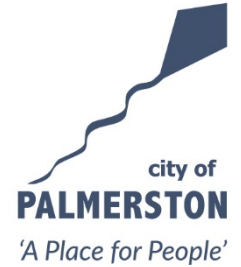


# COUNCIL REPORT



1st Ordinary Council Meeting

<b>Agenda Item:</b>	13.1.1
<b>Report Title:</b>	2025-26 Municipal Plan and Budget - Feedback from Public Consultation
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	Tuesday 3 June 2025
<b>Author:</b>	Executive Manager Organisational Performance, Penny Hart
<b>Approver:</b>	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

This Report the submissions received for the 2025-26 Municipal Plan and Budget public consultation for consideration by Council.

## Key messages

- Council is required to prepare an annual Budget for adoption for a particular year on or before 30 June in the previous financial year.
- Council's annual Municipal Plan outlines the service delivery plan and allocated budget for the forthcoming year.
- Pursuant to the *Local Government Act 2019* (NT) (the Act), the Municipal Plan and Budget must be made available for public consultation for a minimum of 21 days.
- The draft 2025-26 Municipal Plan and Budget was open for public consultation for a period of 28 days commencing on 16 April 2025 and closing on 13 May 2025.
- No submissions were received, other than one from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Community Development.

## Recommendation

1. THAT Report entitled 2025-26 Municipal Plan and Budget - Feedback from Public Consultation be received and noted.
2. THAT Council notes that the feedback from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Community Development will be included in the final 2025-26 Municipal Plan and Budget.
3. THAT Council notes that the 2025-26 Municipal Plan and Budget will be presented for adoption on 17 June 2025.

## Background

The 2025-26 Municipal Plan and Budget reflects Council's overarching Community Plan, aligning with its six (6) defined outcomes. These outcomes serve as the framework for performance and service plans, guiding Council's activities for the upcoming 2025-26 fiscal year. Progress towards these objectives will be tracked and reported in the subsequent Annual Report for 2025-26.

The draft 2025-26 Municipal Plan and Budget was presented to Council on 15 April 2025 and adopted for public consultation for a period of 28 days:

### **10.1.3 Draft 2025-26 Municipal Plan and Budget**

**Moved:** Councillor Henderson  
**Seconded:** Councillor Giesecke

1. *THAT Report entitled Draft 2025-26 Municipal Plan and Budget be received and noted.*
2. *THAT Council endorses the draft 2025-26 Municipal Plan at **Attachment 27.1.3.1.** to report entitled Draft 2025-26 Municipal Plan and Budget for public consultation including administrative amendments and reallocation of the \$150,000.00 for the SWELL Cafe design to Community Facility.*
3. *THAT feedback from the public consultation on the draft 2025-26 Municipal Plan be presented to Council at the 1<sup>st</sup> Ordinary Council Meeting on 3 June 2025.*
4. *THAT the decisions relating to report entitled Draft 2025-26 Municipal Plan and Budget be moved into open following the draft 2025-26 Municipal Plan media release.*

**CARRIED (7/0) - 10/1859 - 15/04/2025**

## Discussion

The draft 2025-26 Municipal Plan and Budget was open for public consultation for a period of 28 days commencing on 16 April 2025 and closing on 13 May 2025.

During the consultation, no submissions were received. However, the Local Government Compliance Unit within the Department of Housing, Local Government and Community Development provided minor administrative feedback relating to links within the document that will be incorporated into the final 2025-26 Municipal Plan and Budget.

The 2025-26 Municipal Plan and Budget will be presented for adoption on 17 June 2025 Council Meeting.

## Consultation and marketing

The draft 2025-26 Municipal Plan and Budget public consultation was promoted via Council's social media platforms, website and the NT News. Key messages included:

- Efforts have been undertaken to reduce rising operational costs being passed on to our community
- Several external factors and tenders have resulted in higher costs than previous years:
  - Increases in the operational costs for SWELL
  - Increases in our annual insurance program, which you have likely also seen in your personal finances
  - Increases in waste management operations, mowing and landscaping contract costs in the order of 25%
  - Increase in the disposal of waste at Shoal Bay Waste Management Facility by 15%, based on the City of Darwin's long-term financial plan.
  - Inclusion of Cyber Security insurance in Council's program, which we know is necessary to reduce the risk to our operations
  - A rates exemption decision by NTCAT applied to affordable housing supplier Venture Housing.
- Council has focused on maintaining service levels, events and programs, rather than committing to new projects that may require additional funding.
- We will continue to support the community through free facility hire and entry to SWELL, free community events and support for local businesses.

The draft 2025-26 Municipal Plan was submitted to the Department of Housing, Local Government and Community Development as part of the consultation period for review to ensure alignment with the provisions of the Act.

## Policy implications

City of Palmerston's Municipal Plan and Budget were developed in accordance with Council's policies and legislative requirements under the Act.

## Budget and resource implications

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

## Risk, legal and legislative implications

Pursuant to the Act, Council is required to prepare an annual Budget for adoption for a particular year on or before 30 June in the previous financial year. Council has developed the 2025-26 Municipal Plan and Budget in accordance with the Act.

This Report addresses the following City of Palmerston Strategic Risks:

### 6. Governance

Failure to effectively govern.

## Strategies, framework and plans implications

The Municipal Plan and Budget 2025-26 delivers on City of Palmerston's adopted strategies, framework and plans for the 2025-26 period.

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

- [Long Term Financial Plan](#)

## 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. LG Compliance - Feedback on Draft Council Plan 2025-26 [13.1.1.1 - 2 pages]

**Council: City of Palmerston**

**Released on: 16/04/2025**

**Submission closes: 13/05/2025**

Our Ref: 2024/1567-13~4

Mr Andrew Walsh  
Chief Executive Officer  
City of Palmerston  
PO Box 1  
Palmerston NT 0831

Email: [governance@palmerston.nt.gov.au](mailto:governance@palmerston.nt.gov.au)  
[Penny.hart@palmerston.nt.gov.au](mailto:Penny.hart@palmerston.nt.gov.au)

Dear Mr Walsh

**Re: Feedback on Council's draft 2025 – 26 Annual Plan out for Public Consultation**

Every year the Department of Housing, Local Government and Community Development (DHLGCD) as the Agency responsible for regulating the Local Government sector, provides feedback on the draft Annual Plan and budget (draft plan) published by councils.

Although the general public are invited to make a written submission on the draft plan, this letter is not a formal submission on the City of Palmerston (Council) draft plan. Rather, it is a contribution to support the Council to meet its legislative obligations in relation to its planning and budgeting process under the *Local Government Act 2019* (Act).

Provided at **Attachment A** are sections in the draft plan recommended for review by the Council. Please note, the feedback on the draft plan does not include any assessment or comment on the Council's rates declaration. Council is encouraged to seek its own legal advice in relation to its rates declaration.

Once the Council has considered any written submissions and the final plan and budget is ready to be adopted, it is recommended the Council separately resolves to:

1. Declare the rates (under sections 237 and 238 of the Act).

*NOTE:* before the Council can adopt the budget, the CEO must check the rate records and certify in writing to the Council that to the best of the CEO's knowledge, information and belief, the assessment record is a comprehensive record of all rateable land within the area (Regulation 29).

2. Adopt the budget (under section 203 of the Act).
3. Adopt the regional plan (under section 35(1) of the Act).

Under the Act the Council must adopt its 2025-26 Annual Plan including the budget on or before 30 June 2025. It is important to note that the Act does not provide the Minister or DHLGCD with the power to defer or waive the stipulated 30 June date.

Should you have any queries in relation to this feedback please email [jg.compliance@nt.gov.au](mailto:jg.compliance@nt.gov.au).

Yours sincerely

The Sustainability and Compliance Team

## Attachment A

### Draft Annual Plan Feedback

#### **Feedback for consideration**

1. On page 50, under “Fees and Charges”, the link directed the reader to Council’s website which is 2024-25 information. It is recommended that once the plan is finalised, the link be updated to show 2025-26 fees and charges.
2. On page 14, under “Allowances”, the link to the NT Remuneration Tribunal reports and Determination of Allowances for Members of Local Councils on Council’s website is outdated. It is recommended that the link is updated once the plan is finalised.
3. On page 10, the link to Council’s website directing the reader to the 2025-26 LTFP is outdated. It is recommended that the link is updated once the plan is finalised.