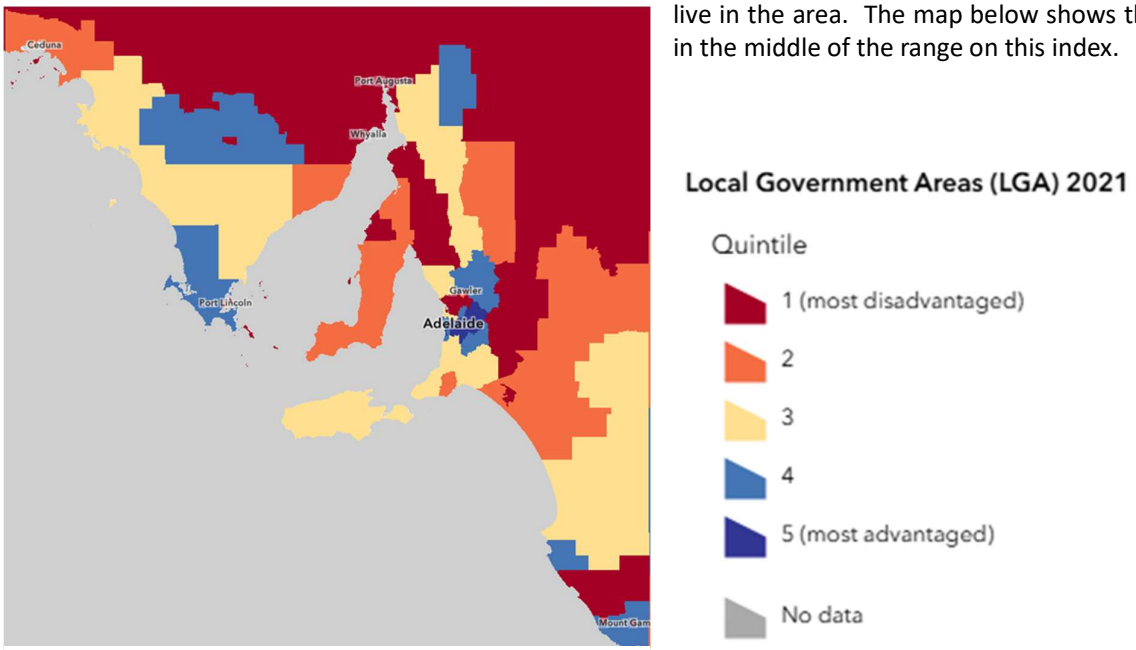


Figure 1 IRSAD in South Australia

Table 1 – SEIFA Advantage and Disadvantage by Locality

Suburb	SEIFE (Advantage & Disadvantage Lower = More Disadvantage, Less Advantage Higher = Less Disadvantage, More Advantage	Percentage of Population
Elliston	921.62	35.5%
Mount Damper	963.18	3.5%
Bramfield	964.30	2.9%
Colton	964.30	2.3%
Coolillie	964.30	0.8%
Mount Joy	964.30	0.7%
Mount Wedge	964.30	1.6%
Palkagee	964.30	1.4%
Polda	964.30	0.9%
Port Kenny	964.30	5.6%
Sheringa	964.30	3.0%
Talia	964.30	0.5%
Venus Bay	964.30	5.6%
Lock	973.18	24.0%
Murdinga	973.18	6.8%
Tooligie	973.18	2.4%
Ulyerra	973.18	2.7%

Current Rating Structure

The District Council of Elliston currently imposes a Differential Rate on properties based on their land use, with an additional rating category for properties in the Employment (Bulk Handling) Zone.

In 2025/26 the Council set a Fixed Charge of $350.

The Council also charges an annual service charge for the Community Wastewater Management Systems and for the provision of water at Port Kenny.

A charge for the collection, treatment and disposal of waste is levied on properties based on the volume of waste collected. In 2025/26 this charge was:

- 0-0.3m³ of waste per week on average - $376.00 per annum
- 0.3-0.6m³ of waste per week on average - $752 per annum
- 0.6m – 0.9m³ of waste per week on average - $1,130 per annum

The table below shows the differential percentage of each land use compared to the Residential Rate in the Dollar (RID).

Table 2 - District Council of Elliston Differential Percentages

Rating Category	Differential %
Residential	100%
Commercial Shop	100%
Commercial Office	100%
Commercial Other	100%
Industry Light	100%
Industry Other	100%
Primary Production	100%
Vacant Land	100%
Other	100%
Employment Bulk Handling	438%

10. Council Comparisons

Differential Rating

The majority of South Australian councils apply a Differential Rating system based on property land use, which is also the approach used by the District Council of Yankalilla.

Fixed Charge Vs Minimum

Thirty-six councils in the state use a Fixed Charge, averaging $569. Thirty-two councils use a Minimum Rate, averaging $1,045. The District Council of Elliston set a Fixed Charge of $350 for 2025/26.

Waste Charge

Thirty-nine councils in the state levy a waste charge, with an average of $329. The District Council of Elliston set the base waste charge for up to 0.3m³ of waste at $376 for 2025/26.

Comparison Councils

Councils can be quite different from each other, and all councils are unique in some way.

There are a number of ways to categorise councils to determine which councils may have similarities that could make comparisons useful:

- The Australian Classification of Local Governments (ACLG) compares council type and population
- The Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS) compares the remoteness of an area. This is measured by road distance from various populated locations.
- The Regional Local Government Association.
- Neighbouring Councils – this is important if one council charges differently for commercial and industrial properties than neighbouring councils. Different rates could factor into decisions about where businesses are located.

The District Council of Elliston has the following classifications:

- ACLG Rural Agricultural Small (RAS),

- ASGS Inner Regional Australia
- Regional LGA Eyre Peninsula LGA

The councils with the most in common with the District Council of Elliston, and are used for comparisons in this paper, are:

- Elliston
- Cleve
- Franklin Harbour
- Kimba
- Streaky Bay
- Tumby Bay
- Wudinna

Comparisons

The following graphs present comparisons of 2025/26 rating information across the councils. For more details on the comparisons in the graphs, refer to the table that follows the graphs. Some explanations on the table are:

Differentials

The table below shows the Differential for the comparison councils against Land Use. The Differential compares the RID for any Land Use against the RID for Residential properties.

Table 3 - Differentials for Comparison Councils

	Elliston	Cleve	Franklin Harbour	Kimba	Streaky Bay	Tumby Bay	Wudinna
Residential	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Commercial Shop	100%	100%	117%	100%	110%	100%	130%
Commercial Office	100%	100%		100%	110%	100%	130%
Commercial Other	100%	100%	138%	100%	110%	100%	150%
Industry Light	100%	100%	112%	100%	110%	100%	130%
Industry Other	100%	100%	110%	100%	110%	100%	130%
Primary Production	100%	105%	207%	80%	100%	100%	80%
Vacant	100%	100%	245%	500%	100%	100%	300%
Other	100%	100%	97%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Silos	438%	585%	918%	234%	808%	373%	425%

Rates by Land Use

The table below compares rates between the councils for properties with different Land Uses and valuations.

Table 4 – Rates per Valuation for Comparison Councils

Council	Fixed/Min	House Value $300k	House Value $500k	Primary Production Value $1m	Primary Production Value $1.5m	Vacant Land Value $100k	Vacant Land Value $300k
Elliston	Fixed $350	1,216	1,794	3,238	4,682	639	1,216
Cleve	Fixed $633	1,251	1,664	2,807	3,893	839	1,251

Council	Fixed/Min	House Value $300k	House Value $500k	Primary Production Value $1m	Primary Production Value $1.5m	Vacant Land Value $100k	Vacant Land Value $300k
Franklin Harbour	Fixed $505	1,093	1,485	4,555	6,580	985	1,945
Kimba	Min. $612	1,130	1,883	3,013	4,519	1,883	5,649
Streaky Bay	Fixed $769	1,437	1,883	2,997	4,111	992	1,437
Tumby Bay	Fixed $848	1,360	1,701	2,555	3,408	1,019	1,360
Wudinna	Min. $658	1,557	2,596	4,153	6,230	1,557	4,672

Waste Charges

The table below presents the various waste charges applicable to the comparison councils.

Table 5 – Waste Charges for Comparison Councils

Council	Waste Charge
Elliston	0-0.3m³ waste per week $376/yr 0.3-0.6m³ waste per week $752/yr 0.6-0.9m³ waste per week $1,130/yr
Cleve	$295 per bin per assessment
Franklin Harbour	$355 for 140L bin and $397 for 240L bin, $258 for each additional service
Kimba	$264
Streaky Bay	$274
Tumby Bay	$271
Wudinna	$288.75 per mobile garbage bin

11. What Did Council Consider?

The District Council of Elliston held two workshops with Elected Members to review information on the community and rateable properties, as well as various options and their potential impact on ratepayers.

The following were considered and determined not to be pursued:

Set a Higher RID for Commercial Other Properties

This option would increase the Differential RID for all Commercial Other properties

The Council decided not to pursue this option because the number of these properties is low and there were concerns about the impact of higher rates on these ratepayers.

Minimum instead of a Fixed Charge

This option would increase rates for Primary Producers whilst reducing rates for Residential properties. The Council was concerned about the impact of higher rates on Primary Producers.

Higher Rates for Short-Term Accommodation

Councils across the state are considering this option due to the lack of long-term rentals in their areas. There is concern that landowners are shifting away from long-term rentals and making their properties available only for short-term rentals, such as those offered through Airbnb.

The councils that have introduced a system to combat this identify the short-term rental properties in their council area and allocate the Land Use of 'Commercial Other' instead of Residential. These councils have higher RIDs for their Commercial Other properties; therefore, short-term rental properties pay higher rates than Residential properties. Identifying the properties used for short-term rentals has been costly, requiring outsourced firms to undertake the task.

Recently, the State Government's Select Committee on the Short Stay Accommodation Sector tabled its final report in Parliament, recommending the establishment of a registration scheme for the sector, which would be shared with local councils.

The Council decided not to pursue higher rates for short-term accommodation at this time, pending further information from the State Government.

The Council's current rating system assigns the same RID Differential to Commercial Other properties as to Residential properties. For a Short-Term rate to result in higher rates from these properties, the Commercial Other RID would need to be a higher differential than the Residential properties.

12. Likely Impact on Ratepayers from Proposed Changes

The change to the waste charge is not expected to affect ratepayers, as the Council is simply moving from a per m^3 to a per-bin charge.

The extension of the Rating Category Employment Bulk Handling to include properties within the Rural Zone with a Land Use of Commercial only affects approximately 8 additional properties all owned by large corporations.

Increasing the Differential for Vacant Land will increase rates for owners of Vacant Land with the extra rates from this category distributed as savings to the rest of the ratepayers.

The table below shows the change in the RID and Average Rates from increasing the Differential for Vacant Land.

Table 6 – Change in RID and Average Rates

Land Use	RID Current	Ave. Rates Current $	RID with Vacant Differential to 150% & Extension of Employment Bulk Handling	Ave. Rates Modelled
Residential	0.00288815	1,331	.002848712	1,318
Commercial Shop	0.00288815	709	.002848712	703
Commercial Other	0.00288815	786	.002848712	931
Industry Light	0.00288815	614	.002848712	609
Industry Other	0.00288815	551	.002848712	548
Primary Production	0.00288815	4,263	.002848712	4,208
Vacant Land	0.00288815	539	.004273069	657
Other	0.00288815	130	.002848712	130
Emp Bulk Handling	.0126585	13,532	.0126585	5,512

The Employment Bulk Handling/Rural Zone & Commercial Other category RID has been retained.

The table below shows the properties with the highest increases.

Table 7 – Highest Increases

Land Use	Value $	Increase$
Vacant Land	510,000	706.31
Vacant Land	435,000	602.44
Vacant Land	420,000	581.67
Vacant Land	375,000	519.34
Vacant Land	350,000	484.72
Vacant Land	345,000	477.80
Vacant Land	345,000	477.80
Vacant Land	345,000	477.80
Vacant Land	345,000	477.80
Vacant Land	315,000	436.25
Vacant Land	510,000	706.31

The table below shows the properties with the greatest decreases.

Table 8 – Greatest Descreases

Land Use	Value $	Increase$
Primary Production	7,550,000	-297.75
Primary Production	7,450,000	-293.81
Primary Production	6,450,000	-254.37
Primary Production	5,675,000	-223.81
Primary Production	5,475,000	-215.92
Primary Production	5,425,000	-213.95
Primary Production	4,675,000	-184.37
Primary Production	4,500,000	-177.47
Primary Production	4,475,000	-176.48
Primary Production	4,350,000	-171.55
Primary Production	7,550,000	-297.75

The Council's strategy in increasing the Differential for Vacant Land is not directly to decrease rates for the Primary Production properties but as a strategy to assist in reducing potential Land Banking in the area.

13. Consultation Requirements

Legislative Requirements for Consultation

There is a legal requirement for councils to consult with their communities when considering changes to the basis of their rating.

S151 (5) of the Act states that a Council must prepare a report before:

- changing the basis of rating of any land or
- changing the basis on which land is valued for rating purposes or
- imposing separate rates, service rates or service charges,

S 151(7) of the Act states that the Council must follow the steps of its public consultation policy but must at least:

- Publish a notice.
  - Describing the proposed change
  - Notifying that a Rate Review Report is being prepared.
  - Inviting interested persons to
    - attend a public meeting.
    - make written submissions.
- Organise a public meeting, which must be held at least 21 days after the publication of the notice.
- Ensure copies of the report are available.
  - at the meeting
  - during the consultation period
  - for inspection at the Council's office for free or
  - for purchase for a fee set by the Council

The Council must consider any written submissions received during consultation and any verbal submissions made at the public meeting.



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District Council of Elliston
Policy

Finance
E025: Rating

Signature	 Narelle Biddell Director Business and Community
Policy Issued & Effective from	19 April 2026
Date of Last Review	2021
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Next Review Date	2030
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Refer to the last page of this document for the Document History Table

1. Introduction

This Policy provides a framework for the District Council of Elliston to determine the annual setting and collection of rates against rateable land. All land within the Local Government Area, except for land specifically exempt (eg Crown Land, Council-occupied land, and other land exempt under any relevant legislation) is rateable.

In South Australia, Council Rates are a form of property tax levied by Local Government, as the primary source of funding for the many mandatory and discretionary services that are provided by Council to residents and the general public. Rates are administered by each Council and governed by legislation set out in the *Local Government Act 1999 (**the Act**)* which allows provisions for Council to administer rates in certain metrics to suit the needs and requirements of the local communities. This document sets out the policy of the District Council of Elliston (**Council**) for setting and collecting rates.

2. Scope

Council's powers to raise rates are found in Chapter 10 of the Act . The Act provides the framework within which the Council must operate but also allows Council to make a range of policy choices.

This Policy includes references to compulsory features of the rating system, as well as the policy choices that the Council has made on how it imposes and administers the collection of rates.

Council prepares an Annual Business Plan each financial year. This Plan includes particulars on the rates structure and policies for that financial year and assess the impact of rates structure on the community based on modelling that has been undertaken by the Council.

Council's Rating Policy is underpinned by:

- Accountability and Professional ethics
- Community consultation
- Transparency and simplicity
- Efficiency
- Equitable distribution of the rate burden
- Consistency with the strategic directions of Council
- Compliance with relevant legislation

3. Definitions

Chief Executive Officer means the Chief Executive Officer of the Council.

Notional Valuation means the Capital Valuation assigned by the Office of the Valuer-General after allowing for the portion of land under a current State Heritage Agreement under the *South Australian Heritage Act 1978* and *Valuation of Land Act 1971*.

4. Principles of Rates

Council rates are a system of taxation for Local Government purposes, not a fee for services provided. The purpose of which Council collects rates is broadly defined in Section 7 of the Act. This Policy represents the Council's commitment to balancing the five main principles of taxation.

- **Equity:** Reliance on this principle suggest that (all other things being equal) a taxpayer should contribute according to their ability to pay. This includes horizontal equity (taxing people in similar circumstances equally) and vertical equity (taxing those with higher capacity more)
- **Benefit:** Taxpayers should receive benefits from paying tax, but not necessarily to the extent of the tax paid.
- **Administrative Simplicity:** This principle refers to the costs involved in applying and collecting the tax and how difficult it is to avoid. Taxes should be collected in a manner that is simple, timely, and least burdensome for the taxpayer. The cost of collecting the tax should be minimal relative to the revenue raised and should not unduly hinder economic activity.
- **Economic Efficiency:** This refers to whether the tax distorts economic behaviour. Tax systems should ideally not influence economic decisions (like investment), unless specifically designed to change behaviours, such as discouraging harmful consumption.
- **Policy Consistency:** The principle that taxes should be internally consistent, and based on transparent, predictable rules that are understandable and acceptable to taxpayers. Tax rules, timing, and amounts should be clear, predictable, and not arbitrary.

5. Valuation of Land for Rating Purposes

Section 151(2) of the Act determines that Council must rate based off Capital Value (**CV**) or Annual Value (**AV**) with the exemption of Notional Value. This method provides the fairest way to distribute the rate burden across all ratepayers on the following basis:

- The 'capacity to pay' principle of taxation requires that ratepayers of similar means pay similar taxes and ratepayers with greater means pay more tax than ratepayers of less means;
- Property CV is a relatively good indicator of circumstance and means (when lifetime incomes, including incomes from capital gains, are taken into account). Capital value, which closely approximates the market value for a property, provides the best indicator of overall property value.

Council adopts the valuations made by the Office of the Valuer-General as provided to the Council each year (Section 167 of the Act). Council has no role in the valuation process.

A ratepayer may object to a valuation of the Valuer-General in writing, setting out the reasons for the objection, and the Valuer-General must consider the objection. An objection to a valuation must be made within 60 days after the date of first service of notice containing the valuation of the property to which the objection related, explain the basis for the objection. If the property owner remains dissatisfied with the valuation, they have a right to a review.

6. Council's Revenue Raising Powers

All land within the Council area, except for land specifically exempt (eg Crown Land, Council-occupied land, and other land exempt under any relevant legislation) is rateable. The Act provides for a Council to raise revenue for the broad purposes of the Council through a general rate, which applied to all rateable properties, or through differential general rates, which apply to classes of properties or for a specific purpose. In addition, Council can raise separate rates for specific arears of the Council.

As prescribed under Section 156(1) of the Act, differential rates may vary:

a) According to the use of the land; or

b) According to the locality of the land; or
c) According to the locality of the land and its use; or
d) On some other basis determined by the Council

Council can also raise revenue for the recovery of costs associated with service delivery to the community under Section 155 of the Act. Council can recover the costs associated through a service charge on each property (including non-rateable property) unless otherwise exempt or given a rebate. Council can impose multiple service charges on any property in respect to the number of services provided to that property. Section 155(5) dictates that Council must not seek to recover in relation to a prescribed service an amount by way of service rate, annual service charge, or a combination of both exceeding the cost to the Council of establishing, operating, maintaining, improving, or replacing the service in its area.

7. Component of Rates

General Rates
Council endorses the differential general rates according to the locality of the land and its use. The following differential factors can be utilised for rating purposes under Section 14(1) of the *Local Government (General) Regulations 2013* (**Regulations**):

Land Use
- Residential
- Commercial – Shop
- Commercial – Office
- Commercial – Other
- Industrial – Light
- Industrial – Other
- Primary Production
- Vacant Land
- Other

and/or

Zoning
- According to the zone in which the land is situated

Fixed Charge
Council imposes a fixed charge (applying equally) to all rateable properties pursuant to Section 152(2) of the Act, unless an exemption has been granted.

The purpose of the fixed charge is to ensure that all residents/owners contribute towards the provision of basic services at a reasonable level.

Service Charges
Under Section 155 of the Act, Council may impose a service rate, an annual service charge, or a combination of both on rateable and non-rateable properties within the district for which we provide, or make available, a prescribed service. Council can impose service charges on properties of any land use, including vacant land, if the service has been made available to that land.

Community Wastewater Management (CWMS): Council will recover the cost of providing township- based CWMS via a service charge. The charge applied will include an appropriate provision for the future replacement of CWMS infrastructure and equipment.

Water Supply: Council will recover the cost of providing a water supply to the township of Port Kenny via a service charge. The charge applied will include an appropriate provision for any future replacement of infrastructure or equipment. Water usage charges are invoiced separately as Council's annual Fees and Charges Schedule.

Waste Management: Council will recover the cost of providing a kerbside refuse/recycling service via a service charge. The total amount recovered must not exceed the cost of providing the service.

Pursuant to Regulation 13 of the Regulations, waste collection charges are applied on properties in a tiered manner for those properties required to take their waste a distance to be collected. The following rates apply:

a)	Distance less than 500 metres	100%
b)	Distance less than 2 kilometres	75%
c)	Distance less than 5 kilometres	50%
d)	Distance over 5 kilometres	0%

Separate Rate

Regional Landscape Levy: The Eyre Peninsula Landscape levy is a separate charge required under the *Landscape South Australia Act 2019*. This levy is a state-mandated, Council collected tax on all rateable land to fund the Eyre Peninsula Landscape Board. The levy is applied as a fixed charge on each rateable property based on land use under the categories dictated in Section 14(1) of the Regulations. Properties can be exempt from this levy under the requirements of Section 152(2).

8. Mandatory and Discretionary Rebates

8.1 Mandatory Rebates

If grounds exist for a person or body to receive a rebate of rates, Council may be required to rebate (remit or discount) the rates or services payable on some land used for the following purposes pursuant to Section 159 of the Act:

8.1.1 100% Mandatory Rebates:

- Health Services;
- Religious Purposes; and
- Public Cemeteries.

8.1.2 75% Mandatory Rebates:

- Community Service Organisations; and
- Schools and Universities.

8.2 Discretionary Rebates

Council may grant, from time to time, rebate of rates or service charges at any percentage for several purposes prescribed in Section 166 of the Act, such as:

- Securing proper development of an area
- Assisting or supporting a business

- Preservation of historically significant places
- Facilities or services for children or young people
- Accommodation for the aged or persons with a disability
- Other purposes

Should ratepayers feel they meet the criteria for a discretionary rebate, applications must be made to Council annually. Upon receipt of an application, Council will consider the following:

- why there is a perceived need for financial assistance through a rebate
- the level of rebate being sought
- the extent of financial assistance, if any, being provided to the ratepayer and/or in respect of the land by Commonwealth or State agencies
- whether, and if so to what extent, they are or will be providing a service within the Council area
- whether the ratepayer is a public sector body, a private not-for-profit body or a private or profit body
- the nature and extent of Council services provided in respect of the land, in comparison to services provided elsewhere in the Council's area
- the community need, if any, that is being met by activities carried out on the land
- the extent to which activities at the land provide assistance or relief to disadvantaged persons
- the desirability of granting a rebate for more than one year
- consideration of the full financial consequences of the rebate for the Council
- the total income the applicant received for the prior financial year
- the time the application is received
- any other matters and policies of the Council, which the Council considers relevant

9. Concessions and Postponement of Rates

9.1 State Government Concessions

The State Government provides a "Cost of Living Concession'. This payment may be used for any purpose, including offsetting Council rates. This concession amount will be paid directly to the eligible concession holders and Council has no part in approving or providing these concessions.

9.2 Postponement of Rates

In accordance with Section 182A of the Act persons who hold a Seniors Card may apply to postpone payment of rates for their principal place of residence. Council treats such applications confidentially. Section 182 of the Act permits Council, on the application of the ratepayer, to partially or wholly remit rates or to postpone rates, on the basis of hardship. Where a ratepayer is suffering hardship in paying rates he/she is invited to contact the Council office to discuss the matter. Further information is contained in Council's Financial Hardship Policy.

10. Late Payment and Non-Payment of Rates

10.1 Late Payment of Rates

Council will impose a penalty of (in the form of) a two (2) percent fine on any late payment of rates in accordance with Section 181 (8) of the Act. This fine may be remitted (waived) in whole or in part at the CEO's discretion.

A payment that continues to be late is then charged an interest rate (which is adjusted by legislation each year) for each month it continues to be in arrears, including the amount of any previous unpaid fine and including interest from any previous month. The purpose of this penalty is to act as a genuine deterrent to ratepayers who might otherwise fail to pay their rates on time, to allow Council to recover the administrative cost of following up on unpaid rates.

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

- First – to satisfy any costs awarded to, or recoverable by the Council in connection with court proceedings undertaken by Council for the recovery or rates;
- Second – to satisfy any interest costs;
- Third – in payment of any fines imposed;
- Fourth – in payment of rates, in chronological order (starting with the oldest account first).

10.2 Sale of Land for Non-Payment of Rates

Section 184 of the Act provides that a Council may sell any property where the rates have been in arrears for three (3) years or more. The Council is required to notify the owner of the land of its intention to sell the land, provide the owner with details of the outstanding amounts and advise the owner of its intention to sell the land if payment of the outstanding amount is not received within one (1) month. A copy of this notice is to be sent to the principal ratepayer, as well as: -

- Any owner of the land who is not the principal ratepayer; and
- Any registered mortgagee of the land; and
- To the holder of any caveat over the land; and
- If the land is held from the Crown under a lease, licence or agreement to purchase – to the Minister who is responsible for the administration of the Crown Lands Act 1929

If Council cannot, after making reasonable inquiries, ascertain the name or address of the person to whom a notice is to be sent or Council considers that it is unlikely that a notice sent would come to the attention of the person to whom it is to be sent, the Council may serve effective notice by: -

- Placing a copy of the notice in a newspaper circulating throughout the State; and
- Leaving a copy of the notice in a conspicuous place on the land.

If the outstanding amount is not paid in full within the time allowed, Council may proceed to have the land sold. Except in extraordinary circumstances, the Council will enforce the sale of land for arrears of rates.

11. Changes to Assessment Records

Any changes to Council assessment records, eg changes to postal addresses or changes of ownership must be notified promptly to Council in writing. The appropriate forms can be found on Council's website and emailed to Council.

Requests for change to addresses over the phone will not be accepted.

DOCUMENT HISTORY				
Version	**Changes since last version**	**Approved by**	**Record No**	**Issue Date**
1.0	New policy			June 2012
2.0	Updated template			20 June 2017
3.0	Updated	Karen Quinn		18 May 2021
4.0	Updated formatting – added further information re process	Narelle Biddell		19 April 2026