

COUNCIL REPORT

2nd Ordinary Council Meeting

Agenda Item:	12.1.4
Report Title:	2026-27 Budget Development Timeline
Meeting Date:	Tuesday 21 October 2025
Author:	Finance Manager, Jeffrey Guilas
Approver:	General Manager Finance and Governance, Wati Kerta

Community plan

Governance: Council is trusted by the community and invests in things that the public value.

Purpose

The purpose of this Report is to advise the Council of the timelines for the preparation of the Draft 2026/27 Municipal Plan & Budget and 2027-36 Long-Term Financial Plan.

Key messages

- This report presents the proposed schedule for the development of the 2026/27 Municipal Plan & Budget and Long-Term Financial Plan.
- Elected Member Workshops will be undertaken to present various elements of the Municipal Plan & Budget 2026/27 throughout the budgeting development process.
- The topics that will be discussed will include: the rating models, rates concessions, economic conditions, new initiatives and review of proposed budget.
- The Municipal Plan and the Long-Term Financial Plan will go out for 28 days of public consultation from 8 April to 5 May 2026. This is one week earlier compared to last year.
- Council is required to adopt the Municipal Plan 2026/27 by 30 June 2026 to meet the requirements of the Local Government Act 2019.
- The timetable has been prepared to enable the Municipal Plan 2026/27 and the Long-Term Financial Plan to be adopted at the 2nd Ordinary Meeting in June 2026.

Recommendation

1. THAT Report entitled 2026-27 Budget Development Timeline be received and noted.

2. THAT the Council endorse the 2026-27 Budget Timeline in **Attachment 12.1.4.1** contained in the report entitled 2026-27 Budget Development Timeline.

Background

Each year a report is presented to Council with a proposed timeline with key planning dates for the following year's budget preparations. These timelines provide an outline to stakeholders on how Council intends to meet the requirements stated in the *Local Government Act 2019* in finalising both the Municipal Plan and Long-Term Financial Plan.

The Municipal Plan 2024-25 reflects Council's overarching Community Plan, aligning with its six defined outcomes. These outcomes serve as the framework for performance and service plans, guiding Council's endeavours for the upcoming 2026-27 fiscal year. Progress towards these objectives will be tracked and reported in the subsequent Annual Report for 2026-27.

This report provides Council with the proposed timeline for budget development activities to produce the 2026/27 Municipal Plan and Budget and the 2027-36 Long Term Financial Plan.

Discussion

A series of budget development workshops are held with Elected Members to ensure that Council finalise both the Municipal Plan and Long-Term Financial Plan in line with the requirements of the *Local Government Act (LGA 2019)*.

The table below outlines the proposed timeline for upcoming 2026/27 financial year. Details of specific topics to be discussed at workshops is found at **Attachment 12.1.4.1**

Timeline: Budget Development

Dates	Event
21 October 2025	Council Meeting
8 November 2025	Infrastructure Tour
11 November 2025	Budget Workshop 1
10 February 2026	Budget Workshop 2
24 February 2026	Budget Workshop 3
10 March 2026	Budget Workshop 4
26 March 2026	Budget Workshop 5
7 April 2026	Council Meeting (endorse draft Municipal Plan and LTFP for public consultation)
8 April to 5 May 2026	Public consultation
2 June 2026	Council Meeting - present feedback
16 June 2026	Council Meeting - adoption

The above timeframe is indicative only and subject to change depending on requirements and availability of Executive Management and Elected Members. The budget will present to

Council challenges and opportunities for the forthcoming year for consideration. Some topics that will be included are:

- Current economic conditions impacting both Palmerston and the Northern Territory at large.
- Waste Charges.
- New initiatives.
- A review of proposed budget in conjunction with the Asset Management Strategy.
- Rates models and rates concessions.

This year, public consultation will commence one week earlier compared to last year to allow feedback from the public consultation to be presented to Council at the 1st Ordinary meeting in June 2026 before finalising the 2026-27 Budget and Long-Term Financial Plan 2027-36 for adoption at the 2nd Ordinary Meeting in June 2026.

Consultation and marketing

It is recommended at this draft stage to hold five workshops with the Elected Members. These workshops are mainly to consult on matters relating to both the Draft Municipal Plan & Budget 2026/27, and the Long-Term Financial Plan 2027-2036. Further workshops may be required depending on the budget development progress and consultation.

The following City of Palmerston staff were consulted in preparing this Report:

- Executive Leadership Team
- Senior Leadership Team

Policy implications

The development of the budget must comply with Council's policy, which include

- Asset Management Policy
- Borrowing
- Debt Collection
- Financial Reserve
- Investment
- Rating Concession
- Rating Policy.

Budget and resource implications

There are no budget or resource implications relating to this Report.

Risk, legal and legislative implications

Part 3.3, 10.4 and 10.5 of the *Local Government Act 2019* (NT) (the Act) sets out the requirements of Municipal Plan, LTFP and the Annual Budget.

- Section 35(1) - A council must, by resolution, adopt its municipal, regional or shire plan between 1 March and 30 June in each year.

- Section 200(4) - council must provide the Agency with a copy of its long-term financial plan by 30 June in the year preceding the first financial year to which the plan relates.
- Section 203 of the *Local Government Act 2019* (NT), council must adopt its budget for a particular financial year on or before 30 June in the previous financial year.

This Report addresses the following City of Palmerston Strategic Risks:

2. Financial Sustainability

Failure of Council to be financially sustainable to deliver key services and infrastructure for the community.

6. Governance

Failure to effectively govern.

Strategies, framework and plans implications

This Report relates to the following City of Palmerston Strategies, Framework and Plans:

- [Long Term Financial Plan](#)

Financial sustainability entails ensuring CoP can adequately finance its services and asset replacement at a rate aligned with their deterioration.

Council officer conflict of interest declaration

We the author and approving officer declare that we do not have a conflict of interest in relation to this matter.

Attachments

1. 2026 27 Budget Development Timeline (1) [12.1.4.1 - 1 page]

2026-27 BUDGET DEVELOPMENT TIMELINE

*Indicated Council Policies

Dates	Event	Topics
21 October 2025	Council Meeting	2026-27 Budget Development Timeline
8 November 2025	Tour	Tour as part of the budget development process
11 November 2025	Budget Workshop 1	Rating Strategy* Overview on Rating Model, Waste Charges, Reserves* and LTFP. Fees and Charges Overview Intro to 10-year Capital Program
12 November 2025	New initiatives	Circulate New Initiatives
18 November 2025	Council Meeting	Present budget workshop report for Council direction
20 January 2026	New initiatives	Due date for New initiatives
10 February 2026	Budget Workshop 2	Elements of the Consolidated Budget New Initiatives Borrowings* Rate Concession* Investments* Economic indicators Fees and Charges
17 February 2026	Council Meeting	Present budget workshop report for Council direction
24 February 2026	Budget Workshop 3	Present model of Consolidated Budget based on Council direction - Rating Strategy - Waste Charges - New initiatives - Reserves Present LTFP based on above and 10 year Capital Program
3 March 2026	Council Meeting	Present budget workshop report for Council direction
10 March 2026	Budget Workshop 4	Revised Rating Models Waste Budget Consolidated Budget
17 March 2026	Council Meeting	Present budget workshop report for Council direction
26 March 2026	Budget Workshop 5	Consolidated Budget Draft Municipal Plan & Budget
7 April 2026	Council Endorsement	Council endorses release of Draft MP & LTFP for public consultation
8 April to 5 May 2026	Public consultation	28 days public consultation
2 June 2026	Council Meeting	Feedback on Public consultation
16 June 2026	Council Meeting	Adoption of MP & LTFP