Media Release

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Cockburn's 2026-27 Budget to maintain, improve essential services and facilities in challenging economy

Cockburn Council has adopted a responsible 2026-27 Budget to maintain and improve essential services and facilities, in a challenging economy where costs have escalated significantly for the whole community.

Cockburn Council adopted its Budget and Rates for 2026-27 at a Special Council Meeting on Tuesday 30 June.

City of Cockburn Mayor Logan Howlett said a rates income of $153.95 million (excluding Special Area Rates) would continue providing vital services and facilities including:

- Waste management - weekly general waste and recycling collections, six trailer passes, and three verge collections (two general and one green-waste) for residential improved properties
- Road and drainage improvements
- 408 parks and reserves and 214 playgrounds
- Three libraries
- Community infrastructure upgrades and maintenance
- A range of free and low-cost community events
- A variety of community facilities including dedicated seniors and youth centres.

Mayor Howlett said while addressing current economic conditions to safeguard the City's finances, there was plenty to be excited about in the year ahead.

"The Budget incorporates a capital works program of $64.07m, comprising 135 renewal programs and 91 new or upgrade projects," he said.

"The City continues to progress and build the important community infrastructure our residents have asked for or that require maintenance or upgrade work.

"There are several hundred projects from footpath upgrades to larger infrastructure projects planned across our three wards for 2026-27 including vital traffic projects, park and reserve upgrades and redevelopments, and school crossings and CCTV additions."

Mayor Howlett said Council understood households and businesses were experiencing acute cost-of-living pressures, because local governments were striving to meet the same challenges head on.

“We have taken the necessary steps to secure the sustainable future of our community at what is an economically challenging time for all,” he said.

“We know even a small increase can be challenging for households and businesses and have taken measures to alleviate the burden on our community by facilitating the management of rate payments over an extended period without financial penalty.

“We have again committed to ensuring no fees apply to ratepayers who choose to pay their rates by instalments, with a zero interest rate on any overdue amounts under an agreed payment plan.”

In 2026-27, a 6.75 per cent rate will result in the average property experiencing an increase of approximately $2.50 per week, or $132 per year, compared with 2025-26 (excluding minimum payments and annual levies such as pool inspection charges).

Cockburn has been one of Perth’s lowest-rating councils for the past six years, with an average rate increase of 3.88 per cent compared to an average CPI of 4.67 per cent.

He said the City received almost 200 submissions in response to the advertised proposed Budget and rates, with the majority appealing for projects to be delayed or reduced, with only essential work being completed, to cut costs and spending.

“We have approved a responsible Budget and Rates to address current economic conditions and sustainably safeguard the City’s finances for Cockburn’s ratepayers, today and in the future,” he said.

“The City continues to work hard to create value for money for its residents and we’ll continue reviewing services and operations over the coming 12 months.

“Led by the City’s Strategic Community Plan we aim to achieve balance by prioritising investment in core infrastructure, including roads, footpaths, drainage and community facilities, guided by asset condition, safety requirements and service demand.

“Planning for growth and future infrastructure needs remains critical to avoiding higher costs and service shortfalls in the long term."

Mayor Howlett said while striving to keep rates affordable, Council was also focused on ensuring income was available to continue delivering the essential services the community expected and deserved.

"In the current economic climate we must be prepared for many major expenses to rise beyond our control over the next year," he said.

"For example, the cost of operating waste services will increase by $7.48m, parks and playground maintenance will increase by $3.1m, fuel costs are estimated to be about $1m higher than 2025-26, road and footpath maintenance is up by $900,000 and depreciation of City assets has increased by $5.82m.

"We are contending with a set of unpredictable inflationary pressures, environmental and biosecurity impacts, and geopolitical events over an extended period."

The City funds about 30 per cent of its Budget from sources other than rates including fees, grants, contributions, and investment income, while constantly reviewing services, operations and expenditure.

In 2026-27 local government Budgets coincide with the Western Australian Valuer-General's statewide three-yearly Gross Rental Valuation. This has resulted in an average 47.4 per cent increase in these values across Cockburn.

This valuation redistributes the rates burden between properties but a change in your property value will not automatically result in the same percentage increase to your Council rates.

The following differential property rates will apply for 2026-27:

- **Residential Improved properties** – 6.75 per cent yield increase with adjustments to the rate-in-the-dollar and minimum payment
- **Vacant** – 6.75 per cent yield increase with adjustments to the rate-in-the-dollar and minimum payment

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- **Unimproved Value rated properties** – 6.75 per cent yield increase with adjustments to the rate-in-the-dollar and minimum payment
- **Commercial & Industrial properties (including caravan parks)** – 6.75 per cent yield increase with adjustments to the rate-in-the-dollar and minimum payment.

2026-27 Budget highlights:

- Road resurfacing $8.7m
- Black Spot road projects $5.8m
- Enhancement of natural areas, parks, and playgrounds $5m
- Atwell Reserve changeroom upgrades $4m
- Beale Park redevelopment $2.8m
- Cockburn ARC planning and upgrades $2m
- Grants and sponsorships $1.61m
- Cockburn ARC Oval development $1.05m
- Pathway improvements $1.06m.

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