

Councillors' views on the
BUDGET 2026/27

2026/2027





KINGAROY TOWN HALL

RECEPTION ROOM

MAYOR

On behalf of our Council team, I am pleased to hand down the 2026/2027 financial year budget.

This budget has been extra challenging with rising fuel costs, electricity prices, insurance premiums and other costs placing more and more pressure on both our community and Council's operations.

We recognise the cost of living pressures facing everyone, so we have done everything possible to reduce costs within our organisation and find greater efficiencies. We want to ensure that we are delivering the best value we can for our community.

I am pleased that we have kept the overall general rate increase for residential to 2.95% and commercial and industrial to 3.95%.

Within the categories because of the three-year averaging and last year's revaluations there will still be winners and losers with some going up and some going down. With service charges we continue to work towards full cost recovery with water access, wastewater, and waste services having varying increases to keep up with the rising cost of delivering these services. Waste, in particular, is a continuous issue with the cost of Government compliance causing us to have to fence some of our rural transfer stations. We continue to encourage everyone to recycle and sort waste, particularly commercial users, to help keep the costs down.

Our rate rise is very minimal compared to some other Councils that I know have reached double digit figures. We have also kept our 10% discount that many other Councils have removed. The 10% discount for early payment not only comes off general rates, it also includes water access, wastewater and wheelie bin collection charges. Eligible South Burnett pensioners can also receive up to \$400 per annum off their annual rate fee plus 50% off recycling charges.

In this budget there will be upgrades to some of the depots because of a change in work structure. We are empowering local teams to deliver services closer to home, reducing costs while keeping local jobs and expertise within our communities.

We have kept a large focus on roads and have invested \$16.56M on the total road program, with \$5.4M on reseals to continue to minimise the bitumen potholes. We have budgeted \$4.85M in our operational budget to be spent on our sealed roads and \$2.54M on our unsealed roads and this will include drainage work. We are also investing time and effort into sourcing good quality gravel to ensure best practise with our gravel re-sheeting program. \$2.6M will be spent on stormwater drainage, including kerb and channel, culverts new and renewals and \$560K on footpath renewals and upgrades.

We successfully air scoured the Blackbutt and Benarkin water pipes last year and this year we will be working on Murgon and Wondai's water pipes. Water continues to be a major focus with \$2.2M dollars going to the Mt Wooroolin Reservoir and \$8.5 million to the Gordonbrook off stream storage upgrade. Repairs to Kingaroy's wastewater plant due to trade waste damage has unfortunately cost this council and our community \$2.8M. Council is well advanced in our Biosecurity plans, and I am pleased to announce that we are investing funds into a feral pig subsidy program and in this budget, we are designing a weed seed wash down facility.

Council remains in a strong financial position, with a healthy cash balance, no new borrowings and a strong focus on maintaining our assets. Unfunded depreciation remains broadly consistent with last year and we are pleased to work with the community to continue to deliver on their community plans.

I would like to thank CEO Mark Pitt, our Finance General Manager Kerri, Infrastructure General Manager Aaron, my fellow Councillors and everyone who helped to put this budget together. This budget will continue to deliver the best possible outcomes for our community within the resources we have, and we look forward to a customer focused Council serving our wonderful community.

Thank you and God Bless.



Mayor Kathy Duff

DIVISION 1

As we come through another budget process I want to acknowledge just how challenging this work has been. Preparing a responsible budget is never simply a matter of balancing figures on a page. It means weighing the cost of maintaining roads, water parks, community facilities and essential services against the very real pressure that rates place on households, businesses and primary producers. 2025/26 was a busy time with quite a few upgrades done. Footpaths, pool pumps, sewer pumps, bitumen reseals, parks and gardens, fountains to name just a few.

I am now looking forward to our 2026/27 year. Some new projects planned starting with improved access to the disabled toilet at the Cultural Centre. I'm really looking forward to the refurbishment of the amenities at Reg McCallum Park. They are very dated, and we are looking at making these more user-friendly. A lot of my budget has been put aside for this upgrade, and I urge the community to assist in reporting any damage, it is time we said enough is enough. These facilities are important to our residents. We will also have a family room that I think will be fabulous for those families needing to come down to use the facilities. Hopefully funding will also allow for a little refurbishment of the toilet facilities in the Cultural Centre which need some TLC.

Upgrades are continuing for Brighthaven, Council's aged care units, money is allocated each year to keep the units in good condition. Pioneer Park will get replacement bollards to keep vehicles off the grounds and replacement pegs on the climbing wall. We are hoping to use a local supplier with recycled plastics for the bollards and climbing pegs, and I am keen to see this project progress. For over forty years many little people have climbed and enjoyed this Lion's playground park. Newer swings for the bigger kids have been installed, and we will now be replacing with some new equipment and softfall and seating for parents. The park is well serviced with BBQs and is well utilised for birthdays and family get togethers. Some repairs on the path at Butter Factory are also planned, for the next generation of bike riders.

Ringsfield House gardens has been very well looked after, there will be some changes to the gardens removing some of the old garden beds and creating more space especially for the Tai Chi uses. The schoolhouse will get a much needed roof replacement and we are also hoping to get some music happening again at Ringsfield.

There are several new projects lined up with a bitumen reseal in Cairns Street, Elk Street and George Street; an upgrade to the Memerambi Barkers Creek Road; installation of a light at Brown Street to give better visibility at the creek crossing; replacement of damaged Nanango town entry signs; reseal program on Old Esk North Road; and kerb and channel renewing in Alfred and Brisbane Streets. We are hoping to do an exchange with Main Roads between Drayton Street and the Appin Street Heavy Vehicle bypass, along with upgrades at the Cairns Street and Appin Street corner. All in all, I think that is a pretty impressive list of projects for the next financial year.

Cr Jane Erkens



DIVISION 2

Working towards a budget that is in keeping with community expectations has proven challenging for the 2026 -27 budget year.

As Councillors we have had many budget meetings with the CEO and Senior Management to put forward our proposals and ideas for each councillor division. Everyone has worked extremely hard to work within the strategic and operational plans of our council. We have also had to consider the expectations of our residents within the community plans. This has proven especially challenging with the rising costs of living and the ability to pay for the services that we all expect from Council.

The 26/27 financial year will see some long-awaited capital works projects commencing throughout Division 2. There is \$340K allocated to Maidenwell for much needed upgrades to the Sports-grounds amenities, replacing bollards at the Memorial and refurbishing the public toilets.

The final Works for Queensland (W4Q) project will see the public toilet constructed at the Brisbane Valley Rail Trail (BVRT) precinct Blackbutt. This is great news for the residents who use the skate park with their families as well as all the visitors and rail trail users.

There is a budget of \$2.259M for new road upgrades throughout Division 2 in this financial year. The Blackbutt Water Treatment Plant will receive a \$220K upgrade to enable Council to continue to supply potable water to the community. There are also many other smaller projects that will be occurring through the year in Division 2.

I want to thank all the staff and my fellow Councillors for the work they have put in to find savings and fund important works for the residents of Division 2. This has taken a considerable effort to keep our rates and services to a reasonable level.

The total capital works budget for Division 2 this financial year totals \$3.291M.

I look forward to working with Division 2 residents in the coming year and seeing these and many more projects around our region coming to fruition.



Cr Linda Little







DIVISION 3

Preparing a Council budget is one of the most challenging responsibilities we have as elected representatives. Every figure on a page represents a real decision that affects communities, businesses, farmers, families and the future of our region. Household budgets are stretched by higher grocery prices, electricity bills, insurance premiums, fuel costs and interest rates. Many families are making difficult choices every day, and we understand those pressures because we feel them also.

What many people may not realise is that Councils are facing those same financial challenges. The cost of constructing roads, maintaining parks, collecting waste, operating libraries, providing community facilities and delivering essential services has increased significantly. Materials, fuel, machinery, insurance, electricity and contractor costs have all risen, placing enormous pressure on Council's own budget.

This year's budget includes important bitumen reseals in Taabinga and Kingaroy, helping to improve road safety and extend the life of our local road network. We are continuing work at the Animal Management Centre to ensure we provide modern facilities that meet the compliance needs required for our animals and our community. We are investing in solar panels on Council buildings to reduce our long-term electricity costs. This is a practical investment that will help lower operating expenses over time, allowing more money to be directed back into community services and infrastructure.

The budget also provides for kerb and channel construction along Markwell Street and from the Kingaroy Hospital emergency entrance through to Albert Street, improving drainage, accessibility and safety. Essential water main replacements and sewer extensions will strengthen the reliability of our water and sewer networks as our region continues to grow.

Major infrastructure projects such as the Gordonbrook Water Treatment Plant upgrades and the Trunk Sewer Main are also critical investments. While these projects are significant, they are necessary to secure reliable services for our community now and for future generations.

I am most excited to say that we have budgeted for a detailed design plan for the Kingaroy pool, this means we will be shovel ready for any grant opportunities that might be available.

No budget will ever satisfy every expectation, but this budget reflects careful consideration, responsible financial management and a commitment to delivering projects that matter most. We have worked hard to balance today's challenges with tomorrow's opportunities, ensuring the South Burnett remains a strong, resilient and thriving region for everyone. I want to thank my fellow Councillors, the Mayor and all Council staff for the many hours of work that went into preparing this budget. It is not simply about balancing the books, it is about balancing the needs of today with the opportunities of tomorrow.

Cr Danita Potter



DIVISION 4

Another interesting year with Mayor Kathy, fellow Councillors and senior staff working around what the community needs and what we can deliver. Liveability in the South Burnett is behind every decision that is made by Council and the balance between replacing and repairing our ageing infrastructure and planning for future growth is a balancing act that we continue to work on. Council is grateful for the support from other levels of government to assist deliver upgrades to our infrastructure.

Projects being completed this year include the replacement of mains in Ivy Street (well underway), Premier Drive Reservoir relining and an upgrade of the Apex Park Lookout fencing and paths. Apex Park has had additional playground equipment installed and there is now a spinning orb next to the pirate ship that will be suitable for a variety of ages. This is such a well used park and it is great to see the continued development there.

The Tessmanns Road footpath extension is nearly completed and will provide a link for walkers, cyclists and those on mobility scooters from the northern end of Kingaroy to the centre. The medians in Fisher Street and the D'Aguilar Highway using Works for Queensland (W4Q) funding have been repaired and have really smartened up the areas. There have been upgrades to the footpath at the top of Fisher Street with a kick around the power pole half way up that challenging hill and work on the section of path adjacent to Carroll Nature Reserve is not far from starting.

New projects for the road network this year include bitumen reseals for Tessmanns Road, Bellair Drive and Curtis Road. Moonya Street will have sections of the kerb and channel replaced as they are definitely ageing.

The Memerambi playground to be developed will include a Mousewheel and has been substantially funded from my W4Q funds. I know this will be a welcome asset for the developing community there.

These projects from Division 4 and those in the whole of the South Burnett will be completed by our own teams with contractors being bought in when necessary. The SBRC team who now run the Animal Management Centre have made many positive changes to the service and put their hearts into caring for the animals who need them.

Thank you so much to the residents of Division 4 for your positive feedback and your constructive ideas. Also, a huge thank you to all staff and the Council team at South Burnett Regional Council you are the best.



Cr Deb Dennien



DIVISION 5

This year's budget is about making smart decisions that strengthen the South Burnett for the future. Investments have been carefully considered, ensuring we deliver the greatest value while protecting the essential infrastructure that the community rely on every day.

The projects I am highlighting today represent just a snapshot of the many investments planned throughout Division 5. One of the most significant decisions in this budget is the reallocation of funding from the planned water main replacement near the Murgon Hospital Reservoir, Macalister Street to allow an extra \$156,000 direct investment into the Lamb Street water main replacement.

By delivering the Lamb Street water main replacement alongside the scheduled stormwater works, Council can complete both projects at the same time. This means businesses, residents and motorists will only experience disruption once, rather than multiple interruptions.

After more than 30 years of community advocacy, \$119,000 has been committed to the Watt Street, Murgon kerb and channel upgrade, improving drainage, road safety and the appearance of one of our township's key streets. Council is also investing \$340,000 in the Crownthorpe Road bitumen reseal program and \$176,000 in the Kangaroo Yard Road, Wheatlands bitumen reseal program, ensuring these important rural transport routes remain safe and reliable.

Beyond roads, this budget invests in the facilities keeping rural communities connected. Funding has been allocated to replace the rear roof of the Proston Showgrounds Pavilion, undertake minor footpath upgrades along Rodney Street in Proston, a brand-new dump point in Hivesville, ceiling and drainage improvements at the Proston Administration and Library building, and renovate the Kapernick Park public toilets in Tablelands.

These investments, together with the \$970,000 commitment to the Boondooma Dam Water Treatment Plant and \$200,000 for the Webbers Bridge Road timber bridge deck replacement, demonstrate a Council that plans ahead rather than waiting for infrastructure to fail.

This year's 2.95% general rate rise is both responsible and necessary. I understand that no one welcomes a rate increase, myself included, however, the reality is that the cost of construction, materials and maintaining essential infrastructure continues to rise. Choosing not to invest today would only result in greater costs and disruptions in the future. I proudly support this budget as it reflects responsible leadership, careful financial management and a commitment to ensuring the South Burnett remains a resilient, connected, and prosperous region for generations to come.

Additionally, my focus is on planning for a stronger, more efficient water and waste network that supports the long-term needs of Murgon, Wondai, and Cherbourg. This is about thinking beyond today's challenges and planning for tomorrow's opportunities. By investing wisely in infrastructure, we have the opportunity to deliver significant financial savings over the life of the assets. My goal is to build a more financially resilient and sustainable future for the South Burnett by making informed decisions today that deliver lasting benefits for our communities.

Cr Heath Sander



DIVISION 6

I'm very proud to be part of this Council team delivering our third budget for the 2024-2028 term of South Burnett Regional Council. In this time of escalating costs it has been a challenge to balance delivering services and keeping the rate rise to a minimum as we recognise the cost of living pressures on many residents.

The Councillors and senior staff have put long hours into this detailed document and worked well together, always focused on our commitment to the region and the two key priorities of this term to give attention to the financial sustainability of Council and continue to support and develop our towns and villages. This is of particular relevance to me as the representative of Division 6, the largest division with the most individual towns and villages which each have their own character and identity and I value Council's commitment to each town and village.

Just a few highlights from the budget:

In Wondai I look forward in particular the new playground for Coronation park which has been a long time coming. We have done extensive community consultation and the new Railway train themed playground will be a fantastic asset to the residents and the whole region. And the Wondai town clock should be fixed once and for all!

Of special mention is the new playground for Memerambi mouse wheel will be something special for this small community and will be a great point of interest.

Tingoora has had drainage issues since for ever! Last financial year we planned the whole village drainage system and this financial year I'm excited that we will start by spending \$800K on new drainage for Muller street. It will take many years for the whole village drainage to be finished but I'm pleased that we have started this challenging programme.

Kumbia footpath as requested by residents will be an asset to the town. Wooroolin replacement playground equipment, Crawford new toilet and most importantly bitumen reseals on many roads across the region.

I'm very excited that we have rectified a long standing issue that those supplied with non-potable water have been paying the same amount for water as that for potable water. This budget for the first time we have a lower cost for non-potable water for Kumbia, Wooroolin and a small area of Nanango. I'm glad we have made this equitable for these residents.

We endeavour to always deliver the best customer service to provide excellent customer satisfaction. In closing I'm hoping for a kind new financial year with a good growing season, no disasters and our residents safe and prospering.



Cr Ros Heit





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