



GOVERNANCE AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

12 August 2025

Meeting Notice

**The Governance and Finance Committee
of Central Coast Council
will be held Function Room 2,
2 Hely Street, Wyong,
on Tuesday 12 August 2025 at 7:00pm,
for the transaction of the business listed below:**

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2 Confidential Items

- 2.1 2024-25 FY NSW Audit Office - Interim Audit

The reason for dealing with the report confidentially is that it contains commercial information of a confidential nature that would, if disclosed (i) prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it; or (ii) confer a commercial advantage on a competitor of the Council; or (iii) reveal a trade secret.

ITEM 1.1

WELCOME

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we live, work and play.

We pay our respects to Darkinjung Country, and Elders past and present.

We recognise the continued connection to these lands and waterways and extend this acknowledgement to the homelands and stories of those who also call this place home.

We recognise our future leaders and the shared responsibility to care for and protect our place and people.

APOLOGIES

ITEM 1.2

DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

Chapter 14 of the *Local Government Act 1993* ("LG Act") regulates the way in which the councillors and relevant staff of Council conduct themselves to ensure that there is no conflict between their private interests and their public functions.

Section 451 of the LG Act states:

- "(1) A councillor or a member of a council committee who has a pecuniary interest in any matter with which the council is concerned and who is present at a meeting of the council or committee at which the matter is being considered must disclose the nature of the interest to the meeting as soon as practicable.*
- (2) The councillor or member must not be present at, or in sight of, the meeting of the council or committee:*
 - (a) at any time during which the matter is being considered or discussed by the council or committee, or*
 - (b) at any time during which the council or committee is voting on any question in relation to the matter.*
- (3) For the removal of doubt, a councillor or a member of a council committee is not prevented by this section from being present at and taking part in a meeting at which a matter is being considered, or from voting on the matter, merely because*

the councillor or member has an interest in the matter of a kind referred to in section 448.

- (4) Subsections (1) and (2) do not apply to a councillor who has a pecuniary interest in a matter that is being considered at a meeting, if:*
 - (a) the matter is a proposal relating to:*
 - (i) the making of a principal environmental planning instrument applying to the whole or a significant part of the council's area, or*
 - (ii) the amendment, alteration or repeal of an environmental planning instrument where the amendment, alteration or repeal applies to the whole or a significant part of the council's area, and*
 - (a1) the pecuniary interest arises only because of an interest of the councillor in the councillor's principal place of residence or an interest of another person (whose interests are relevant under section 443) in that person's principal place of residence, and*
 - (b) the councillor made a special disclosure under this section in relation to the interest before the commencement of the meeting.*
- (5) The special disclosure of the pecuniary interest must, as soon as practicable after the disclosure is made, be laid on the table at a meeting of the council and must:*
 - (a) be in the form prescribed by the regulations, and*
 - (b) contain the information required by the regulations."*

Further, the Code of Conduct adopted by Council applies to all councillors and staff. The Code relevantly provides that if a councillor or staff have a non-pecuniary conflict of interest, the nature of the conflict must be disclosed as well as providing for a number of ways in which a non-pecuniary conflicts of interests might be managed.

Recommendation

That Committee members and staff now disclose any conflicts of interest in matters under consideration at this meeting.

ITEM 1.3

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Recommendation

That the Committee confirm the minutes of the previous Governance and Finance Committee Meeting held on 13 May 2025.

Summary

Confirmation of minutes of the previous Governance and Finance Committee Meeting held on 13 May 2025.

Attachments



MINUTES - Governance and Finance Committee - 13 May 2025

D16771943



Central Coast Council

Governance and Finance Committee

Held in Function Room
2 Hely Street, Wyong

13 May 2025

MINUTES

Attendance

Members

Cr Jared Wright, Chairperson	Present
Cr Kyle MacGregor, Deputy Chairperson	Present
Cr Helen Crowley, Member	Present
Cr Doug Eaton OAM, Member	Present (remotely)

Status

Guest

Cr Rachel Stanton

Status

Present

Staff

Marissa Racomelara, Director Corporate Services	Present
Louise Rampling, Unit Manager Governance Risk and Legal	Present
Emma Galea, Chief Financial Officer	Present
Michael Ross, Unit Manager, Facilities and Asset Management	Present
Danny Andrews, Section Manager, Procurement Operations	Present
Phil Cantillon, Unit Manager, Leisure Beach Safety and Community Facilities	Present
Stephanie Prouse, Section Manager, Councillor and Democratic Services	Present
Briony Stiles, Team Lead, Civic Support	Present
Kylie Blakely, Civic Support Officer	Present

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting Governance and Finance Committee of Council (cont'd)

The Chairperson, Councillor Jared Wright, declared the meeting open at 7:07pm

THAT IN ACCORDANCE WITH CLAUSE 6.20 OF THE CODE OF MEETING PRACTICE, REMOTE ATTENDANCE VIA AUDIO VISUAL LINK TO THE GOVERNANCE AND FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING ON 13 MAY 2025 BE GRANTED TO DEPUTY MAYOR EATON OAM DUE TO PERSONAL REASONS WAS *MOVED* by Councillor *WRIGHT* and *SECONDED* by Councillor *MACGREGOR*

REPORTS

1.1 Introduction: Welcome, Acknowledgement of Country, and Apologies

7:09pm

The Chair read an Acknowledgement of Country statement.

1.2 Disclosures of Interest

7:10pm

No conflicts of interest were disclosed.

THAT COUNCIL ADOPT THE FOLLOWING ITEMS EN-MASSE AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS, WAS *MOVED* by Councillor *MACGREGOR* and *SECONDED* by Deputy Mayor *EATON* OAM:

7:11pm

GFC1/25

That the Committee determines the following items will be adopted without debate:

- ***Item 1.4 - Reviewed Code of Conduct – for Public Exhibition***
- ***Item 1.5 - Draft Code of Meeting Practice – for Public Exhibition***
- ***Item 1.6 - Draft Public Forum Policy – for Public Exhibition***
- ***Item 1.8 - Reviewed Investments Management Policy and Draft Borrowings Policy – for Adoption***

1.3 Q3 (March 2025) Operational Plan and Budget Review

7:13pm

The Executive Officer and Chief Financial Officer spoke to the Q3 Operational Plan and Budget Review presentation.

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting Governance and Finance Committee of Council (cont'd)

GFC2/25

That the Committee:

- 1 Receives and notes the preliminary Q3 (March 2025) Quarterly Operational Plan and Budget Review as outlined in this report and Attachments to this report.**
- 2 Receives and notes the changes to the 2024-25 capital works program (Attachment 3) and notes the impact of these changes on the indicative program in the outer years.**
- 3 Notes that the subject of this report will be presented to the Council meeting in May for further consideration.**

CARRIED

FOR: UNANIMOUS

1.4 Reviewed Code of Conduct - for Public Exhibition

RESOLVED by EXCEPTION on the MOTION of Councillor MACGREGOR and SECONDED by Deputy Mayor EATON OAM:

GFC3/25

That the Committee:

- 1 Recommends to Council that the Code of Conduct provided as Attachment 1 to this report to be placed on public exhibition for a period of 28 days, with a further report to be presented after the public exhibition period.**
- 2 Notes that the Office of Local Government's reform of the Councillor Conduct Framework has not, to date, resulted in any amendments to the current Model Code of Conduct.**

1.5 Draft Code of Meeting Practice - for Public Exhibition

RESOLVED by EXCEPTION on the MOTION of Councillor MACGREGOR and SECONDED by Deputy Mayor EATON OAM:

GFC4/25

That the Committee:

- 1 Recommends that Council endorses the Draft Code of Meeting Practice provided as Attachment 1 to this report to be placed on public exhibition for a period of 28 days, allowing submissions from the public up to 42 days, with a further report to be presented after the exhibition period.**

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting Governance and Finance Committee of Council (cont'd)

- 2 ***Notes that the Office of Local Government's reform of the Councillor Conduct Framework has not, to date, resulted in a new Model Code of Meeting Practice being prescribed.***

1.6 Draft Public Forum Policy - For Public Exhibition

RESOLVED by EXCEPTION on the MOTION of Councillor MACGREGOR and SECONDED by Deputy Mayor EATON OAM:

GFC5/25

That the Committee:

- 1 ***Recommends that Council endorses the draft Public Forum Policy as amended at Attachment 1 to this report to be placed on public exhibition for a period of 28 days with a further report to be presented after the exhibition period.***
- 2 ***Notes that the Office of Local Government's reform of the Councillor Conduct Framework has not, to date, resulted in a new Model Code of Meeting Practice being prescribed.***

1.7 Draft Councillor Expenses and Facilities Policy - for Adoption

8:06pm

A MOTION was MOVED by Deputy Mayor EATON OAM and SECONDED by Councillor MACGREGOR:

GFC6/25

That the Committee:

- 1 ***Recommends to Council that the draft Councillor Expenses and Facilities Policy at Attachment 1 be adopted.***
- 2 ***Notes that a letter will be sent to those persons that made a submission during the exhibition period thanking them for their interest and submission.***

CARRIED

FOR: UNANIMOUS

1.8 Reviewed Investments Management Policy and Draft Borrowings Policy - for Adoption

RESOLVED by EXCEPTION on the MOTION of Councillor MACGREGOR and SECONDED by Deputy Mayor EATON OAM

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting Governance and Finance Committee of Council (cont'd)

GFC7/25

That the Committee recommends to Council:

- 1 That the reviewed Investments Management Policy at Attachment 1 to be referred to the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee, and then submitted to Council for adoption.***
- 2 That the draft Borrowings Policy at Attachment 2 to be referred to the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee, and then submitted to Council for adoption.***

1.9 Reviewed Procurement Policy - for Adoption

8:08pm

A MOTION was *MOVED* by Councillor MACGREGOR and *SECONDED* by Councillor CROWLEY:

GFC8/25

That the Committee:

- 1 Endorses the recommended amendments to the Procurement Policy.***
- 2 Recommends to Council that the reviewed Procurement Policy at Attachment 1 be adopted.***

CARRIED

FOR: UNANIMOUS

1.10 North Avoca Surf Life Saving Club - Approval to issue Lease and Licence

8:23pm

A MOTION was *MOVED* by Councillor MACGREGOR and *SECONDED* by Deputy Mayor EATON OAM:

GFC9/25

That the Committee recommends to Council that the Chief Executive Officer be authorised to negotiate, finalise and execute a lease and licence for surf lifesaving purposes for a period of up to twenty (20) years over land at 46 North Avoca Parade, North Avoca (being part of Lot 1 DP543153 and Part Lot 2 DP543153) with North Avoca Surf Life Saving Club.

CARRIED

FOR: UNANIMOUS

The next meeting is to be held at 7:00pm on Tuesday 8 July 2025 at the Wyong

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting Governance and Finance Committee of Council (cont'd)

Administration Building.

The Meeting concluded at 8.24pm.

UNCONFIRMED

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting Governance and Finance Committee of Council (cont'd)

UNCONFIRMED

Item No: 1.4
Title: Items Resolved by Exception
Department: Corporate Services

12 August 2025 Governance and Finance Committee

Reference: F2025/00484 - D16842064



Recommendation

That the Committee determines the items on the Governance and Finance Committee Agenda that will be adopted without debate.

Summary

In accordance with Council's Code of Meeting Practice, items that are dealt with by exception are items where the recommendations contained in the staff reports in the agenda are adopted without discussion.

Item No: 1.5
Title: Council's Investments Management Strategy
Department: Corporate Services



12 August 2025 Governance and Finance Committee

Reference: F2025/00016 - D16987855
Author: Michelle Best, Section Manager Financial Accounting and Assets
Manager: Emma Galea, Chief Financial Officer
Executive: Darrylen Law, Director Corporate Services

Recommendation

That the Committee notes Council's Investments Management Strategy at Attachment 1 for information.

Report purpose

To provide an overview of an Investments Management Strategy, developed for Council by Perpetual Advisory Pty Ltd. Representatives from Perpetual Advisory Pty Ltd, that will be present at the Committee meeting.

Executive Summary

Council adopted an Investments Management Policy at its 22 July 2025 Ordinary Meeting. Council is required to manage its investments portfolio within the parameters set out in the Policy.

An Investments Management Strategy has now been finalised in alignment with the Policy and will guide Council's operational management of its investments portfolio. The Strategy will guide investments placements in terms of term, risk rating and products, and is intended to maximise returns whilst ensuring adequate liquidity and legislative compliance, within the context of prevailing and anticipated market conditions, and the parameters of the adopted Policy.

The Strategy is presented to the Committee for information.

Report

Council's Investments Management Policy was adopted by Council at its 22 July 2025 Ordinary Meeting. The Policy establishes the framework for Council's investments regarding:

- Risk Management Criteria.
- Credit Management Criteria.
- Concentration Risk (Counterparty / Institution Credit Framework).
- Product, Interest Rate, and Income Risk / Term to Maturity.

The adopted Investments Management Policy can be accessed here:

[Investments Management Policy](#)

The Policy states that a strategic approach will be taken when investing funds surplus to immediate requirements, considering short and long term cashflow requirements as identified in Council's Long Term Financial Plan. To support this approach Perpetual Advisory Pty Ltd. were engaged to prepare an Investments Management Strategy. The engagement of an external organisation was aimed at ensuring that the Strategy is informed by the appropriate specialist expertise both in the investments market as well as products. This expertise combined with Council's cashflow projections in its Long-Term Financial Plan provided a good basis for the development of a Strategy that is aligned with Council's profile and business needs.

The Investments Management Strategy is an operational document and is presented to the Committee for information.

The Strategy is aimed at balancing liquidity, security, and yield, within the boundaries prescribed in the Policy. The Strategy considers current financial market conditions, anticipated market trends and Council's forecast cashflow movements based on the Long-Term Financial Plan, to outline investment targets.

The Strategy supports Council's conservative risk position while allowing for tactical flexibility in response to market conditions and interest rate movements, and includes:

- Consideration of Council's Long Term Financial Plan and associated cashflow forecasts.
- Identification of investment opportunities beyond the current approach, to improve investment performance compared to benchmark.
- Options regarding the structure of Council's investment portfolio by investment type, within the maximum levels stipulated by Council's Investment Policy.
- Mitigate risk by investing in rated funds as stipulated by Council's Policy.

Overall, the Strategy builds on, and refines, the current portfolio structure to further optimise term, risk profile and returns.

It is noted that the Strategy is based on information current as at 30 April 2025. Projected cashflows in the Long-Term Financial Plan, have also since been revised and will continue to do so as financial projections are updated each Quarter and annually. The cashflow trends identified at the time of preparing the Strategy did not change in the last update of the Long-Term Financial Plan and are therefore still relevant and appropriate as the basis for the Strategy.

It is also noted that at the time the Strategy was being developed, Council was transitioning to the revised Policy that was subsequently adopted at the Council meeting on 22 July 25. At the time of preparation of the Strategy, Council was not compliant with the revised Investment Policy limits. Since that time Council actively pursued investments to achieve compliance to the revised limits upon adoption of the Policy. At time of adopting the Investments Management Policy at the July Council meeting, Council was fully compliant with all the limits set out in the Policy.

The Investment Strategy aligns with Council's legislative obligations and adopted Investments Management Policy and offers a prudent path to enhance investment outcomes while managing risk effectively.

It is proposed to review the Investment Strategy annually, however it would be considered prudent to review earlier if there was material change to legislation or significant market movement.

Stakeholder Engagement

Nil.

Financial Considerations

Financial Year (FY) Implications.

The proposal has revenue financial implications for the current FY and outer years in the LTFP.

Funding for the development of the Strategy was included in the 2024-25 FY Budget. The implementation of the Strategy is anticipated to have a favourable impact on Council's income from its investments portfolio. However, as this income is impacted by various factors, including wider economic factors outside Council's control, it is difficult to quantify the anticipated impact at this stage.

Budget and Long-Term Financial Plan (LTFP) Impact.

The FY adopted budget does not include the impact on revenue in this proposal and the impact will need to be included in a future Quarterly Budget Review.

Link to Community Strategic Plan

Following the adoption of the Community Strategic Plan (CSP) and framework in June 2025, Council report templates are being updated with new CSP themes and goals. Contents in this report are aligned with the adopted CSP.





Risk Management

The Investments Management Strategy, and the overarching Investments Management Policy, specifically address and mitigate the different types of risks associated with the placement of investments.

Critical Dates or Timeframes

The Investments Management Strategy is intended to guide Council's placement of investments over a period of 12 months. The Strategy can be reviewed earlier if any significant legislative, economic or other relevant changes impacting on the effectiveness of the Strategy occur.

Attachments

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|-----------|
| 1 |   | Investment Management Strategy | D16987984 |
| 2 |   | Investment Management Strategy - presentation | D16998658 |

Perpetual Advisory

Investment Management Strategy

Central Coast Council

May 2025

Perpetual Advisory Pty Ltd (Formerly Laminar Advisory)
ACN 637 448 894
Corporate Authorised Representative of Perpetual Corporate Trust Pty Ltd AFSL 392673

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Portfolio Commentary

Introduction

The following Investment Strategy is to be read in conjunction with the Council's Investment Policy. This strategy covers the period of June 2025 to May 2026 and considers the following:

- Council's cash flow expectations and financial plans
- Optimal target allocation of investment types, credit rating exposure and term to maturity exposure
- Ability to fund Councils' operational and capital expenditure requirements
- Appropriateness of overall investment types for Council's portfolio
- Global and domestic economic environments
- Responsible Investment

Cash Flow Forecasts

As at 30 April 2025, Council's Investment holdings were \$817,723,776.20 The table below shows the forecast cash and cash equivalents position out to 2034/35. Existing balances are expected to increase over the next year when it then reduces significantly through to 2029/30 due to purchases of infrastructure, property, plant and equipment. Balances are expected to rise again from 2030 with holdings more than \$1.0bn expected from 2033/2034.

Cash Flows from Operating Activities	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35
Cash and Cash Equivalents - end of the year	176,140,736	151,134,246	151,721,902	154,012,059	159,510,177	166,344,546	169,081,840	172,427,832	174,393,317	189,486,879
Investments - end of the year	647,773,823	586,930,918	555,783,207	562,938,779	579,831,346	659,651,907	742,291,353	778,356,568	850,634,872	907,289,108
Cash, Cash Equivalents and Investments - end of the year	823,914,559	738,065,164	707,505,109	716,950,838	739,341,523	825,996,453	911,373,193	950,784,400	1,025,028,189	1,096,775,987

Current Portfolio

The following table summarises the Council's investment portfolio as at 30 April 2025. Recommended Investment Strategy targets are included as well as recommended Investment Policy Exposure Targets provided in the Investment Policy provided by Council. Investment types and exposures are in line with legislation and Current Investment Policy limits however the recommended targets would breach some limits based off balances as at 30 April 2025.

Central Coast Council Investment Profile 30 April 2025							
General Credit Profile							
	Investment Balance (Current)	Weighting (Current)	Investment Strategy Targets (Proposed)	Investment Policy Limits (Proposed)	Investment Policy Limits (Current)	Investment Policy Compliance (Current)	Investment Policy Compliance (Proposed)
	\$ million	%	%	%	%		
Long Term Issuer Rating Exposure							
AAA Category	20.017	2.45	3	100	100	Yes	Yes
AA+ to AA- Category	113.906	13.93	20	100	100	Yes	Yes
A+ to A- Category	290.915	35.58	45	70	70	Yes	Yes
BBB+ to BBB- Category	392.886	48.05	45	45	60	Yes	No
Unrated	0.000	0.00	0	0	0	Yes	Yes
	817.724	100.00					
Individual Counterparty Limits							
Largest Individual Exposure per Long Term Credit Rating							
AAA Category (NSWTC)	14.92	1.82	2	100	100	Yes	Yes
AA Category (UBS)	40.77	4.99	10	30	30	Yes	Yes
A Category (Rabobank)	101.89	12.46	10	10	20	Yes	No
BBB Category (CUA)	45.11	5.52	5	5	10	Yes	No
Unrated ADI Category	0.00	0.00	0	0	0	Yes	Yes
Term to Maturity Limits							
Portfolio % < 1 yr	411.92	50.37	50	100	100	Yes	Yes
Portfolio % > 1 yr	405.80	49.63	50				NA
Portfolio % 1-3 Yrs	294.05	35.96	40	70	70	Yes	Yes
Portfolio % 3-5 yrs	111.75	13.67	20	40	40	Yes	Yes
Portfolio % > 5 yrs	0.000	0.00	5	5	5	Yes	Yes
Total	817.724	100.0					
Asset Allocation Targets							
Cash	15.00	1.83	2	na	na		
Covered Bonds and FRNs	5.10	0.62	1	na	na		
Government and Semi Government Securities	19.95	2.44	2	na	na		
Term Deposits, Discount Securities	334.86	40.95	40	na	na		
ADI Issued Senior Debt	442.827	54.15	55	na	na		
Total	817.724	100.00	100				

Portfolio Exposure

General Credit Profile:

The portfolio has an overall credit rating of S&P Long-Term 'A-', based on the weighted average of the individual security ratings. The weighted average term to maturity is 1.4 years.

The overall portfolio balance as at 30 April 2025 is \$817,723,776.19 with a very even split of maturities between short-term (less than 12 months) and long-term (greater than 12 months). Exposure to institutions is skewed to lower-rated entities with almost half of the portfolio invested in the BBB+ to BBB- rated category. Council's largest direct exposure is to Rabobank with almost \$102 million held in Term Deposits with this bank. Exposure to Australian Major Banks is mostly via Norfina, formerly Suncorp Bank, which is a subsidiary of ANZ, and CBA which holds most of your at-call balance.

Council has just over \$442m invested in senior unsecured floating rate notes and fixed rate bonds with investments in Term Deposits in excess of \$334m. The remaining funds are invested in cash, covered FRNs and Semi Government securities.

The current investment profile offers a balanced and diversified portfolio that complies with all investment policy constraints and ensures liquidity when required. The portfolio is fully invested in APRA-regulated ADIs or Government entities.

Existing counterparty limits are not breached however please note implications of changes to limits in the Investment Policy review recently undertaken.

As discussed in more detail below, today's economic and political conditions are influencing financial markets and shaping investment strategies. In response, we have outlined investment targets that reflect the current yield curve, issuer credit quality, and asset allocation considerations.

Investment Strategy Targets (Recommended)

Long-Term Issuer Rating Exposure Category

In the Long-term Issuer Rating Exposure category, we have recommended targets that aim to preserve the overall credit quality of the portfolio while also considering the returns on currently available investments.

Due to the limited number of issuers in the AA and A- rated categories, a significant portion of the portfolio is currently allocated to BBB+ to BBB rated issuers. While we are comfortable with this allocation given the strong credit quality of Australian regulated banks, we acknowledge Council's recent directive to reduce exposure to lower-rated entities and agree with this stance.

AAA and AA- Rated Exposure

Council's exposure to AAA rated entities is currently 2.45%. We recommend increasing this to 3%, acknowledging the lower yields associated with these investments due to their minimal risk profile.

In the AA+ to AA- category, Council's current exposure is 13.93%, which is slightly below the recommended target of 20%. While term deposit rates from major banks are sometimes less competitive than those offered by regional banks, comparable rates are occasionally available. We also suggest considering new issuances of floating rate notes (FRNs) and fixed-rate bonds from major banks to help meet this target.

A and BBB Rated Categories

We propose a target allocation of 45% for both the A+ to A- and BBB+ to BBB- categories. This approach allows for a gradual shift toward higher-rated issuers as existing investments mature, thereby improving the overall credit quality of the portfolio.

Counterparty Exposure Limits

We remain mindful of Council's conservative stance regarding lower-rated entities. Given the limited number of institutions available for diversification, we recommend setting a maximum exposure of 5% to any individual issuer within the BBB+ to BBB- category. This would allow the portfolio to benefit from the more attractive rates offered by these issuers while managing risk appropriately.

For A-rated entities, we suggest a maximum exposure of 10% of the total portfolio per individual counterparty. This strikes a balance between yield opportunities and prudent risk management.

Term to Maturity Strategy

As outlined below, the shape of the yield curve and Council's cash flow requirements will influence the structure of the term-to-maturity strategy. Given the need to maintain liquidity while achieving competitive returns, we recommend a balanced approach, with 50% of the portfolio allocated to short-term and 50% to long-term investments.

A laddered maturity structure ensures that funds are regularly available to meet cash flow needs and to take advantage of attractive investment opportunities as they arise. We recommend allowing up to 40% of the portfolio to be invested in maturities of up to three years, to capitalise on longer-tenor specials when available. Additionally, with the potential for further interest rate cuts, placing up to 20% of the portfolio in investments with maturities of three to five years is also advisable.

Asset Allocation Targets

Cash

Holding 2% of the portfolio in cash provides essential liquidity to meet short-term operational and cash flow requirements. This allocation aligns with the strategy's emphasis on maintaining flexibility and ensuring funds are readily available for opportunistic reinvestment or unexpected expenses. While cash yields are typically low, the liquidity benefit justifies this modest allocation.

Covered Bond and Floating Rate Notes

An allocation of 1% to covered bonds and FRNs offers a low-risk, income-generating component with some protection against interest rate volatility. Covered bonds are typically secured and highly rated, enhancing the portfolio's credit quality. FRNs, with their variable interest payments, are particularly valuable in a fluctuating interest rate environment, aligning with the strategy's recommendation to diversify across fixed and floating rate instruments.

Government and Semi-Government Securities

A 2% allocation supports the portfolio's credit quality and risk mitigation goals. Government and semi-government securities are among the safest investments, providing stability and a counterbalance to higher-yielding, lower-rated assets. Although yields are modest, their inclusion helps meet Council's directive to reduce exposure to lower-rated issuers.

Term Deposits

A 40% allocation to term deposits reflects a core component of the portfolio, offering predictable returns and capital preservation. This aligns with the strategy's emphasis on laddering maturities to manage liquidity and reinvestment risk. Term deposits from both major and regional banks can be selectively used to optimise yield while adhering to credit rating and counterparty exposure limits.

ADI Issued Senior Debt

55% of the portfolio is the largest allocation and is consistent with the strategy's focus on enhancing yield while maintaining acceptable credit quality. Senior debt issued by Authorised Deposit-taking Institutions (ADIs), particularly those rated A or higher, provides a balance of return and security. This allocation supports the strategy's recommendation to gradually shift exposure from BBB rated issuers to higher-rated ADIs as opportunities arise. It also allows for diversification across fixed and floating rate structures, including FRNs and bonds.

Overall Portfolio Credit Profile:

This asset allocation is well-aligned with the recommended investment strategy. It balances **liquidity (cash, FRNs)**, **security (government and covered bonds)**, and **yield (term deposits and senior debt)**. The structure supports Council's conservative risk posture while allowing for tactical flexibility in response to market conditions and interest rate movements.

Perpetual Advisory

Recommendations

Investment Strategy Recommendations

Compliance Recommendations

- Maintain the current conservative and compliant approach which is delivering strong risk-adjusted returns.
- Gradually reduce exposure to BBB+ to BBB rated investments by reallocating maturing investments into higher-rated categories
- Reduce exposure to Great Southern Bank/CUA by limiting reinvestment and diversifying into other similarly rated institutions

Liquidity Management

- Current cash levels are appropriate for short-term liquidity requirements
- Maintain short-term (< 1Yr) allocation which allows for flexibility amid potential rate cuts
- Consider increasing exposure to longer-dated (3 to 5-year) securities with attractive fixed rates or floating margins

Enhancing Returns

- Given potential for further rate cuts as well as economic and political uncertainty, reallocate maturing BBB rated investment into A rated issuers to improve credit quality and reduce risk
- Consider selectively extending duration slightly if attractive fixed-rate opportunities arise

Diversification

- Increase exposure to AA- rated issuers to reduce reliance on BBB rated issuers.
- Continue diversifying across mid-tier and regional banks, which offer competitive yields and remain within policy limits.

Portfolio Performance

- Monitor unrealised losses on longer dated FRNs but avoid reactive selling unless liquidity or return analysis justifies it.

ESG

- Explore ESG-aligned investments as the market evolves, ensuring they remain compliant with the Ministerial Investment Order.

Perpetual Advisory

Economic and Credit Commentary

Market Update

There was no change to the RBA cash rate target at the meeting held on the 1st of April and the rate remains at 4.10%. The post-meeting press conference was balanced with no indications of further guidance either way however it was mentioned that the Board needs to be confident that the recent easing in inflation continues to progress, so it returns to the midpoint of the target band.

Concerns around the global economic outlook were raised however the meeting occurred prior to the tariff announcements made by Donald Trump on April 2nd which increased the downside risks to global and Australian economic growth. The market reacted by expecting more rate cuts this year however the impact to inflation is still a concern. We see a 25bps cut in May taking the cash rate down to 3.85% however, if data stays firm, there may be only one more cut later this year.

The three-month Bank Bill Swap Rate (BBSW) closed at 3.8745% at the end of April, well down from 4.1254% at the end of the previous month and six-month BBSW also closed the month lower at 3.8876% from 4.2961% as at the end of March.

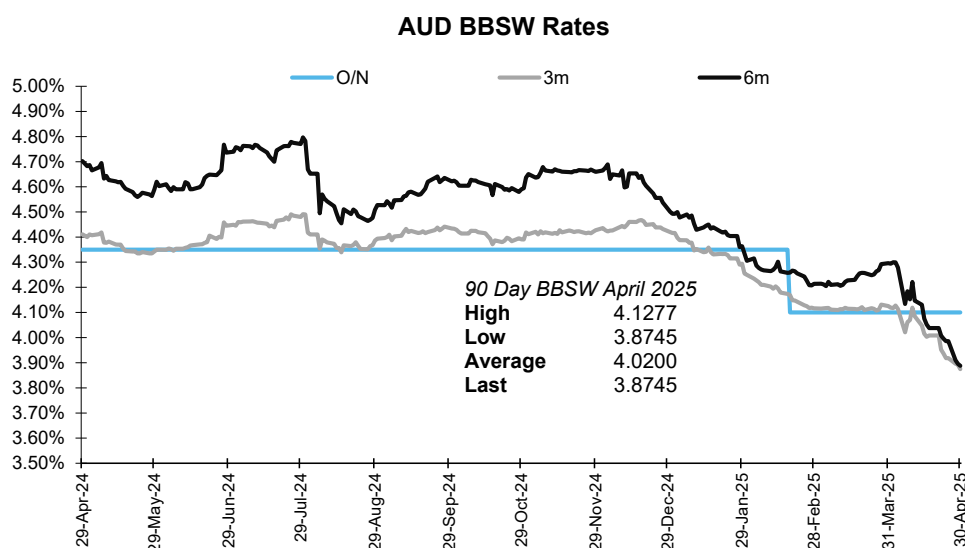


Figure 1 RBA Cash vs 3 Month vs 6 Month BBSW Source Bloomberg

Market Commentary

Trump's tariff war shocked markets but after a solid recovery the month ended with mixed results for equities, losses for credit and gains for government bonds. Equities rose in Australia (3.6%), Japan (1.2%) and emerging markets (1.0%) but fell in the US (-0.8%), Europe (-1.7%) and China (-3.0%). Credit spreads rose again across investment grade and high yield debt. Commodities were mostly hit hard with losses for US natural gas (-18.7%), US oil (-18.3%), copper (-8.1%) and iron ore (-2.6%) as gold (4.8%) bucked the trend.

Government bond yields fell in the US, Europe, Japan and Australia with growth forecasts lowered as the uncertainty of potential tariff outcomes sunk in. The imposition of high tariffs on Chinese goods entering the US has resulted in goods being stuck on ships pending a resolution and orders being cancelled or delayed. The tariffs have come at a critical time for the stuttering Chinese economy, adding to the real estate slump and clumsy central government interventions in the private sector.

Expectations for interest rate cuts in the short term have significantly increased. In the medium and long term, it is increasingly difficult to estimate GDP growth, inflation or interest rates with potential outcomes ranging from quick concessions to a second cold war. The Federal Reserve is expected to hold steady at its May 7th meeting but a cut of at least 0.25% by the RBA is expected on May 20th. Australian interest rate futures are pricing in a year end Cash Rate of 2.98%, which implies the RBA will cut more than 1.00% this year. The US ten-year yield fell from 4.21% to 4.16% during April while the Australian equivalent fell from 4.40% to 4.16%.

Index Performance as at 30 April 2025

Indices	1 Month	3 Month	6 Month	12 Month
Bloomberg AusBond Bank Bill Index	0.35%	1.05%	2.19%	4.46%
Bloomberg AusBond Composite Bond Index 0+ Years Index	1.70%	2.67%	4.53%	7.08%
Bloomberg AusBond Credit FRN 0+ Years Index	0.22%	1.04%	2.32%	5.20%

Figure 1 Source Bloomberg

Major Bank Curves

Senior financial spreads of major Australian banks were wider across the curve with levels ranging from 6bp to 10bps higher than as at the end of March. Sentiment across risk assets continues to deteriorate following 'Liberation Day' tariff announcements from the US however there has been some recovery from recent wides.

1-year spreads were 6bps higher over the month and closed at +45, 2-years were 7bps wider and closed at +62bps, 3-years closed 8 wider at +77bps. 4-year spreads closed 6bps wider at 86 and 5-year spreads closed 10bps wider at +95bps. A new 5-year major bank senior unsecured issue would likely come around the +100bps area (including new issue premium) if issued today.

Curve Majors	Change	Apr-25
1yr	6	45
2yr	7	62
3yr	8	77
4yr	6	86
5yr	10	95

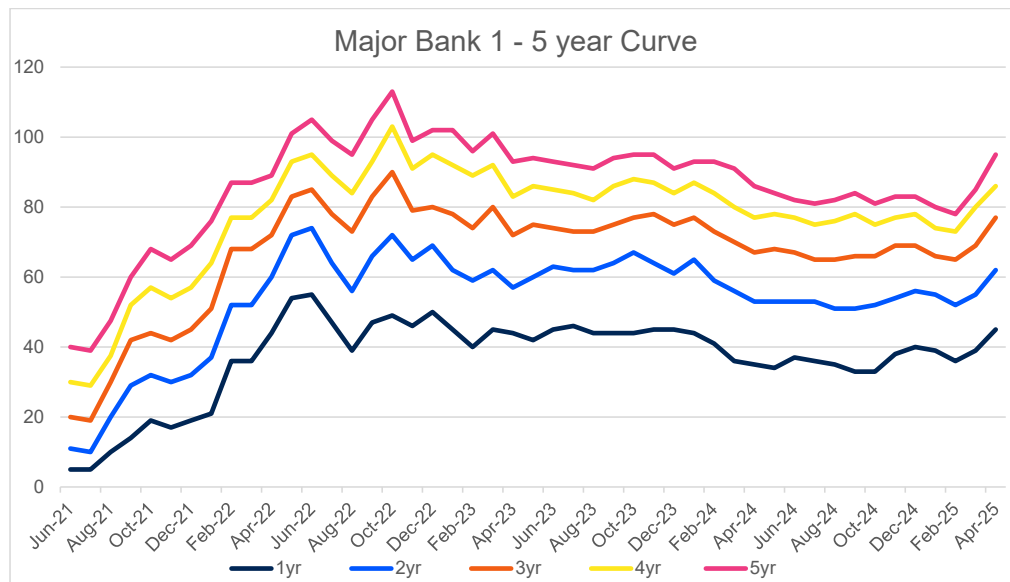


Figure 2 Source Perpetual Advisory

Australian Bank Credit Curves

Credit spreads have proved to be quite volatile since the 'Liberation Day' announcements on tariffs. With an initial spike beyond the 100 level, recent news has settled markets and Credit Default Swaps have begun to converge lower. Concerns around tariffs as well as political tensions still lingering will add to volatility, however, continued appetite for adding risk will keep spreads within recent trading ranges.

AUD Corporate Credit Spreads
5-year CDS



Figure 4 Source Bloomberg

AUD Credit Spreads

The chart below shows the current credit curves for ADIs rated BBB, A and AA respectively. These curves represent the margin over bank bill achievable from 30 days out to 5 years. As per the above chart, bank funding would now be more expensive than previous quarters given the recent increase in tariffs imposed by the US Government. Lower rated institutions have seen the biggest moves wider, particularly in longer tenors.

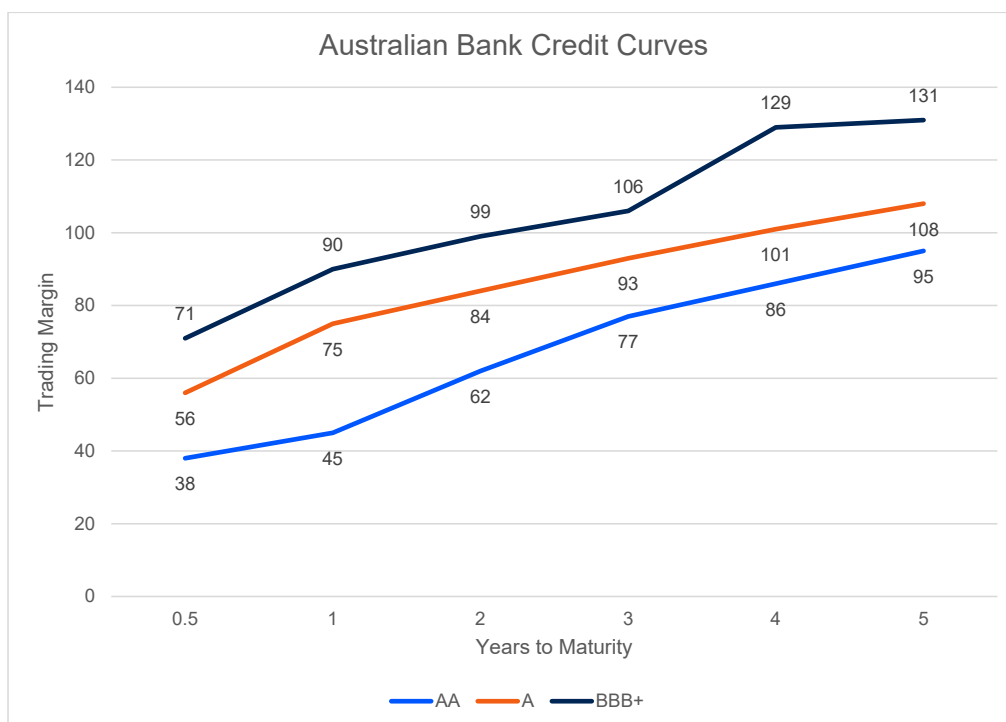


Figure 5 Source Perpetual Advisory

Perpetual Advisory

Economic Update

Economic Roundup

Market volatility was pronounced in April, due largely to the Trump Administration's imposition, escalation and subsequent revision of new trade tariffs. The acceleration of the US-China trade war, alongside President Trump's continued protectionist policies, has created uncertainty in global markets, contributing to increased volatility in both equities and bond markets. The trade war led to a surge in risk-off sentiment and subsequent recovery, as investors sought safer assets amid concerns over prolonged global economic slowdown and the inflationary impact of tariffs.

Economic data released in April suggests that the global economy remains in a delicate balancing act. While the US is experiencing signs of slowing economic growth, stronger indicators have been seen in China, Europe, and Australia. Despite persistent inflationary pressures, major central banks appear increasingly cautious, as they navigate the challenge of supporting growth without exacerbating inflation. Both the US Federal Reserve and the Bank of England chose to pause rate cuts at their March meetings, maintaining their respective policy rates at 4.5%. With inflation proving to be more persistent than expected, global growth prospects remain uncertain, and there is growing concern about the potential for further rate hikes, particularly in the US.

In the US, economic growth slowed in Q1 2025, with the advanced GDP reading coming in at -0.3% annualized, down from 2.4% in Q4 2024. Consumer spending, which had been a major driver of US economic strength in 2024, still showed signs of life with retail sales advancing 1.4% m-o-m in March from up only 0.2% m-o-m in February and personal spending increasing 0.7% from 0.4% m-o-m in February. Personal income softened to +0.5% m-o-m from +0.8% m-o-m in February, but Conference Board consumer confidence plunged to the equal covid period low of 86 from 93.9 prior largely due to tariff related concerns with households remaining wary of inflationary pressures. The US labour market continues to be tight, with nonfarm payrolls increasing by 228,000 from 151,000 in February, and the unemployment rate steady at 4.2% from 4.1% prior on increased participation. US CPI inflation dropped to 2.4% y-o-y in March from 2.8% y-o-y in February, but inflation remains above the Federal Reserve's 2% target. The Federal Reserve left the funds rate unchanged at 4.50% in March, acknowledging the possibility of further rate cuts in 2025, though their actual ability to cut rates will depend on the inflationary impact of tariffs if they remain in force.

In China, data in April revealed a slight improvement in domestic economic activity, with fixed asset investment rising by 4.2% y-o-y in March and retail sales increasing by 5.9% y-o-y from 4.0% y-o-y in February. Exports spiked +12.4% y-o-y in March as exporters tried to front run expected US tariffs and are expected to weaken sharply from here. Inflationary pressures remain subdued, with the March CPI falling 0.1% y-o-y and producer prices down 2.5% y-o-y. China's economic growth continues to be challenged by the US trade tariffs, as well as persistently falling residential property prices and high unemployment. These factors suggest that more robust policy support is needed to stimulate household consumption and revive economic activity.

Europe's economic outlook remains mixed. Early April signals confirm that the euro area continues to grow at a near-stagnant pace—Q1 GDP is expected to be around 0.1% quarter on quarter and 0.8% year on year. Although headline CPI inflation has been steady at about 2.4% y-o-y and 0.6% m-o-m in March these figures still exceed the ECB's target. With rising unemployment figures hinting at a slowly softening labour market, European policymakers may eventually have room to ease, but caution dominates for now amid escalating trade tensions and fiscal headwinds.

In Australia, economic reports for April show that while domestic growth has remained resilient supported by retail sales which grew by 0.2% m-o-m in February from 0.3% in January. Q1 CPI came in at 0.9% q-o-q from +0.2% prior pointing to underlying price pressures persisting even while headline annual CPI printed at 2.4%. Non tradable prices and services continue to rise (roughly 5.0% and 4.3% respectively), and the labour market remains tight with unemployment hovering at 4.1%. In addition, with the pre-election Budget's expansive fiscal measures and upcoming income tax cuts set for July, demand-side pressures may even push inflation higher into 2026. However, the government's budgetary measures, including ongoing subsidies and tax cuts, may be expected to contain inflation in the near term.

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Interest Rate Outlook

Rate and Yield Curve Commentary

The Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA) is anticipated to implement a 0.25% rate cut at its May 2025 meeting, aligning with market expectations reflected in the latest cash futures pricing. This decision is primarily driven by recent inflation data, which indicates a moderation in price pressures. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) showed a decline to 2.4% year-on-year, providing the RBA with some flexibility to ease monetary policy to support the economy ahead of current and expected volatility.

Despite this, underlying inflation remains a concern, with core measures such as the trimmed mean (2.9%) and weighted median inflation (3.0%) barely inside the RBA's 2-3% target range.

The Australian bond market has experienced increased volatility in April, influenced by global factors, including the escalation of the US-China trade tensions. The 2-year government bond yield closed at 3.27% on April 30, reflecting market expectations of a rate cut. The 10-year yield was at 4.19% on the same day with both bonds seeing a broad trading range during the month.

In response to these dynamics, the RBA is expected to adopt a cautious approach, implementing a modest rate 0.25% cut in May despite markets toying with a larger 0.50% cut and will be closely monitoring inflation trends and economic conditions. The cash rate is likely to remain at 3.85% for the remainder of 2025, with further cuts contingent upon sustained moderation in inflation and signs of economic slowdown although this is highly dependent of global market factors.

In terms of the yield curve, sticky and high underlying inflation close to 3% y-o-y (it was still 2.7% y-o-y in February 2025) means that the Australian cash rate is unlikely to be cut more than another 50bps in 2025. Short and long-term bond yields should drift close to their current levels through much of the year. Our longer-term view continues to be that with firmer-than-expected domestic demand will add to the risk of rekindling inflation from early 2026, and bond market expectations will change from expecting a lower cash rate through much of this year towards expecting a higher cash rate in 2026, pushing up shorter-term bond yields more than longer-term bond yields later in 2025 and in 2026.

Perpetual Advisory Investment Strategy

We see longer dated fixed rates steady to higher with short to mid-tenor fixed rates likely to fall a little further in the near term but vulnerable to sharp pullbacks if the RBA plays down rate cut expectations or global political tensions de-escalate. We see highly rated bank credit spreads to contract in the near term with highly rated structured credit continuing to outperform. We continue to maintain a positive view on adding additional long dated floating rate investments to portfolios with tactical interest in medium term fixed rate investments.

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Yield Curves

Forward Yield Curves

The below chart shows the implied yields that are currently priced into the futures market and shows market predicted interest rate curves for 3, 6, and 9 months forward. The white curve is the current yield curve (as at 30 April 2025), the forecast curves are 3 months (blue), 6 months (brown) and 9 months (purple). The forward curves indicate that short term interest rates between 1 to 3 months are expected to remain flat to slightly higher over the next 3 months and then begin to move lower until early 2027. The chart is showing they are then predicted to rise again when the curve turns positive. Markets are pricing in one or perhaps two further cuts to the cash rate this year however this is data dependant and is not a foregone conclusion given risk to inflation on the upside. Our view is that there may be one or two more cuts this year taking the cash rate down to 3.60% by the end of 2025, but 2026 could be a year when the cash rate starts to rise again.

Whilst the moves in the curves below seem quite exaggerated, the Y axis shows the scale of the yields vary between 3.00% and 4.05% which is just over one percent from highest to lowest point, so it is worth keeping this in mind when looking at this chart. This chart has changed recently with 'Liberation Day' Tariffs proclaimed by the US Government. Whilst there has been a pause to the implementation of these tariffs, the fallout has adjusted the yield curves lower and heightened the chance of recession as well as higher inflation in the US.

Whilst some commentators are calling for more aggressive rate cuts from the RBA, we believe that they will cut the rate by 25bps in May, but the inflation outlook may stay quite sticky. Given the above, we think rates will remain steady for the short-term with potential for them to finish the year around 3.60%.

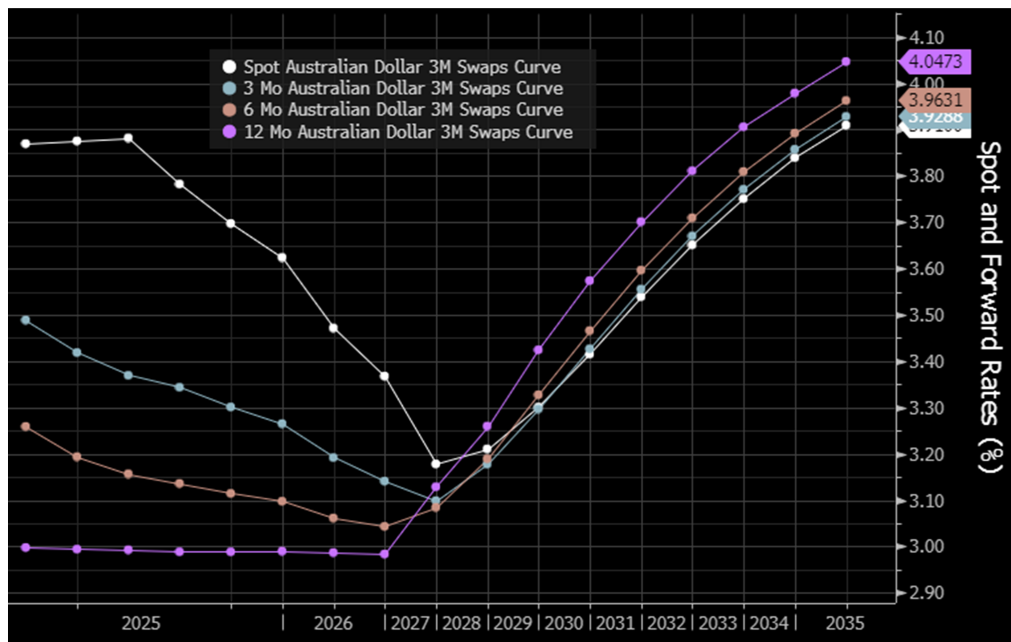


Figure 6 Source Perpetual Advisory

Perpetual Advisory

Strategic Implications

Market Drivers

Despite the changes announced last week to President Trump's tariff program, delaying for three months the bigger tariff hikes for some and a reprieve for US IT companies from the super-sized retaliatory tariffs imposed on China, the US Administration remains wedded to reversing decades of change mostly in favour of freer international trade that saw effective tariff trade protection down below 3% at one point and at around 5% at the end of the Biden Administration. Even with the changes announced last week, trade protection has more than tripled and when the higher tariffs come back into play in July that could lift to 30%.

The last time US tariff protection was so high was back in the 1930s and President Trump has recently praised the 1930 Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act that raised US Tariffs around 20 percentage points as a move towards combatting the Great Depression against almost universal economic opinion that it made it worse.

Even with the latest tariff modifications the US will suffer from weaker GDP growth together with higher inflation. Quantifying the extent of the damage is challenging partly because of the usual difficulties in making economic forecasts as well as in the current circumstances the erratic qualities of President Trump who changes policies abruptly and unpredictably. Our rough calculation is that annual US GDP growth will be around one percentage point lower than would otherwise have been the case while US inflation will be about 1.2 percentage points higher.

The forecasting problems are greater when assessing the impact of US tariff policy changes on countries outside the US. Those countries facing higher tariff imposts and with substantial trade links to the US will suffer most. China, for example, subject to the biggest US tariff imposts will suffer as much as three percentage points of lost annual GDP growth on our estimate unless it is quick to take policy initiatives to boost substantially domestic spending. China can also try to boost international trade with trading partners other than the US but that would at best be a partial and slow response to loss of trade with the US.

In contrast, the direct impact of recent US tariff announcements on Australia is comparatively small. It runs to about a 0.1 percentage point deduction to annual GDP growth and a 0.2 percentage point addition to inflation. Additional spending initiatives announced by the Government and Opposition in the Federal Election campaign over the past week would offset the damage to growth from the American tariffs while by boosting demand will add a little more to inflation.

Apart from the direct impact Australia will also be affected by damage to the economic prospects of our major trading partners, especially our biggest trading partner, China. Commodity export volumes and prices are likely to be lower. All told, Australia is likely to suffer some reduction in growth prospects, probably quite small together with addition to inflation.

Some see the damage to Australian economic prospects creating a need for the RBA to cut interest rates more aggressively and quickly than considered likely previously. One or two more 25bps rate cuts thought likely previously changed to expectations of four or five rate cuts perhaps starting with a super-sized 50bps rate cut at the mid-May meeting.

The need for emergency rate cuts was doubtful in our view even before the announcement of pauses on some US tariff hikes over the past week. There appeared to be little risk of substantial reduction in Australia's growth prospects that would warrant emergency rate cuts. Australia's growth rate has been picking up pace since mid-2024 and with growing government spending promising to be turbo charged in the election campaign. Financial market turbulence cut into household wealth and that conceivably might dent consumer spending, but the sharp fall in the share market has turned to partial recovery over the past week.

When the RBA meets in mid-May it will probably have evidence that inflation tracked in line with its latest forecasts in Q1 2025 allowing some room to cut the cash rate 25bps to 3.85%. But the inflation outlook looks set to stay quite sticky in the wake of US tariff announcements as well as the Australian Federal Election which whoever wins will come with a legacy of even more government spending.

By mid-May with diminished threat of a local recession and with inflation likely to push back up to 3% and more in the first half of next year, the RBA can make monetary policy a little less restrictive, but that provides scope for one or two more 25bps cash rate cuts taking the cash rate down to 3.60% by the end of 2025.

President Trump's push to take the US and the world back to 1930's international trading conditions is being watered down. Expectations about what central banks will do in response need to be watered down too. For Australia, less severely impacted by President Trump's initial tariff proposals than most, the changes over the past week mean that the RBA returns to its previous rate setting trajectory – watch the data and cut modestly when warranted by the data.

NCD and Term deposit commentary

Over the month of April, we saw high levels of volatility driven by the trade war uncertainty. This caused the market to price in a potential chance of a 50bps rate cut at the RBA meeting in May (albeit this has eased back now due to the Trump 90 day pause), which drove short end rates significantly lower. The Major banks continued to follow the swap rates lower and remained tight on margins, whilst the BBB bank TD margins widened by around 30bps over the month. The A2 NCD market remained active and functioning with margins steady on average at +40 to +45.

Term deposit rates issued by rated ADIs on average ranged from 4.50% to 4.60% for 90 days and 4.50% to 4.65% for 180 days.

Issuer	S&P Rating	NCD margin to 90-day BBSW	Term Deposit margin to 90-day BBSW
Major Bank	AA- / A1+	Flat	+55
Regional Bank	A- / A2	+30	+65
Foreign Bank	A / A1	+40	+65
Mutual Bank / Credit Union	BBB / A2	+45	+70

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Central Coast Council

Investment Management Strategy August 2025

Matthew Findlay - Head of DCM & Advisory

Angela Modica – Senior Adviser

Trust is earned.

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Strategy Overview

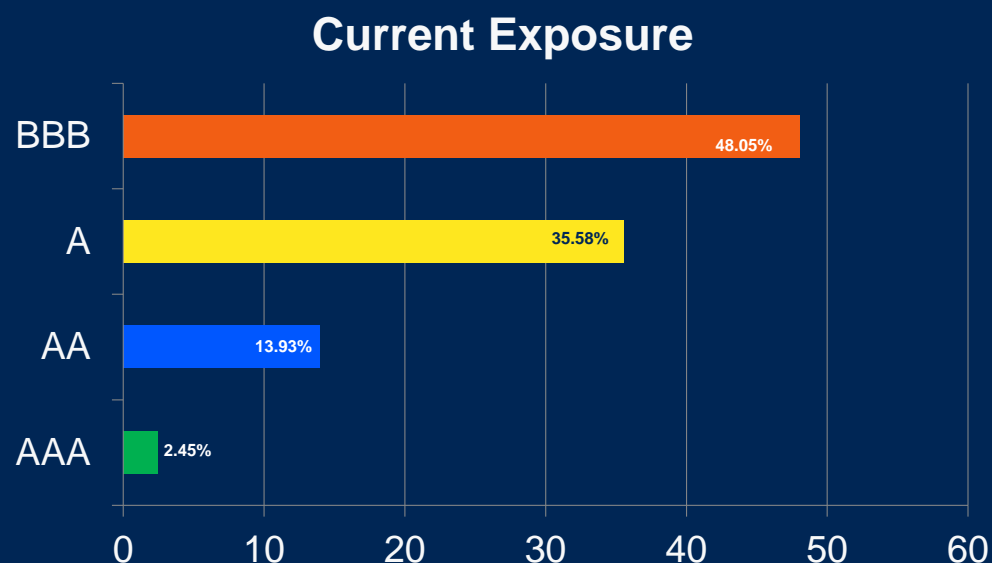
Strategic Review – Key Elements

- Developed through a comprehensive analysis of current portfolio holdings
- Integrated with Investment Policy Guidelines to ensure alignment with objectives
- Informed by prevailing economic conditions and interest rate forecasts

Portfolio Overview

- Total Holdings: \$817.7m **(as at 30 April 2025)**
- Overall Portfolio Credit Rating of S&P Long-Term 'A-'
- Balanced maturity profile (50% short-term, 50% long-term).
 - Weighted Average Term to Maturity is 1.4 years
- Exposure skewed to lower rated entities.
 - Largest exposure: Rabobank (\$101.9M)
- Fully compliant and diversified

Credit Rating Exposure

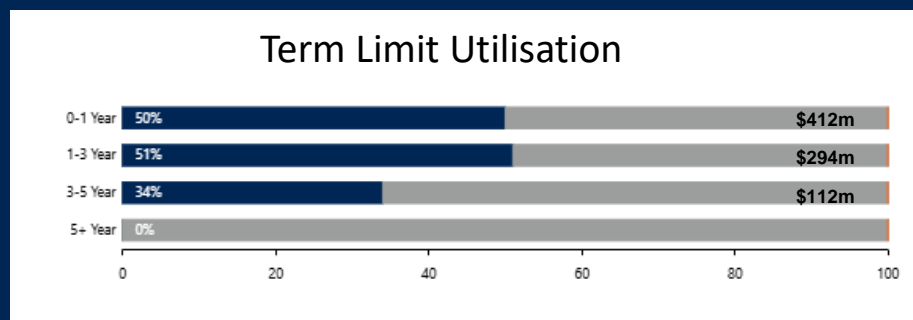


Target Exposure

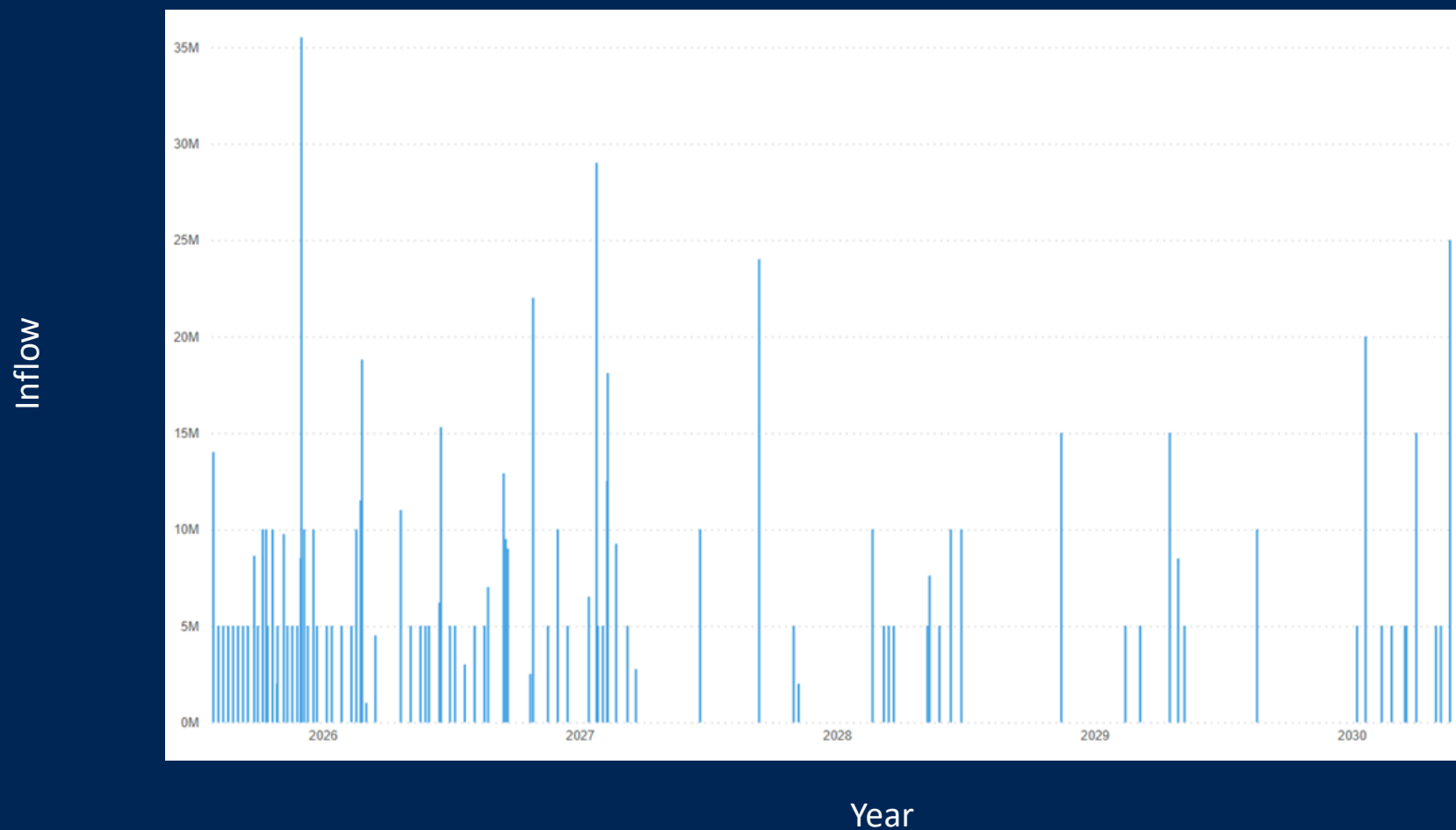
- AAA (Target: 3%): Increase allocation slightly to enhance portfolio safety, acknowledging lower yields due to minimal risk.
- AA+ to AA- (Target: 20%): Expand exposure to major banks through term deposits and new FRN or bond issuances to improve credit quality.
- A+ to A- (Target: 45%): Maintain current allocation to support yield while gradually shifting toward higher-rated issuers.
- BBB+ to BBB- (Target: 45%): Moderate allocation short-term over time in line with Council's preference towards higher quality credits.

Term to Maturity Strategy

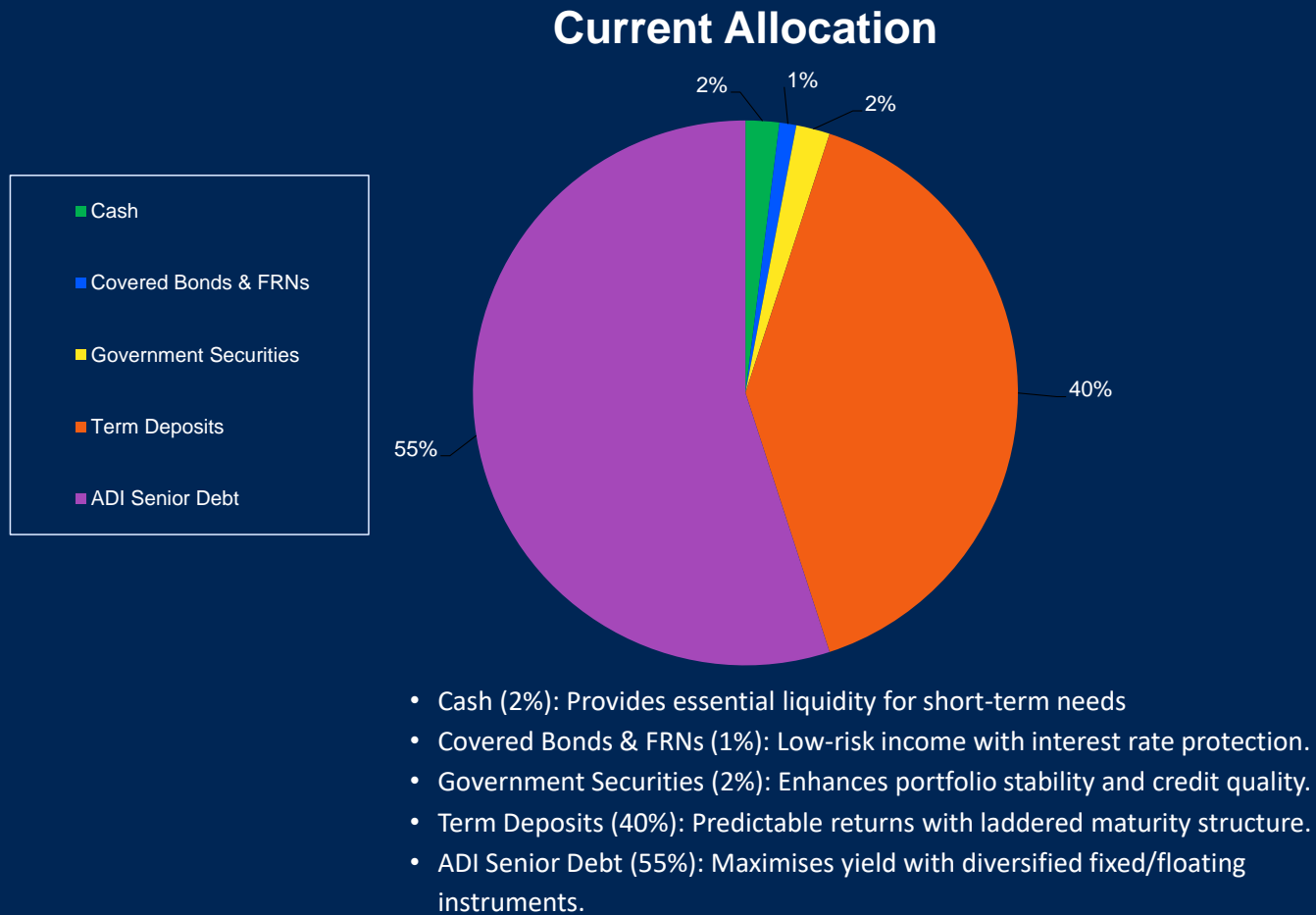
- Balanced approach with 50% short-term (<1 year), 50% long-term (>1 year)
- Laddered structure ensures liquidity and reinvestment opportunities
- Up to 40% in 1–3 year maturities for yield optimisation
- Up to 20% in 3–5 year maturities to capture longer-tenor specials



Forecast Maturity Table



Current Asset Allocation



Counterparty Exposure Limits

- BBB+ to BBB–: Max 5% per issuer to balance yield and risk
- A-rated: Max 10% per issuer to optimise returns while managing exposure
- AAA and AA-rated: No specific cap, but maintain prudent diversification

Strategic Approach

- Increase AAA and AA exposure
- Gradually reduce BBB exposure
- Set prudent counterparty limits
- Maintain liquidity with Short Term Investments
- Laddered maturity structure
- Reallocate maturing investments to higher-rated issuers
- Monitor unrealised losses on longer-dated FRNs
- Explore ESG- aligned investments
- Stay responsive to market and rate changes

Item No: 1.6
Title: Agency Information Guide - For Adoption
Department: Corporate Services



12 August 2025 Governance and Finance Committee

Reference: F2022/02582 - D16823211
Author: Warwick Lawrence, Governance Consultant
Manager: Edward Hock, Unit Manager Governance Risk and Legal
Executive: Darrylen Law, Director Corporate Services

Recommendation

That the Committee recommends to Council that the Agency Information Guide (AIG) at Attachment 1 be adopted.

Report purpose

To present to the Governance and Finance Committee an amended Agency Information Guide for recommendation for adoption by Council following the Information and Privacy Commissioner's (IPC) review and positive feedback.

Executive Summary

In accordance with the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* (GIPA Act) Council is required to have an Agency Information Guide (AIG) and review its guide every 12 months.

The AIG provides a valuable mechanism to ensure the community has knowledge of, and access to, government information that is both current and significant in relation to the formulation of policy and service delivery. It provides clear and accessible guidelines on accessing government information and encourages public participation in Council's decision-making and functions.

Background

In accordance with section 20(1) of the GIPA Act, Council is required to have an AIG.

The AIG must:

- Describe the structure and functions of Council,
- Describe the ways in which the functions (in particular, the decision-making functions) of Council affect members of the public,
- Specify any arrangements that exist to enable members of the public to participate in the formulation of Council's policy and the exercise of Council's functions,
- Identify the various kinds of government information held by Council and what information will be made publicly available, and
- Specify the way Council will make the information publicly available (whether free of charge or whether a charge is or will be imposed).

Council's AIG was last updated in February 2024.

Report

A review of the 2024 AIG has been completed, and the following amendments have been made:

- Updated cover page and photo.
- A statement to recognise the traditional custodians of the local government area.
- Updated organisation chart.
- Reference to the former Administrator have been amended to reflect the end of his appointment following the 2024 local government elections.
- Inclusion of the Councillors, including photographs and their contact details.
- Additional information included in relation to the referendum held in September 2024 to reduce the number of councillors from 15 to 9 which will take effect from September 2028.
- Inclusion of information related to the composition of Council's decision to form and appoint standing committees.
- Inclusion of information concerning Council's decision to hold at least three (3) Council meetings at the Gosford Regional Library in the latter half of 2025.

Other minor administrative amendments that do not affect the intent of the AIG.

All other mandatory information as required has been included in the AIG in accordance with the best practice guide set by the AIG and other legislative requirements.

The revised AIG was provided to the Information and Privacy Commission (IPC) for their review and feedback in March 2025, in accordance with the requirements of section 22 of the GIPA Act.

The IPC responded positively to Council's referral (by letter dated 2 May 2025) and as such, the amended AIG is now presented to Council for adoption.

Stakeholder Engagement

Internal consultation was carried out amongst the Governance, Risk and Legal Unit, including the Governance and the Councillor and Democratic Services Sections.

External consultation was done with the Information and Privacy Commission as outlined above.

Financial Considerations

Financial Year (FY) Implications.

The proposal does not have financial implications for the current year or outer years in the LTFP.

Budget and Long-Term Financial Plan (LTFP) Impact.

The FY adopted budget includes funding for this proposal.

Link to Community Strategic Plan

Following the adoption of the Community Strategic Plan (CSP) and framework in June 2025, Council report templates are being updated with new CSP themes and goals. Contents in this report are aligned with the adopted CSP.

Risk Management

There are both regulatory and reputational risks to Council should it not comply with its statutory obligation in reviewing and adopting an AIG each year.

Critical Dates or Timeframes

Council is required to review and adopt a new AIG at intervals of no more than 12 months.

Attachments

1   Agency Information Guide 2024-2025 D16839511

Agency Information Guide 2024-2025

Central
Coast
Council

Central Coast Council

Agency Information Guide

2024-2025

Summary of Review/Amendments

Date	Summary of Amendments
May 2019	New Agency Information Guide created
February 2023	Revisions made to the Guide including updating the organisational chart, details of executive group and Councillors, references to information on Council website and relevant Acts.
February 2024	Periodic review of Guide
February 2025	Periodic review of Guide



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Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians
of the land on which we live, work and play.

We pay our respects to Darkinjung country,
and Elders past and present.

We recognise the continued connection to
these lands and waterways and extend this
acknowledgement to the homelands and
stories of those who also call this place home.

We recognise our future leaders and the
shared responsibility to care for and protect
our place and people.



What is the Agency Information Guide?

This Agency Information Guide has been produced in accordance with section 20 of the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* (GIPA Act). The Guide exists to provide members of the public with a comprehensive overview of:

- The structure and functions of Central Coast Council
- How those functions affect the community
- The ways we engage with the community
- The type of information we hold and
- How we make information publicly available.

This Agency Information Guide is available on Council's website and is reviewed annually in accordance with the Act.

David Farmer
Chief Executive Officer



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1. Structure and Functions of Council

1.1. About Central Coast Council

Central Coast Council was established on 12 May 2016 following the amalgamation of Gosford City Council and Wyong Shire Council.

The Central Coast is situated along the coastline of New South Wales, 90 kilometres north of Sydney and 80 kilometres south of Newcastle. Council's local government area (LGA) encompasses 1681 square kilometres and is home to approximately 350,000 residents, making it one of the largest local government areas in New South Wales and the sixth largest in Australia by population.

1.2. Basis of Constitution

Central Coast Council is constituted as a body politic of the State of New South Wales under section 220 of the *Local Government Act 1993* (NSW) (**the LG Act**).

1.3. Organisational Structure and Resources

Central Coast Council was placed in administration in November 2020 following the suspension of the elected Councillors on 30 October 2020. A Public Inquiry was undertaken by the Office of Local Government and an Administrator was appointed to address the findings.

At the September 2024 Local Government elections 15 Councillors were elected to Council for a 4 year term, effectively ending the term of the Government appointed Administrator.

The Central Coast LGA consists of five electoral areas, known as Wards:

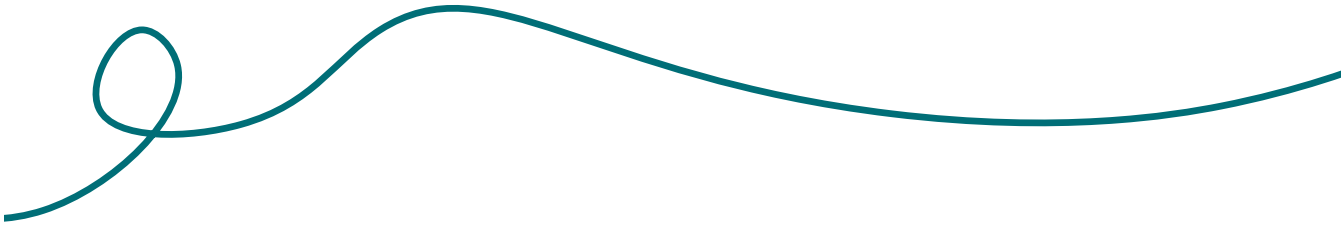
- Budgewoi
- Gosford East
- Gosford West
- The Entrance
- Wyong

Three Councillors are elected to each Ward, with a total of 15 elected Councillors representing the Central Coast community for a four-year term.

Councillors must elect a Mayor from their number who serves a 2 year term. A Deputy Mayor is also elected from the Councillors and may serve for the entire mayoral term or for a shorter term. At the Extraordinary Council meeting held on 8 October 2024, Councillor Lawrie McKinna was elected as Mayor for a 2- year term, and Councillor Doug Eaton OAM was elected for a 1- year term as Deputy Mayor.

Central Coast Council's Constitutional Referendum, held at the same time as the Local Government Election on 14 September 2024, provided voters with the opportunity to respond 'yes' or 'no' to the question: 'Do you favour a reduction in the number of Central Coast Councillors from 15 to nine?'. The referendum was passed, with the 'yes' vote. This will result in three Wards with each Ward electing three Councillors. The community's decision on the referendum will come into effect from the 2028 Council term.





Central Coast Council's organisational structure is led by the Chief Executive Officer (**CEO**) and made up of five directorates:

- Community and Recreation Services
- Corporate Services
- Environment and Planning
- Infrastructure Services
- Water and Sewer

Council's Executive Leadership Team makes day-to-day decisions on operational matters that comply with Council's policies and procedures and its legislative responsibilities.

1.4. Role of Governing Body

The role of the governing body is as follows:

- a. to direct and control the affairs of Council in accordance with the LG Act;
- b. to provide effective civic leadership to the local community;
- c. to ensure as far as possible the financial sustainability of Council;
- d. to ensure as far as possible that Council acts in accordance with the principles set out in Chapter 3 and the plans, programs, strategies and policies of Council;
- e. to develop and endorse the community strategic plan, delivery program and other strategic plans, programs, strategies and policies of Council;
- f. to determine and adopt a rating and revenue policy and operational plans that support the optimal allocation of Council's resources to implement the strategic plans (including the community strategic plan) of Council and for the benefit of the local area;
- g. to keep under review the performance of Council, including service delivery;
- h. to make decisions necessary for the proper exercise of Council's regulatory functions;
- i. to determine the process for appointment of the CEO by the elected Council and to monitor the CEO's performance;
- j. to determine the senior staff positions within the organisation structure of Council;

- k. to consult regularly with community organisations and other key stakeholders and keep them informed of Council's decisions and activities; and
- l. to be responsible for ensuring that Council acts honestly, efficiently and appropriately.

As members of the governing body, and in the interests of ensuring the organisation operates effectively to achieve the best outcomes for the community, Councillors should endeavour to work constructively with Council staff who are responsible for implementing Council decisions.

1.5. Role of a Councillor

The role of a Councillor is, as an elected official:

- a. to be an active and contributing member of the governing body;
- b. to make considered and well-informed decisions as a member of the governing body;
- c. to participate in the development of the integrated planning and reporting framework;
- d. to represent the collective interests of residents, ratepayers and the local community;
- e. to facilitate communication between the local community and the governing body;
- f. to uphold and represent accurately the policies and decisions of the governing body; and
- g. to make all reasonable efforts to acquire and maintain the skills necessary to perform the role of a Councillor.

Budgewoi Ward



Councillor Helen Crowley
Helen.Crowley@centralcoast.nsw.gov.au
0457 406 024



Deputy Mayor Doug Eaton OAM
Doug.Eaton@centralcoast.nsw.gov.au
0475 636 074



Councillor John Moulard
John.Moulard@centralcoast.nsw.gov.au
0487 648 028

Gosford East Ward



Mayor Lawrie McKinna
themayor@centralcoast.nsw.gov.au
0484 034 862



Councillor Sharon Walsh
Sharon.Walsh@centralcoast.nsw.gov.au
0474 168 339



Councillor Jared Wright
Jared.Wright@centralcoast.nsw.gov.au
0477 990 360

Gosford West Ward



Councillor Trent McWaide
Trent.McWaide@centralcoast.nsw.gov.au
0483 187 147



Councillor Belinda Neal
Belinda.Neal@centralcoast.nsw.gov.au
0474 244 106



Councillor Jane Smith
Jane.Smith@centralcoast.nsw.gov.au
0488 152 296

The Entrance Ward



Councillor Margot Castles
Margot.Castles@centralcoast.nsw.gov.au
0458 199 523



Councillor Rachel Stanton
Rachel.Stanton@centralcoast.nsw.gov.au
0457 730 194



Councillor Corinne Lamont
Corinne.Lamont@centralcoast.nsw.gov.au
0488 293 019

Wyong Ward



Councillor Kyla Daniels
Kyla.Daniels@centralcoast.nsw.gov.au
0484 059 909



Councillor Kyle MacGregor
Kyle.MacGregor@centralcoast.nsw.gov.au
0457 366 308



Councillor John McNamara
John.McNamara@centralcoast.nsw.gov.au
0474 570 896

1.6. Role of the Mayor

The role of the Mayor is as follows:

- a. to be the leader of Council and a leader in the community;
- b. to advance community cohesion and promote civic awareness;
- c. to be the principal member and spokesperson of the governing body, including representing the views of Council as to its priorities;
- d. to exercise, in cases of necessity, the policy-making functions of the governing body of Council between meetings of Council;
- e. to preside at meetings of Council;
- f. to ensure that meetings of Council are conducted efficiently and in accordance with the Local Government Act 1993;
- g. to ensure the timely development and adoption of the strategic plans, programs and policies of Council;
- h. to promote the effective and consistent implementation of the strategic plans, programs and policies of Council;
- i. to promote partnerships between Council and key stakeholders;
- j. to advise, consult with, and provide strategic direction to the CEO in relation to the implementation of the strategic plans and policies of Council;
- k. in conjunction with the CEO, to ensure adequate opportunities and mechanisms for engagement between Council and the local community;
- l. to carry out the civic and ceremonial functions of the mayoral office;
- m. to represent Council on regional organisations and at inter-governmental forums at regional, State, and Commonwealth levels;
- n. in consultation with the Councillors, to lead performance appraisals of the CEO; and,
- o. to exercise any other functions of Council that Council determines.

1.7. Role of the Chief Executive Officer

The role of the CEO is as follows:

- a. to conduct the day-to-day management of Council in accordance with the strategic plans, programs, strategies, and policies of Council;
- b. to implement, without undue delay, lawful decisions of Council;
- c. to advise the Mayor and the governing body on the development and implementation of the strategic plans, programs, strategies, and policies of Council;
- d. to advise the Mayor and the governing body on the appropriate form of community consultation on the strategic plans, programs, strategies, and policies of Council and other matters related to Council;
- e. to prepare, in consultation with the Mayor and the governing body, Council's community strategic plan, community engagement strategy, resourcing strategy, delivery program, operational plan, and annual report;
- f. to ensure that the Mayor and other Councillors are given timely information and advice, and the administrative and professional support necessary to effectively discharge their functions;
- g. to exercise any of the functions of Council that are delegated by Council to the CEO;
- h. to appoint staff in accordance with the organisation structure and the resources approved by Council;
- i. to direct and dismiss staff;
- j. to implement Council's workforce management strategy;
- k. any other functions that are conferred or imposed on the CEO by, or under, the Local Government Act 1993 or any other Act.

1.8. Organisational Structure Chart



2. Impact of Council Functions on the Public

As a service organisation, the majority of the activities of Council have an impact on the public. The following is an outline of how the broad functions of Council affect the public.

Function	Description
Service	Service functions affect the public as Council provides services and facilities to the public. These include provision of human services such as childcare services and libraries, halls and community centres, recreation facilities, water and sewerage works and facilities, infrastructure and the removal of garbage.
Regulatory	Regulatory functions place restrictions on developments and buildings to ensure they meet certain requirements affecting the amenity of the community and not endanger the lives and safety of any person.
Ancillary	Ancillary functions affect only some members of the public. These functions include, for example, the resumption of land or the power for Council to enter on a person's land. In these circumstances, only the owner of the property would be affected.
Revenue	Revenue functions affect the public directly in that revenue from rates and other charges paid by the public are used to fund services and facilities provided to the community.
Administrative	Administrative functions have an indirect impact on the community from the efficiency and effectiveness of the services provided by Council.
Enforcement	Enforcement functions only affect those members of the public who are in breach of certain legislation. This includes matters such as the non-payment of rates and charges, unregistered dogs and parking offences.
Community Planning and Development	Community planning and development functions affect areas such as cultural development, social planning and community profile. This involves collaboration with government agencies, businesses and not-for-profit agencies and the community as well as the preparation and implementation of the Community Plan. In addition, Council assesses and processes a broad range of development applications and proposals.

3. Public Participation in Local Government

Council supports the principles of open government and encourages community involvement in policy development and general activities of Council.

Members of the community may participate in the policy development and, indeed, the general activities of the Council in two main ways: by making representations to Councillors and participation in Council engagement activities.

3.1. Representation

Local government in Australia is based on the principle of representative democracy. This means that the people elect representatives to their local Council to make decisions on their behalf. In New South Wales, local government elections are held every 4 years.

3.2. Community Participation

Council seeks to be accessible and accountable to the community by encouraging ratepayers, residents and businesses to actively participate in community engagement and other Council activities to better inform Council's decision-making process and achieve best outcomes.

Members of the community are able to access government information, voting in polls and referendums, make submissions to Council and attend public Council meetings.

Council's website centralcoast.nsw.gov.au is regularly updated to provide information about Council's activities, including meeting agendas, business papers, news items, information about upcoming community events and notices and exhibitions.

Members of the community can also visit yourvoiceourcoast.com.au to have their say on Council's decision-making process and provide feedback on projects and initiatives currently open for consultation.

Council also provides information and connects with the community on Council activities, decisions and programs on our social media platforms:

- Facebook
- Instagram
- LinkedIn
- Twitter
- YouTube

3.3. Community Meetings

Councillors make decisions on behalf of the Central Coast community at Council meetings.

A meeting agenda is made available prior to each meeting alongside a business paper which provides relevant detailed background information. Shortly after each meeting, the minutes and any other relevant documentation are published on the website.

Members of the public may attend Council meetings which are usually held at 6:30 PM on the fourth Tuesday of the month. Council may also convene an Extraordinary Meeting outside of these regular times. Public notification will be provided for any Extraordinary Meetings.

Meetings are run in accordance with Council's Code of Meeting Practice and Code of Conduct.

Council meetings are held in the Council Chambers at the Wyong Administration Building at 2 Hely Street, Wyong. Any changes to meeting locations are posted on the [Council Meetings](#) page on Council's website.

Attendance numbers at Council meetings are limited and pre-registration is recommended. Members of the community can register from 5:00pm Wednesday the week prior to the Council meeting. [Registration is done by following the links on Council's website.](#)

To support open, accessible and transparent government, Council meetings are livestreamed via [YouTube](#). Any part of the meeting that is held in a closed or confidential session will not be streamed.

3.4. Public Forums

Council may hold a Public Forum prior to each Ordinary, Extra-ordinary or standing committee meeting of Council to hear from members of the public on items to be considered at the proceeding meeting.

3.5. Council Committees

The Standing Committees are made up of Councillors, chaired by the Mayor or a Councillor, run in accordance with standard procedures and are accessible to the public. However, some committee meetings are confidential, such as those involving commercially sensitive issues.

The Standing Committees make recommendations on matters related to the responsibility of the committee. Minutes are submitted to Council for consideration as Standing Committee recommendations require a formal resolution by Council. Members of the public are also invited to attend as observers.

Council sub-committees allow the public to provide input on a range of issues relevant to the community.

A full list of these groups, including meeting agendas and minutes are available on Council's website.

Council may call for nominations via the website as vacancies become available.

3.6. Public Submissions

Council is committed to proactively engage with the community and key stakeholders on major issues and plans affecting the future of the region and activities that have significant impact on the community. Council staff conduct hundreds of engagement activities each year to better inform Council's decision-making process.

Council provides an online hub for community participation titled *Your Voice – Our Coast* yourvoiceourcoast.com where individuals can provide direct input and direction on various Council projects, policies, strategies, and initiatives. Members of the public usually have 28 days to view and make comments on items placed on public exhibition.

Development applications that are open for public comment are located separately on the [Development Applications](#) page on Council's website.

All other public submissions should be addressed to:

The Chief Executive Officer
PO BOX 20
WYONG NSW 2259
Phone: 02 4306 7900
Email: ask@centralcoast.nsw.gov.au
Internet: www.centralcoast.nsw.gov.au

4. Access to Government Information

Council is committed to the principle of open, accountable, and transparent government through the timely release of Council held information that is of interest to the community.

Under the [Government Information \(Public Access\) Act 2009 \(GIPA Act\)](#), members of the public have a right to access certain information held by Council except where there is an overriding public interest against disclosure.

Council holds information in a range of formats in respect of its functions and information which is pertinent to different issues relating to the Central Coast Council LGA. Council information is primarily created, stored, and accessed digitally with some older physical records from the previous Gosford City and Wyong Shire Councils held in secure off-site storage.

Public access to government information is overseen by the Information and Privacy Commission (IPC). The IPC's role includes promoting and protecting information access rights in NSW, including public awareness and understanding of the GIPA Act, dealing with complaints about government agencies and providing advice and assistance to agencies and the public. Further information is available on the [IPC's website](#).

The GIPA Act complements other legislation under which the public can access information held by government. It does not detract from any other rights of access that exist under other legislation or policies.

Council also complies with the [Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 \(NSW\)](#) and the [Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002 \(NSW\)](#) for the purpose of access, alteration, and disclosure of personal information. Council manages personal information in accordance with the GIPA Act and as outlined in Council's Privacy Management Plan Policy for dealing with private or personal information.

Councillor access to Council information is governed by Council's Councillor and Staff Interaction Policy that complements the Code of Conduct.

Under the GIPA Act, there are four ways in which Council may provide access to information:

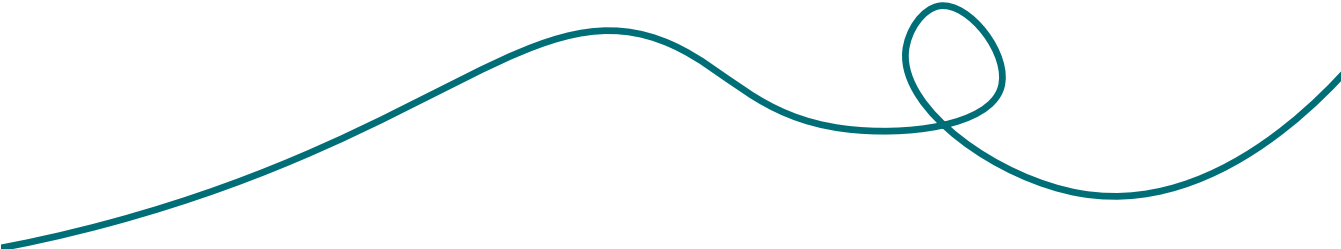
1. Mandatory Proactive Release
2. Authorised Proactive Release
3. Informal Release
4. Formal Access Applications

4.1 Mandatory Proactive Release – Open Access Information

The following documents are defined open access information under section 18 of the GIPA Act. Where possible, Council makes this information available on its website. If this is not possible, the information will be provided upon request as soon as practicable, free of charge:

Open Access Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Council's Agency Information Guide• Documents tabled in Parliament by or on behalf of Council, other than any document tabled by order of either House of Parliament• Council's policy documents• Council's Disclosure Log of Formal Access Applications• Council's Register of Government Contracts• Council's record of the open access information (if any) that it does not make publicly available on the basis of an overriding public interest against disclosure,• Such other government information as may be prescribed by the GIPA Regulations as open access information.
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Schedule 1 of the [Government Information \(Public Access\) Regulation 2018 \(NSW\) \(GIPA Regulation\)](#) also stipulates that the following additional documents are to be provided as open access information by Council.



	Section	Description
Open Access Information – Schedule 1 GIPA Regulations	Information about Council	<p>Codes and policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Model Code of Conduct prescribed under section 440(1) of the LG Act • The Code of Conduct adopted under section 440(3) of the LG Act • Procedures for the Administration of the Code of Conduct • Code of Meeting Practice • Policy concerning the payment of expenses and provision of facilities to Councillors • Local policies adopted by Council concerning approvals and orders <p>Reports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Report • Annual Financial Report • Auditor's Report • Annual reports of bodies exercising functions delegated by Council • Departmental representative reports presented at Council meetings in accordance with section 433 of the LG Act <p>Plans</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management Plan • Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan • Plans of management for community land • Environment planning instruments, development control plans and contributions plans made under the <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979</i> applying to land within Council's LGA • Community Strategic Plan • Delivery/Operational Plan • Any codes referred to in the <i>Local Government Act 1993</i> <p>Meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agendas and business papers for any meeting of Council or a Council committee (but not including business papers for matters considered when part of a meeting is closed to the public), • Minutes of Council or Council committee meetings (but not including business papers for matters considered when part of a meeting is closed to the public) <p>Registers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land register • Register of investments • Register of delegations • Register of graffiti removal work kept in accordance with section 13 of the <i>Graffiti Control Act 2008</i> • Register of current declarations of disclosures of political donations kept in accordance with section 328 of the LG Act • Register of voting on planning matters kept in accordance with section 375A of the LG Act • Returns of the interests of councillors, designated persons and delegates.

	Section	Description
Open Access Information – Schedule 1 GIPA Regulations	Information about Development Applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development applications and any associated documents received in relation to a proposed development including the following*: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Home warranty insurance documents - Construction certificates - Occupation certificates - Structural certification documents - Town planner reports - Submissions received on development applications - Heritage consultant reports - Tree inspection consultant reports - Acoustics consultant reports - Land contamination consultant reports Records of decisions made on development applications including decisions on appeals Records describing the general nature of documents that Council decides to exclude from public view, including internal specification and configurations, and commercially sensitive information. <p>*NOTE: Access to development applications lodged prior to 1 July 2010 will require a Formal Access Application in accordance with Schedule 1, Clause 3(2)(c) of the GIPA Regulation.</p>
	This clause does not apply to so much of the information referred to above as consists of:	
Open Access Information – Schedule 1 GIPA Regulations		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The plans and specifications for any residential parts of a proposed building, other than plans that merely show its height and its external configuration in relation to the site on which it is proposed to be erected, or Commercial information, if the information would be likely to prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it or to reveal a trade secret.
	Approvals, orders and other documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applications for approvals under Part 1 of Chapter 7 of the <i>Local Government Act 1993</i> Applications for approvals under any other Act and any associated received in relation to such an application Records of approvals granted or refused, any variation from Council policies with reasons for the variation and decisions made on appeals concerning approvals Orders given under Part 2 of Chapter 7 of the <i>Local Government Act 1993</i> and any reasons given under section 136 of the <i>Local Government Act 1993</i> Orders given under the authority of any other Act Records of building certificates under the <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment 1979</i> Plans of land proposed to be compulsory acquired by Council Compulsory acquisition notices Leases and licences for use of public land classified as community land Performance improvement orders issued to Council under Part 6 of Chapter 13 of the <i>Local Government Act 1993</i>

4.2. Proactive Release

In addition to open access information, Council proactively makes other information publicly available that may be in the public interest or has been frequently requested, unless there is an overriding public interest against disclosure.

The information will be free of charge or made available at the lowest reasonable cost.

This information can be viewed on [Council's website](#) and by using the search function. New information is regularly reviewed as part of Council's proactive release program.

4.3. Informal Release

Access to information that is not available through mandatory open access or authorised proactive release may be provided through Informal Release.

The GIPA Act provides for members of the public to apply for the informal release of government information, subject to any reasonable conditions that Council deems fit to impose, or instances where there is an overriding public interest against disclosure.

Applications must be made by submitting an informal access to information application:

In instances where informal access request involves personal or sensitive information, the need to consult with a third party or the request requires extensive research, it is likely that Council will require the submission of a Formal Access application form.

The GIPA Act does not provide any statutory timeframe by which Informal requests for information are to be decided.

Formal access applications take priority as they are required to be completed in accordance with strict legislative timeframes.

4.4. Formal Access

Prior to lodging a [Formal Access Application](#), a person seeking information from Council should check if the information being sought is already available on [Council's website](#) or could easily be made available through an [informal request application](#).

The GIPA Act provides for members of the public to apply for access to information formally in instances where:

- the information is not available through open access, proactive or informal release
- an informal access request involves a large volume of information or extensive research and will involve an unreasonable amount of time and resources to produce
- the request contains personal or business information about third parties which may require consultation under the GIPA Act
- the request is of a sensitive nature that requires careful weighing of the consideration in favour of and against disclosure

If one or more of the above criteria is met, Council requires a *formal access application form* to be submitted and accompanied by the prescribed fee of \$30.00.

An application will be invalid if it seeks access to excluded information of Council or does not meet the requirements for a *formal access application*.

An application will be invalid if it seeks access to excluded information of Council or does not meet the requirements for a *formal access application*.

A [formal access application](#) must:

- be in writing,
- clearly indicate that it is an application made under the GIPA Act,
- state an Australian postal address or email address,
- be accompanied by the \$30.00 fee, and
- provide sufficient detail to enable Council to identify the information requested.

Council must acknowledge the receipt of a valid application by responding to applicants within **five (5) working days**.

4.5. Deciding Formal Access Applications

Formal access applications will be assessed and determined, and the applicant will be advised of the decision, within **twenty (20) working days** after receipt of the application.

The decision period may be extended where consultation with a third party is required or if records need to be retrieved.

A request for an advance deposit may also extend the statutory time period. The applicant will be notified of the decision in writing.

Any decision to refuse access will include reasons for the decision. If charges are payable, access will be given to the information only when the payment has been received.

When information of potential interest to other members of the public is released to an applicant under a [formal access application](#), Council may provide details of the information through the [Disclosure Log](#) on its website.

Decisions made regarding formal access applications may be appealed internally at Council or externally through the NSW Information Commissioner or the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (**NCAT**). The internal review fee is \$40.00.

4.6. Public Interest Test

Under the GIPA Act, all government agencies must disclose or release information unless there is an overriding public interest against disclosure.

The 'public interest test' requires balancing factors for and against of each piece of government information. This balancing must be undertaken within the context of the GIPA Act, including the objects of the Act, the four legislative pathways under which information can be released and the presumption in favour of disclosure of information.

When deciding what information to release, Council will apply the public interest test which requires the decision-maker to:

- identify the relevant public interest considerations in favour of disclosure,
- identify the relevant public interest considerations against disclosure, and
- determine the weight of the public interest considerations in favour of and against disclosure and come to a conclusion about

whether the factors in favour of disclosure outweigh the factors against disclosure (taking into account the presumption in favour of disclosure).

The public interest test provides that there is an overriding public interest against disclosure if, on balance, the public interest considerations against disclosure **outweigh** the presumption in favour of disclosure and the public interest considerations in favour of disclosure.

Section 14 of the GIPA Act provides an exhaustive list of public interest considerations against disclosure. These are the **only** considerations against disclosure that Council can consider in applying the public interest test:

- Responsible and effective government
- Law enforcement and security
- Individual rights, judicial processes and natural justice
- Business interests of agencies and other persons
- Environment, culture, economy and general matters
- Secrecy provisions specifically provided in legislation
- Exempt documents under interstate Freedom of Information legislation.

4.7. Fees and Charges

Open access information held by Council must be made publicly available for inspection free of charge. Fees for photocopying may be required as set out in Council's [Fees and Charges](#).

Information that Council chooses to disclose proactively may be released free of charge, or at the lowest reasonable cost.

The formal access application fee is \$30.00. Applicants may be entitled to a 50% reduction of processing charges on financial hardship grounds or may be entitled to a waiver of the fee if the information requested is of a special benefit to the public generally.

Applicants may be asked to pay a processing charge. Processing information access applications costs \$30.00 per hour and covers time needed to deal efficiently, compliantly and accurately with the application.

Applicants may be asked to pay an advance deposit of up to 50% of the estimated processing charge. In accordance with sections 68-71 of the GIPA Act, a notice for advance deposit must be in writing and the applicant must be given at least 4 weeks to pay.

If an applicant is applying for their own personal information or applying on behalf of someone else for that person's personal information, the first 20 hours of processing time are free of charge.

4.8. Review Rights

Applicants may request a review of certain decisions made by Council about the release of information under the GIPA Act, such as:

- A decision that an application is not a valid access application,
- A decision to refuse to deal with an access application (including such a decision that is deemed to have been made),
- A decision to provide access or to refuse to provide access to information in response to an access application,
- A decision that government information is not held by Council,
- A decision to impose a processing charge or to require an advance deposit, or
- A decision to refuse a reduction in a processing charge.

The GIPA Act does not provide for a right of review of a decision of an agency regarding an informal request.

The applicant may:

- Seek an internal review by Council
- Contact the IPC for a review of the Council decision
- Contact the NSW Civil and Administrative Decisions Tribunal (NCAT) to request a review

Applications for an internal review by Council must be made within **20 working days** of the notice of the decision being given to the applicant.

The review will be undertaken by a senior officer who was not involved in making the original decision. The review decision must be made as if it was a fresh application and issued within **15 working days** (this may be extended by up to **ten (10) working days** where there is a need to consult with a third party not previously consulted or by agreement with the applicant).

Applications must be made by completing the internal review application form on Council's website and paying a fee of \$40.00.

An applicant can also seek an external review from the IPC or NCAT. An applicant has **forty (40) working days** from the date of the original decision being given to them to ask for this review. If the applicant has already had a review by the IPC, they have 4 weeks from the date that the decision was given to them to make an application to NCAT. Processing charges may apply in accordance with Council's Fees and Charges, including processing and photocopy charges, depending on the type and amount of information sought. Payment of an advance deposit may also be required for an amount up to 50% of estimated processing charges in accordance with sections 68-71 of the GIPA Act.

4.9. Copyright

Copyright issues often arise when requests are made for copies of documents held by Council.

Copyright in Australia is governed by the [Copyright Act 1968 \(Cth\)](#), which takes precedence over State legislation, meaning that the right to copy documents under the GIPA Act does not override the Copyright Act. Nothing in the GIPA Act or GIPA Regulations permits Council to make government information available in any way that would constitute an infringement of copyright.

Copyright may be infringed by using copyright material without the permission of the copyright owner. Examples include:

- Reproducing the work (including photocopying, copying by hand, filming, recording and scanning),
- Making the work public for the first time, or
- Communicating the work to the public (i.e. via email, broadcasting or the Internet).

The above uses are exclusive rights of the copyright owner. Anyone who wishes to use someone else's material in any of these ways generally needs the permission of the owner.

Access to government information must be provided in the way requested by the applicant unless to do so would involve an infringement of copyright.

The GIPA Act enables Council to delete information from a record or for a new record of the information to be created to facilitate the provision of open access information without infringing copyright.

Access to copyright documents may also be facilitated by providing the documents available for inspection free of charge at Council's Administration Building or libraries during ordinary office hours.

Where consent from the copyright owner is unable to be obtained, copies of copyright material will not be provided. These documents include (but are not limited to) plans/drawings, consultant reports, statements of environmental effects and other miscellaneous reports submitted with an application under the [Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 \(NSW\)](#).

If an applicant wishes to contact a copyright holder, a [Consent to Council – Copyright form](#) is available on Council's website. This form includes advice on how to contact a Copyright holder.

5. Open Data

Open Data generally refers to information stored digitally by an organisation that should be made freely available such that anyone who accesses the data is free to use, rearrange and publish the information without the limitations of copyright.

This concept operates concurrently with the objectives of the GIPA Act as outlined at the introduction to this Agency Information Guide.

Members of the public are encouraged to contact Council with suggestions for information which can be considered for authorised proactive release under the GIPA Act.

Council takes a similar position with respect to Open Data and therefore encourages members of the public to make suggestions as to the kinds of data that Council may consider making publicly available in this way.

Further information regarding NSW State Government and local government Open Data initiatives may be found at Data.NSW: data.nsw.gov.au/data/dataset

6. Feedback and Questions

Most Council documents can be obtained and inspected at Council's Administration Building or libraries during the hours of 8:30am and 5pm, Monday to Friday (except public holidays), through Council's website and the Your Voice – Our Coast website.

For further enquiries about any document, you can contact a Customer Service officer on 02 4306 7900, emailing ask@centralcoast.nsw.gov.au or by using the Service Portal on [Council's website](#).

If you experience any difficulty obtaining documents or information, you can contact Council's Public Officer or Council's Governance Team.

6.1. Public Officer

Each Council must appoint a Public Officer as directed by the [Local Government Act 1993](#). Amongst other duties, the Public Officer may deal with requests from the public concerning Council's affairs and has the responsibility of assisting people to gain access to public documents.

The Public Officer can help members of the public who have difficulty in obtaining access to Council information.

The Unit Manager Governance Risk and Legal has been appointed as Council's Public Officer.

Enquiries should be made in writing and addressed to:

Public Officer

Central Coast Council

Email: ask@centralcoast.nsw.gov.au

6.2. Governance Team

Council's Governance Team are responsible for processing Informal and Formal Access requests and for determining what information is disclosed and withheld in response to access applications as directed by the GIPA Act and other relevant legislation.

For further information regarding access to information, please contact Council on 4306 7900 or email: governanceteam@centralcoast.nsw.gov.au

6.4. Information and Privacy Commission

The IPC oversees the GIPA Act, GIPA Regulation and *Government Information (Information Commissioner) Act 2009*. The IPC provides information on the right to access information and can be contacted by:



information
and privacy
commission
new south wales

Address: Level 15, McKell Building, 2-24 Rawson Place,
HAYMARKET NSW 2000
PO Box: GPO Box 7011, SYDNEY NSW 2001
Phone: 1800 472 679
Email: ipcinfo@ipc.nsw.gov.au

7. Additional Information

7.1. Management of the Agency Information Guide

Council is required by the [GIPA Act](#) to review and update its Agency Information Guide at intervals of no more than 12 months and may update and amend the guide at any time.

7.2. Council Contact Information

Address: 2 Hely Street, Wyong NSW 2259
Phone: 02 4306 7900
Email: ask@centralcoast.nsw.gov.au
Internet: www.centralcoast.nsw.gov.au
Business Hours: 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday to Friday (excluding public holiday)



Agency Information Guide 2024-2025

Central Coast Council
2 Hely St / PO Box 20 Wyong NSW 2259
P 02 4306 7900
W centralcoast.nsw.gov.au
ABN 73 149 644 003

April 2025

Item No: 1.7
Title: Water and Sewer Works in Kind Policy Review
Department: Water and Sewer



12 August 2025 Governance and Finance Committee

Reference: F2025/00484 - D16808245
Author: Luke Drury, Section Manager Assets and Planning
Manager: Stephen Legge, Unit Manager Assets and Projects
Executive: Jamie Loader, Director Water and Sewer

Recommendation

That the Committee recommends to Council that the reviewed Water and Sewer Works-In-Kind Policy at Attachment 1 is adopted, noting that public exhibition is not required as there are no substantive changes to the intent of the policy.

Report purpose

The purpose of this report is to submit the reviewed Water and Sewer Works-In-Kind Policy at (Attachment 1), to the Committee for its consideration and endorsement, prior to submission to Council for adoption.

Executive Summary

A periodic review of the policy has been undertaken and the amended Policy is before the Committee for its consideration and endorsement, prior to submission to Council for adoption. The Policy is required to provide a framework for Council to consider, and for applicants to apply to provide Works-In-Kind (WIK), in lieu of full or partial payment of Water Supply and Sewerage Developer Charges required under the *Water Management Act 2000*.

Background

This Policy is for developers and staff and exists to establish a transparent and consistent framework for preparing, assessing, and approving WIK proposals.

The Policy requires that it be reviewed at least every four (4) years from the date of adoption unless legislated otherwise. The due date for this Policy review was July 2025.

This Policy applies to all elected members of Council, all personnel employed by Council, any person or organisation contracted to or acting on behalf of Council, any person or

organisation employed to work on Council premises or facilities, and all activities of the Council.

Report

The periodic review of the current policy has provided the opportunity to make minor amendments including transposing into Council's new policy template, formatting and changes to grammar or language to improve the readability of the policy. There are no significant changes to the intent of the Policy, only updated references to legislation and simplification.

All amendments are marked up in the Policy at (Attachment 1).

Stakeholder Engagement

- Internal stakeholders:
 - Environment and Planning Department
 - Finance Business Unit
 - Governance Risk and Legal Business Unit
- External Stakeholders:
 - Urban Development Institute of Australia (UDIA) NSW (for associated guideline)

Financial Considerations

Financial Year (FY) Implications.

The proposal does not have financial implications for the current year or outer years in the LTFP.

Budget and Long-Term Financial Plan (LTFP) Impact.

The FY adopted budget includes the impact for this proposal.

The developer delivered infrastructure included in WIK agreements form part of the rolling Water and Sewer capital works budget.

It is also noted that the consideration of WIK, in lieu of full or partial payment of Section 7.11 Development Contributions required under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* is covered by a separate Council Policy.

Link to Community Strategic Plan

Following the adoption of the Community Strategic Plan (CSP) and framework in June 2025, Council report templates are being updated with new CSP themes and goals. Contents in this report are aligned with the adopted CSP.

Risk Management

Without this Policy, there is a risk to Council's reputation and potential corruption risks, arising from potential inconsistency in the development and implementation of WIK agreements between Council and developers. This Policy and associated guideline provide guidance to staff and developers when preparing, approving, and implementing WIK agreements.

There are also regulatory and reputational risks to Council should it not comply with its statutory obligation in reviewing and adopting a council policy.

Critical Dates or Timeframes

This Policy had a review date of July 2025.

Attachments

1  Water and Sewer Works-In-Kind Policy (Final Draft) D16807758

Central Coast Council

Water and Sewer Works-In-Kind Policy



Date Adopted: XX/XX/20XX
Revision: X



DRAFT

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1. Policy Objectives

- 1.1. The Policy exists to establish a transparent and consistent framework for assessing and approving Works-In-Kind (WIK) proposals.
- 1.2. The policy applies to all elected members of Council, all personnel employed by Council, any person or organisation contracted to or acting on behalf of Council, any person or organisation employed to work on Council premises or facilities, and all activities of the Council.

2. Policy Scope

- 2.1. This Policy enables developers to offset all or part of their Water Supply and Sewerage Developer Charges under the *Water Management Act 2000* through the provision of agreed infrastructure works, and to outline the circumstances under which refunds may be issued where the value of works exceeds the payable charges.
- 2.2. Council's 'Water and Sewer Works-In-Kind Guideline' provides a framework and consistent methodology to allow a lead developer to deliver the required trunk infrastructures at the right time with the support of Council. The current version of the document can be sourced from Council's website (centralcoast.nsw.gov.au).
- 2.3. This Policy does not apply to:
 - a) The provision of temporary assets or reticulation assets which are required to be vested in Council, at no charge to Council, as described in the Water Supply and Sewerage Development Servicing Plans (DSP)
 - b) Development Contributions payable levied under any s7.11 or 7.12 Development Contribution Plan levied under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*
 - c) Any proposal or request to provide WIK that are not consistent with the intent of the DSP (provide trunk water supply and sewerage capacity to service growth)

3. Policy Statement

- 3.1. Central Coast Council consider Water Supply and Sewerage Developer Charges required under the *Water Management Act 2000*.
- 3.2. Council is committed to ensuring:
 - a) The delivery of water supply and sewerage infrastructure occurs as required to serve the needs of its growing population
 - b) The provision of such is well-planned, appropriately timed and delivered, meets relevant construction and quality standards, and represents value for money for Council and the community
 - c) That any WIK proposals are assessed in an equitable and transparent manner
- 3.3. The consideration of WIK, in lieu of full or partial payment of Section 7.11 Development Contributions required under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* is covered by a separate Council Policy.

- 3.4. Central Coast Council is a local water utility constituted under Division 2 Part 3 Chapter 6 of the *Local Government Act 1993*.
- 3.5. Development activities that may impact on Council Water Supply Assets are regulated under Section 64 of the *Local Government Act 1993*.

4. General

- 4.1. Council is under no obligation to accept offers to enter into WIK Agreements (WIKAs).
- 4.2. Council will only consider proposals to enter a WIK where the relevant DSP provides that a WIK can be entered into for the carrying out of works in full or partial satisfaction of developer charges payable shown on a Section 306 Requirements letter.
- 4.3. All WIK proposals will be lodged and progressed in accordance with Council's 'Water and Sewer Works-In-Kind Guideline'
- 4.4. All Works-In-Kind proposals will be evaluated against criteria established by Council's 'Water and Sewer Works-In-Kind Guideline'.
- 4.5. All executed WIKAs will be recorded on a WIK Register maintained by Council.

5. Responsibilities

Compliance, monitoring and review

- 5.1. Suspected breaches or misuse of this policy are to be reported to the Chief Executive Officer. Alleged breaches of this policy shall be dealt with by the processes outlined for breaches of the Code of Conduct, as detailed in the Code of Conduct and in the Procedures for the Administration of the Code of Conduct.
- 5.2. This Policy will be reviewed every four years or as required by legislative change or for other purposes.

7. Policy Definitions

Act	means the Water Management Act 2000.
Proponent	means the person who has the written authority to act on behalf of the landowner of the land who has the benefit of a development consent that relates to that land.
Council	means the Central Coast Council which includes any reference to the former Wyong Shire Council or Gosford City Council.
Developer Charges	means the provision made by a developer under a DSP, monetary contribution, or the provision of infrastructure to be used for or applied towards the provision of water supply

	and/or sewerage capacity to service existing or future growth.
Developer Charges Payable	means a condition imposed by Council as a Water Authority relating to the payment of monies in accordance with applicable DSPs.
Developer Contributions Committee (DCC)	means the internal Council Developer Contributions Committee, comprising relevant employees of the Council that review and provide advice in relation to offers from developers for proposed WIK in lieu of payment of contributions.
Development Servicing Plan (DSP)	means a plan prepared by Council in accordance with the provisions of the prevailing Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) determination on Water and Sewerage Developer Charges.
Development Servicing Plan Works Schedule	means the schedule within a contribution plan which itemises the works, costs, staging and timing thereof to be delivered by the plan.
Development Servicing Plan Works Value	means the value assigned to the provision of an item of work or facility under a DSP.
Guidelines	means the operational procedures and assessment Guidelines, as amended from time to time, and endorsed by the DCC or CEO.
Material Public Benefit	means a Work-In-Kind which is listed in the works schedule of a Water Supply and Sewerage Development Servicing Plan (DSP) for which a monetary contribution would be normally sought or the provision of certain water and/or sewerage infrastructure that may or may not exist in the area that is not included in a Water Supply and Sewerage Development Servicing Plan (DSP). A Material Public Benefit is not the dedication of land or the payment of a monetary contribution under the <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979</i> .
Security/Securities	means a financial amount of money paid to Council to pay costs associated with completion of any outstanding works to be undertaken by the proponent.
Water Management Act proposal	Has the same meaning as within Section 305 of the Act. Page 6 of 7.

Water Management Act Requirements	has the same meaning as within Section 306 of the Act.
Work	has the same meaning as within the Act.
Works-In-Kind	means the undertaking of work, or the provision of amenities, services or facilities, as nominated in a Contribution Plan's Work Schedule and includes reference to Contribution Offsets. It does not include the dedication of land.
Works-In-Kind Agreement	means the agreement between a proponent and Council which details the works, plans, costing, timing and other matters deemed necessary for the provision of Works-In-Kind.
Works-In-Kind Policy	means this policy.

8. Policy Administration

Business Group	Water and Sewer
Responsible Officer	Section Manager, Assets and Planning
Associated Procedure (if any, reference document(s) number(s))	Central Coast Council Water and Sewer Works-In-Kind Guideline (D16382919)
Policy Review Date	Four years from the date of adoption unless legislated otherwise.
File Number / Document Number	D16807758
Relevant Legislation (reference specific sections)	<p>This Policy supports Council's compliance with the following legislation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Local Government Act 1993</i> ▪ <i>Water Management Act 2000</i> ▪ Council's Code of Conduct ▪ Central Coast Council's Water and Sewer Works-In-Kind Guideline ▪ Central Coast Council Water Supply and Sewerage Development Servicing Plans (multiple)
Link to Community Strategic Plan	<p>Theme 4: Responsible</p> <p>Goal H: Delivering essential infrastructure</p> <p>R-H4: Plan for adequate and sustainable infrastructure to meet future demand for transport, energy, telecommunications and a secure supply of drinking water.</p>
Related Policies / Protocols / Procedures / Documents (reference document numbers)	<p>Central Coast Council's Water and Sewer Works-In-Kind Guideline: D16382919</p> <p>Information and Records Management Policy</p> <p>Code of Conduct</p> <p>Delegations Register</p>

9. Policy Authorisations

No.	Authorised Function	Authorised Business Unit / Role(s)
<<Enter text...>>	<<Enter text...>>	<<Enter text...>>

10. Policy History

Revision	Date Approved / Authority	Description Of Changes
1	Ordinary Meeting of Council 29/06/2021 Minute Number of Resolution – 194/21	<<Enter text...>>
2	<<Enter text...>>	<<Enter text...>>

11. Appendices: Nil

Item No: 1.8
Title: Comprehensive revaluation of Roads and Drainage Infrastructure asset classes
Department: Corporate Services



12 August 2025 Governance and Finance Committee

Reference: F2023/02208 - D16961129
Author: Michelle Best, Section Manager Financial Accounting and Assets
Manager: Emma Galea, Chief Financial Officer
Executive: Darrylen Law, Director Corporate Services

Recommendation

That the Committee notes the process associated with, and the impact of, the 2024-25 FY comprehensive revaluation of Roads and Drainage infrastructure asset classes.

Report purpose

To provide an overview of the process associated with, and the impact of, the 2024-25 FY Comprehensive Revaluation of Roads and Drainage infrastructure asset classes. The report is being presented to the Committee due to the financial implications associated with this process, and the criticality of the process to the audit of Council's Financial Statements undertaken by the NSW Audit Office.

Executive Summary

In line with Accounting Standards, and to ensure that the value of assets and the associated depreciation remains current, Council is required to report its assets based on fair value. Fair value is tested each financial year for all asset classes, and adjusted through indexation where applicable, with a comprehensive revaluation of each respective asset class being undertaken on a regular basis. Council generally aims to undertake a comprehensive revaluation of each asset class on a cycle of four (4) years.

For the 2024-25 FY a comprehensive revaluation of Council's roads and drainage infrastructure assets was due to be undertaken.

Subject to final Quality Assurance and NSW Audit Office review, the comprehensive revaluation of roads and drainage infrastructure assets has resulted in an overall increase of the Net Book Value (NBV) of these assets of \$0.9 Billion, and an increase in the annual depreciation expense of \$8.4M commencing from 2025-26 FY.

The increase in NBV is processed through the Revaluation Reserve and has no impact on Council's operating result. The annual increase in depreciation has a direct impact on Council's operating result. The impact has already been allowed for within the adopted 2025-26 FY Budget and the Long-Term Financial Plan.

Background

Under Australian Accounting Standards AASB 13 Fair Value Measurement; AASB 116 Property, Plant and Equipment; and the Office of Local Government Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting, infrastructure assets are required to be recognised at fair value.

Fair Value is defined as the price that would be received to sell an asset, however where no market exists, fair value is established using the Cost approach, which reflects the amount that would be required currently to replace the service capacity of an asset. The replacement cost considers inputs such as asset dimensions and unit rates representing the cost to construct or acquire the asset.

Fair value is tested each financial year for all asset classes and adjusted through indexation where applicable, with a comprehensive revaluation of each respective asset class being undertaken on a regular basis.

Council's last comprehensive revaluation for roads and drainage infrastructure assets was last undertaken in 2021-22 FY. A comprehensive revaluation was undertaken after three (3) years to bring this asset class back into the overall revaluation cycle, and to ensure an even spread of revaluation of asset classes over a four-year period.

Roads and drainage infrastructure assets represent a significant portion of Council's infrastructure portfolio, comprising around 180,000 assets with a pre-revaluation carrying (gross book value) of \$5.3B, and a Net Book Value (NBV) of \$3.6B.

The comprehensive revaluation process was undertaken as a joint project between the Finance team and the Roads and Drainage Infrastructure (RDI) team and external consultants. Council engaged APV Valuers and Asset Management to undertake the comprehensive fair value valuation. APV Valuers were engaged due to their expertise, impartiality, and adherence to industry best practices. External consultants were also engaged to assist Council with the asset condition assessment process for certain types of assets.

Report

Project Management and Governance

The comprehensive roads and drainage infrastructure assets revaluation process was formally commenced in July 2024 with the establishment of an Asset Revaluation Working Group with relevant members from both Roads and Drainage Infrastructure (RDI) and Finance included as primary stakeholders.

The Working Group established the timeline for the revaluation process, and met regularly to discuss progress against key dates, and any emerging or potential issues. Minutes documenting key decisions and discussions were circulated after each meeting.

In November 2024, requests for quotations were sought from reputable, established valuation firms via Vendor Panel. APV Valuers and Asset Management were ultimately appointed to provide the service.

Asset Data

Council maintains a Fixed Asset Register (FAR) which reconciles to Council's General Ledger and is used for financial reporting purposes. It also maintains a Technical Asset Register (TAR), which contains asset attribute data and is used for asset management and planning purposes.

RDI and Finance teams worked collaboratively to confirm that the two registers were aligned to ensure the completeness and accuracy of the datasets. Any variances were investigated, with either GIS or onsite asset assessment undertaken. Work was also undertaken to address several asset data improvements that were identified as part of the previous comprehensive valuation in 2021-22 FY.

The aligned FAR and TAR datasets, updated condition assessments, standard useful lives, asset attributes such as materials and measurements, and current unit rates were provided to APV for valuation purposes.

Condition Assessments

Asset condition assessments form a significant input into the valuation of assets, as they inform the remaining useful life and therefore the accumulated depreciation and ongoing depreciation expense.

1.8 Comprehensive revaluation of Roads and Drainage Infrastructure asset classes (cont'd)

Condition assessments were undertaken, using subject matter experts where available:

Asset type	Inspection type and completed by
Roads	For sealed roads, laser road profiling was undertaken by National Transport Research Organisation (NTRO). Internal data processing from raw condition factors to IPWEA Practice Note 9 compliant completed 2024-25. For unsealed roads, visual condition assessment by internal subject matter experts.
Kerb and Gutter Safety Barriers Traffic Facilities Bus stops	Visual condition assessments by NTRO using roads imagery data.
Wharves Jetties	Internal condition assessment using Level 2 Detailed Visual Bridge Condition assessment specifications.
Bridges Footpaths Shared paths Carparks	Internal condition assessment.
Drainage pits, Pipes, Culverts, and Headwalls	Sample asset-based condition assessments using CCTV contractors, internal inspections using Quickview cameras and reports on new assets from post project completion CCTV reports.
Stormwater Dams	Asset conditions based on assessments in the Dam Safety report and reviews undertaken by internal subject matter experts.
Levees Pollutant Traps / Devices	Sample asset condition assessments undertaken by internal subject matter experts.

As part of the valuation, an APV valuer and quantity surveyor attended Central Coast LGA and visually inspected sample assets to validate the condition assessments Council had provided.

Draft Report and Council's Review

APV provided their initial draft dataset on 29 June 25. Council staff then conducted a detailed analysis, sensitivity checks, and review of the information and updates were made as required.

APV advised that Unit Rates adopted were based on actual construction costs incurred, Rawlinson rates, and rates based on APV datasets from other councils' experience. Clarification was sought where unit rates varied significantly from those previously adopted and amendments were made where considered appropriate.

1.8 Comprehensive revaluation of Roads and Drainage Infrastructure asset classes (cont'd)

Council supplied useful lives to APV, which APV revised and returned to Council. The updated standard useful lives were reviewed by Council SMEs for finalisation and adoption by APV.

Some dataset anomalies regarding pathway and road formation widths were identified as part of this process and subsequently updated by APV.

The valuation methodology for road formation was updated to reflect Council's Civil specifications and the above feedback arising from Council's review.

All updates to APV's dataset have been completed and it is currently undergoing Quality Assurance review by both Council and APV.

The final dataset is due to be issued to Council on Monday 4 August 2025.

Financial Impact

Following an asset revaluation, the updated asset values are reported as at 30 June of the financial year the revaluation relates to. The updated asset values arising from this revaluation will be reported as at 30 June 2025 FY. The impact of the updated values on the annual depreciation associated with the revalued assets is reflected from the following financial year.

Accordingly, the increase in the annual depreciation expense arising from this revaluation will commence from the 2025-26 FY. Council's 2025-26 FY Budget for depreciation includes an allowance for the increase. The impact of this increase is consequently also captured in the Long-Term Financial Plan depreciation projections.

The below table is based on the latest dataset, noting it may change following completion of the Quality Assurance review and is subject to audit by the NSW Audit Office:

Asset Class	NBV before revaluation	NBV after revaluation	Movement in Asset Value	Annual Depreciation expense before revaluation	Annual Depreciation expense after revaluation	Annual Depreciation expense change
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Bridges	63,026	69,514	6,488	1,233	1,218	(15)
Bulk Earthworks	410,827	504,542	93,715	0	0	0
Footpaths	175,620	300,019	124,399	4,204	6,735	2,530
Roads	1,703,522	2,459,038	755,516	46,422	53,047	6,626
Stormwater Drainage	1,296,020	1,205,038	(90,982)	15,583	14,845	(738)
Total	3,649,015	4,538,151	889,135	67,442	75,844	8,402

1.8 Comprehensive revaluation of Roads and Drainage Infrastructure asset classes (cont'd)

As shown in the above table, the largest movements in annual depreciation expense are in the Footpaths and Roads asset classes. The biggest driver for this movement is an increase in unit rates mainly due to inflation since the last revaluation. Stormwater Drainage is noted as decreasing slightly. This is due to updated asset data and unit rate information.

Stakeholder Engagement

The Roads and Drainage Infrastructure Unit and the Finance team have worked collaboratively on the revaluation process.

Financial Considerations

Financial Year (FY) Implications.

The proposal has cost financial implications for the current FY and outer years in the LTFP.

Subject to final Quality Assurance and NSW Audit Office review, the comprehensive revaluation of roads and drainage infrastructure assets has resulted in an overall increase of the Net Book Value (NBV) of these assets of \$0.9 Billion, and an increase in the annual depreciation expense of \$8.4M commencing from 2025-26 FY.

The increase in NBV is processed through the Revaluation Reserve and has no impact on Council's operating result. The annual increase in depreciation has a direct impact on Council's operating result. The impact has already been allowed for within the adopted 2025-26 FY Budget and the Long-Term Financial Plan.

Budget and Long-Term Financial Plan (LTFP) Impact.

The FY adopted budget includes funding for this proposal.

Link to Community Strategic Plan

Following the adoption of the Community Strategic Plan (CSP) and framework in June 2025, Council report templates are being updated with new CSP themes and goals. Contents in this report are aligned with the adopted CSP.

Risk Management

Nil.

Critical Dates or Timeframes

The Fixed Asset Register and General Ledger will be updated to reflect the final revaluation when it is available in early August 25, for incorporation in the 2024-25 FY Financial Statements. The draft Financial Statements will be presented to ARIC for review, and then Council for formal referral to audit, in September 25. Audited Financial Statements are due for lodgement with OLG by 31 October 2025.

Attachments

Nil.

Item No: 1.9
Title: Cost Shifting onto Local Government
Department: Corporate Services



12 August 2025 Governance and Finance Committee

Reference: F2025/00484 - D16998470
Author: Emma Galea, Chief Financial Officer
Executive: Darrylen Law, Director Corporate Services

That the Committee:

- 1 Notes the findings of the LGNSW Cost Shifting report for the 2023-24 financial year.***
- 2 Recommends that Council approves the provision of a report to the November Governance and Finance Committee meeting, with estimates as to the approximate costs of local government cost shifting on Central Coast Council. The findings are to be broken down by the overall cost to Council and the average cost it equates to per rate payer.***

Report purpose

To present the findings of the LGNSW Cost shifting report for the 2023-24 financial year.

Executive Summary

Recent Federal and State Parliamentary Inquiries have recognised cost shifting as one of the most significant contributors to the financial concerns of local government.

Cost shifting occurs when state and federal governments force councils to assume responsibility for infrastructure, services, and regulatory functions without providing sufficient supporting funding.

"Cost Shifting 2025: How State Costs Eat Council Rates", by independent consultants Morrison Low, reveals that NSW councils are currently being asked to absorb cost shifting worth more than \$1.5 billion each year. Cost shifting now amounts to an average annual cost of \$497.40 paid by each NSW ratepayer.

Background

Cost shifting, as defined by Local Government NSW (LGNSW), occurs when the responsibility for providing services, concessions, assets, or regulatory functions is transferred to local councils without sufficient financial support or revenue-raising capacity. This means councils must use general rates, which are intended for local services, to fund these newly mandated responsibilities.

LGNSW conducts a periodic cost shifting survey to ascertain the extent of cost shifting by the federal and state governments on to NSW local government. The 2025 cost shifting survey results were analysed by independent consultants Morrison Low.

Survey results show that cost shifting continues to place a significant burden on NSW councils. Cost shifting is estimated to have imposed a cumulative burden of more than \$11.3 billion on councils over the past decade.

Report

Cost shifting from both State and Federal Governments onto local councils is putting an enormous strain on councils and ratepayers.

Intergovernmental funding in Australia is a complex issue. The federal government collects a staggering 81% of the nation's tax revenue, while state governments collect 16.3%, and local governments are left with a mere 2.9%. This revenue is then redistributed through various mechanisms, with the GST being one of the most notable methods of distribution among the states.

To balance their budgets, both federal and state governments often shift spending responsibilities to councils. This practice is known as cost shifting. Local governments, already operating with limited financial resources, are forced to shoulder additional burdens without corresponding increases in revenue.

This is particularly challenging in NSW, where rate capping policies restrict the ability of local councils to raise additional funds through property rates. When extra costs are imposed on NSW councils, they must cut services to accommodate the new financial demands. In contrast, councils in other states have the flexibility to adjust rates to cover additional expenses, providing them with a crucial financial lever that is unavailable to NSW councils.

In NSW cost shifting has taken several forms including:

- Imposing additional regulatory functions.
- The Emergency Service contributions.
- Cutting or failing to adequately continue to fund programs for services that need to continue.
- Pensioner rebates.

- Councils absorbing the costs of service and market gaps that should have been provided by State or Federal governments.
- Forced rates exemptions.
- The waste levy.

The estimated average figure of \$500 per ratepayer being diverted from the many local priorities, is impacting on what Council can deliver.

A summary of the findings of the 2025 cost shifting survey is contained in the following summary report:

[LGNSW Cost Shifting 2025 - Report Summary](#)

Full details and analysis are contained in the following full report:

[LGNSW Cost Shifting 2025 - Full Report](#)

Central Coast Council, like other NSW councils, is impacted by cost shifting, resulting in these costs being passed on to ratepayers, or where these costs cannot be recouped, it means that Council has less funding available to provide services to its community. Council's Long Term Financial Plan and the associated projected financial performance includes the impact of cost shifting on Council's expenditure, and consequently the funding gap required to be addressed through the strategies outlined in the Plan.

Stakeholder Engagement

The cost shifting report provides analysis and insights from the 2023-24 Cost Shifting Survey conducted in December 2024 and January 2025. Fifty percent of councils responded to the 2023-24 survey. These councils represented 62% of the population. In contrast, the 2021-22 survey had a higher response rate, with 58.5% of councils participating, representing 70% of the population. Of those councils that participated in the survey, not all responses in the survey were completed by the councils. Forty-four councils participated in both surveys and in some instances not all the same questions were answered in both surveys. As a result, some variability in the estimates across all NSW councils is expected, which may affect the comparability of results between the two (2) survey periods. Where there is significant variance between the two surveys, the comparative analysis was undertaken using the common forty-four councils across the two surveys and includes commentary in the report. Morrison Low also used external data sources to capture information for all 128 councils where available.

Financial Considerations

Financial Year (FY) Implications.

The proposal does not have financial implications for the current year or outer years in the LTFP.

The outcome of the cost shifting survey itself does not have a direct financial impact on Council, it merely highlights that Council's costs include significant costs shifted onto Council from other levels of government.

Budget and Long-Term Financial Plan (LTFP) Impact.

The FY adopted budget includes funding for this proposal and the LTFP includes funding for the ongoing impact.

The outcome of the cost shifting survey itself does not have a direct financial impact on Council, noting that the highlighted cost shifting is already reflected in Council's current financial year's Budget and the Long-Term Financial Plan.

Link to Community Strategic Plan

Following the adoption of the Community Strategic Plan (CSP) and framework in June 2025, Council report templates are being updated with new CSP themes and goals. Contents in this report are aligned with the adopted CSP.

Risk Management

Nil.

Critical Dates or Timeframes

Nil.

Attachments

Nil.



Item No: 1.10
Title: Response to Notice of Motion - Better Utilising and Monitoring Gosford City Car Park
Department: Environment and Planning

12 August 2025 Governance and Finance Committee

Reference: F2025/00016 - D16972047
Author: Simone Chad, Manager Parking Stations
Manager: Bill Ignatiadis, Unit Manager Commercial Property and Business Enterprise
Executive: Luke Nicholls, Director Environment and Planning

Recommendation

That the Committee notes the content of this report and that a further update will be provided at the November 2025 Governance and Finance Committee meeting.

Background

At the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 29 April 2025, it was resolved that Council:

1. *Undertakes a review into the site and provide costings on different ticketing options and operating hours, including Saturday afternoons and Sundays.*
 - a. *Hold a public briefing session in May 2025 with interested stakeholders such as local businesses and members of the Gosford Strip Precinct committee, to hear their thoughts and to help inform the final report.*
 - b. *Provide a report back to the Finance and Governance Committee by the end of June 2025 for further analysis.*
 - c. *Assess the feasibility of opening the car park permanently on Saturday afternoons, Sundays and public holidays, for a flat rate fee of \$10.*
 - d. *\$10 rate after 3:00pm on Saturday and for all day Sunday, as well as public holidays.*
 - e. *Review perceived safety concerns and the possibility of increased security/lighting etc in line with the recent Safer Cities : Her Way project.*

A feasibility study and business case were commissioned to assess the viability and benefits of implementing an upgraded smart parking system at Gosford City Car Park (GCCP).

Community consultation with a focus on businesses was undertaken between 30 June and 31 July 2025, to gather feedback on extended operating hours and associated fees. Council also implemented several safety measures to reduce the ongoing security concerns in the carpark. The results from these undertakings are detailed in the following report.

Report

Gosford City Car Park - Technology Review

During the 2024-25 Financial Year Council engaged an independent specialist consultant to undertake a comprehensive review of the technologies that manage vehicle access at Gosford City Car Park and complete a feasibility study and business case. The comprehensive review and feasibility study was designed to assess current infrastructure, explore smart parking technologies, and recommend future-ready solutions. The business case determined the justification for investment in the smart parking upgrade and evaluated financial and strategic benefits.

The results of the review and feasibility study identified that the current ticketed boom gate system is outdated and prone to failures, it also requires manual intervention to repair the most common failures, such as ticket jams, dislodged boom gate arms and coin/note jams. It recommended transitioning to a ticketless and cashless ANPR system, with dual cameras and barrierless entry, supported by camera-based bay monitoring for internal guidance. The business case confirmed the financial viability of the upgrade and projected a potential revenue uplift. Strategic benefits were also identified and included alignment with NSW Future Transport and Smart Places strategies, support for the night-time economy, and improved customer experience.

Based on the findings from this consultancy and Council's approved 2025-26 Capital Works Project: Smart Technology Upgrade - Gosford City Carpark, Council has progressed to the procurement stage and currently has an open Tender in the market, due to close on 19 August 2025. Following the review of submissions and award of contract, Council will have a better understanding of the technology that will be implemented at GCCP and the capabilities to support any proposed changes to operating hours. The program for this project indicates that completion will be 16-18 weeks from contract award.

Safety Concerns

Since December 2024, the at-grade car park on Baker Street, directly beneath the Gosford City Car Park, has experienced ongoing safety concerns due to the presence of rough sleepers and associated anti-social behaviour. In April 2025, multiple Council units collaborated to engage with individuals residing in the area, requesting their temporary relocation to facilitate pressure cleaning works. Despite the cleaning efforts completed in mid-May, individuals re-established their presence shortly thereafter.

Throughout May and June 2025, the Crime Prevention Unit of the Brisbane Water Police District engaged with Council following reports from stakeholders within the Gosford CBD. These reports highlighted that the issue of the rough sleepers on Baker Street was becoming

a serious safety concern, in particular the blocking of the dedicated fire exit of the Gosford City Car park. In response to the escalating concerns, Council implemented a series of measures in June and July 2025, aimed at improving safety and discouraging long-term occupation of the site. This included:

- Installing bollards as a physical deterrent, restricting access, and preventing the placement of bulky items, such as mattresses and lounges.
- Installation of additional light fittings to over illuminate the area with light.
- Installation of a sound system to play continuous music, serving as a passive deterrent. This item was due for completion late July 2025.

In addition to the above measures, Council engaged two (2) on-site security guards for a two-week period, commencing the end of June 2025. Following this Council reduced the presence to overnight only, from 6:00pm to 6:00am for a further three-week period, which is due to conclude on Friday, 1 August 2025.

Stakeholder Engagement

Council undertook the following communication and engagement activities targeted at Gosford businesses and associated stakeholders:

1. Your Voice Our Coast Survey – Open from Monday, 30 June to Monday, 28 July 2025.
2. Media release – Tuesday, 1 July 2025.
3. Electronic mail distribution to businesses with an ABN registered in Gosford – Thursday, 17 July 2025.
4. Flyer distribution to Gosford CBD businesses – Thursday, 17 July 2025.
5. Pop up forum, Kibble Park – Thursday, 24 July from 1:30pm to 3:30pm.

At the time of report completion, the engagement survey was still open therefore, the results will be shared in a subsequent report to this committee in November 2025.

Financial Considerations

Financial Year (FY) Implications.

The proposal has cost financial implications for the current FY only.

Budget and Long-Term Financial Plan (LTFP) Impact.

The FY adopted budget does not include funding for this proposal and the amount will need to be included in a future Quarterly Budget Review.

As the homelessness issue on Baker Street was developing into a serious safety concern in the last quarter of the 2024-25 Financial Year and budgets for the 2025-26 Financial Year had already been finalised, the cost to engage the onsite static security guards was unbudgeted. Additional security engagement is estimated this Financial Year at approximately \$58,000 and will be incurred in July 2025. This expense will form part of the Q1 budget adjustment.

There may be a further requirement to increase the security budget, which is pending the effectiveness evaluation of the other mitigation measures. We anticipate that with the installation of the new smart technology and the estimated increase in revenue that this amount will be able to be offset.

Link to Community Strategic Plan

Following the adoption of the Community Strategic Plan (CSP) and framework in June 2025, Council report templates are being updated with new CSP themes and goals. Contents in this report are aligned with the adopted CSP.

Risk Management

The proposed timeline enables Council to gain clarity on the smart technology solutions under consideration for Gosford City Car Park, as well as the associated implementation timeframes, which are contingent on market responses to the current tender. This approach ensures that Council decisions are informed by the capabilities of the selected technology and its potential to support extended operating hours.

Additionally, the timeline allows for a thorough assessment of the effectiveness of recently implemented safety mitigation measures at the Baker Street at-grade car park. Should further interventions be required, Council will be positioned to make evidence-based recommendations. The results of stakeholder engagement will also provide valuable insights into community expectations and priorities, supporting a more responsive and strategic approach to car park operations.

Critical Dates or Timeframes

- August 2025 – Receive the final community consultation results.
- August 2025 – Smart Technology Upgrade Tender closes.
- September/October 2025 – Tender evaluation and contract award.
- Finalised Report to be provided to this committee at the November 2025 meeting.

Attachments

Nil.

Item No: 1.11
Title: 2024-25 FY Financial Results - Status Update
Department: Corporate Services



12 August 2025 Governance and Finance Committee

Reference: F2023/01346 - D16990422
Author: Emma Galea, Chief Financial Officer
Executive: Darrylen Law, Director Corporate Services

Recommendation

That the Committee notes the 2024-25 FY preliminary financial result and the end of financial year process status.

Report purpose

To present an overview of the 2024-25 FY preliminary financial results and to provide a status update on end of financial year processes.

Executive Summary

Council has finalised the initial financial processes associated with closing off the 2024-25 FY.

For the 2024-25 FY Council has performed less favourable than budgeted, achieving a consolidated net operating surplus of \$27.6M, before capital income, compared to an adopted FY Budget of \$37.9M. The result is subject to audit by the NSW Audit Office.

For the 2024-25 FY Council delivered \$298M in capital works and had a further \$17M committed as at 30 June, compared to a total Budget for the year of \$316.5M. Actual expenditure was 94% of the full year adopted Budget, and 97% of the Original Budget for the 2024-25 FY.

Council's financial performance for the 2024-25 FY is considered sound, provides a good basis to monitor the 2025-26 FY financial performance against budget, and informs future updates of the Council's Long Term Financial Plan.

Background

Following 30 June each year Council is required to close off the financial year and prepare Financial Statements in the required format for auditing by the NSW Audit Office.

All revenue and expenditure attributable to the financial year are required to be accounted for accordingly and several annual accounting adjustments relating to assets and liabilities are generally required to ensure Council's Balance Sheet is a true and accurate reflection of Council's financial position at the end of the financial year being reported.

Report

Council has finalised the initial financial processes associated with closing off the 2024-25 FY.

The formal presentation of the results as the 2024-25 Draft Annual Financial Statements is currently underway and the associated reports will be submitted to the Audit, Risk, and Improvement Committee (ARIC) and then to Council at the meeting in September 2025 for referral to audit.

The report submitted to the September 2025 Council meeting will include a variance analysis of actual financial results compared to the 2024-25 FY adopted Budget.

Preliminary Financial Results

For the 2024-25 FY Council has performed less favourable than budgeted, achieving a consolidated net operating surplus of \$27.6M, before capital income, compared to an adopted FY Budget of \$37.9M. The result is subject to audit by the NSW Audit Office.

The overall unfavourable variance is attributed to the net impact of several factors including, but not limited to:

- A shortfall in the advance payment of the Financial Assistance Grant compared to budget.
- Adjustments to employee costs provisions to align with amounts advised by the independent actuary.
- A reduction in landfill remediation provision due to the impact of interest and discount rates.
- Actual savings from vacancy turnarounds less than anticipated.
- Accelerated depreciation and loss on asset disposal due to earlier asset replacement, asset revaluation and water damaged assets.
- Goods or services committed but not delivered as at 30 June.
- Water and Sewer maintenance activities brought forward to align with other works.

Further analysis of variances to the adopted Budget is currently underway and more details will be included in report to Council at the September 2025 Council meeting.

Capital Expenditure

For the 2024-25 FY Council delivered \$298M in capital works and had a further \$17M committed as at 30 June, compared to a total Budget of \$316.5M. Actual expenditure was 94% of the full year adopted Budget, and 97% of the Original Budget for 2024-25 FY.

The wet weather event in May 2025 impacted on capital expenditure leading up the end of the financial year.

A review of amounts committed and the associated work in progress as at 30 June is currently underway to ensure that Council's overall capital works program remains within Council's resourcing capacity to deliver the adopted Operational Plan.

Council's financial performance for the 2024-25 FY is considered sound, provides a good basis to monitor the current financial year's performance against budget, and informs future updates of Council's Long Term Financial Plan.

Stakeholder Engagement

Nil.

Financial Considerations

Financial Year (FY) Implications.

This proposal has cost and revenue financial implications for the current FY and outer years in the LTFP

The actual financial performance for the 2024-25 FY will be taken into consideration when reviewing the 2025-26 FY adopted Budget through Quarterly Reviews, will inform the development of the 2026-27 FY draft Budget and the next update of Council's Long Term Financial Plan.

Budget and Long-Term Financial Plan (LTFP) Impact.

The FY adopted budget does not include funding for this proposal and the amount will need to be included in a future Quarterly Budget Review. The LTFP does not include funding for the ongoing impact and will need to be updated in the next review.

Link to Community Strategic Plan

Following the adoption of the Community Strategic Plan (CSP) and framework in June 2025, Council report templates are being updated with new CSP themes and goals. Contents in this report are aligned with the adopted CSP.

Risk Management

Council's financial performance is monitored and variances to budget are analysed and reported to Council every month. The results for the full financial year must be formally reported and audited through the mandated Annual Financial Statements process. A variance analysis of the results informs future annual budgets and Council's Long Term Financial Plan.

Critical Dates or Timeframes

The formal presentation of the results as the 2024-25 Draft Annual Financial Statements is currently underway and the associated reports will be submitted to the Audit Risk and Improvement Committee and then to Council at the meeting in September 2025 for referral to audit.

Following completion of the audit by the NSW Audit Office, the audited 2024-25 Financial Statements will be submitted to ARIC and then to Council at the meeting in October 2025 and then lodged with the Office of Local Government by 31 October 2025. The 2024-25 audited Financial Statements will then also be included in the 2025-25 Annual Report.

Attachments

Nil.