

Audit & Risk Committee Minutes

27 March 2023

Our Vision

*A City which values its heritage, cultural diversity,
sense of place and natural environment.*

*A progressive City which is prosperous, sustainable
and socially cohesive, with a strong community spirit.*

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City of
Norwood
Payneham
& St Peters

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VENUE Mayors Parlour, Norwood Town Hall

HOUR 7.00pm

PRESENT

Committee Members Mayor Robert Bria (Presiding Member)
Cr Grant Piggott
Cr Claire Clutterham
Ms Sandra Di Blasio (Independent Member)
Ms Stefanie Eldridge (Independent Member)

Staff Mario Barone (Chief Executive Officer)
Lisa Mara (General Manager, Governance & Civic Affairs)
Sharon Francis (Acting Manager, Finance)

Visitor Mr Michael Kelledy (KelledyJones Lawyers)

APOLOGIES Nil

ABSENT Nil

TERMS OF REFERENCE:

The functions of the Audit & Risk Committee include:

- (a) reviewing Annual Financial Statements to ensure that the Statements present fairly the state of affairs of the Council; and*
- (b) proposing, and providing information relevant to, a review of the Council's strategic management plans or annual business plan; and*
- (c) monitoring the responsiveness of the Council to recommendations for improvement based on previous audits and risk assessments, including those raised by the Council's External Auditor; and*
- (d) proposing, and reviewing, the exercise of powers under Section 130A of the Local Government Act 1999; and*
- (e) liaising with the Council's External Auditor in accordance with any requirements prescribed by the regulations; and*
- (f) reviewing the adequacy of the accounting, internal controls, reporting and other financial management systems and practices of the Council on a regular basis; and*
- (g) providing oversight of planning and scoping of the Internal Audit work plan; and*
- (h) reviewing and commenting on reports provided by the person primarily responsible for the Internal Audit function at least on a quarterly basis; and*
- (i) reviewing and evaluating the effectiveness of policies, systems and procedures established and maintained for the identification, assessment, monitoring, management and review of strategic, financial and operational risks on a regular basis; and*
- (j) reviewing any report obtained by the Council pursuant to Section 48(1) of the Local Government Act 1999; and*
- (k) performing any other function determined by the Council or prescribed by the regulations.*

1. PRESENTATION

Michael Kelledy of KelledyJones Lawyers provided a presentation regarding the role of the Committee and the *Local Government (Procedures at Meetings) Regulation 2013*.

2. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 24 OCTOBER 2022

Ms Sandra Di Blasio moved that the minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held on 24 October 2022 be taken as read and confirmed. Seconded by Cr Piggott and carried unanimously.

3. PRESIDING MEMBER'S COMMUNICATION

Mayor Bria welcomed all Members and congratulated them on their appointment to the Committee.

4. QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Nil

5. QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE

Nil

6. WRITTEN NOTICES OF MOTION
Nil

7. STAFF REPORTS

7.1 2023-2024 ANNUAL BUSINESS PLAN AND BUDGET OBJECTIVES & PARAMETERS

REPORT AUTHOR: Acting Manager, Finance
GENERAL MANAGER: General Manager, Governance & Civic Affairs
CONTACT NUMBER: 8366 4548
FILE REFERENCE: qA109628
ATTACHMENTS: Nil

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to advise the Audit & Risk Committee of the process which has been endorsed by the Council regarding the objectives and parameters which will apply in the development of the draft 2023-2024 Annual Business Plan and Annual Budget.

BACKGROUND

Legislative Requirements

Pursuant to Section 123 of the *Local Government Act 1999* (the Act), each financial year the Council is required to prepare an Annual Business Plan and Annual Budget. The Annual Business Plan and Annual Budget are to be adopted by the Council after 31 May for the ensuing financial year and except in a case involving extraordinary administrative difficulty, before 31 August for the financial year.

Pursuant to Section 123(2) of the Act and in Regulation 6 of the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 2011* (the Regulations), each Annual Business Plan of a Council must-

- (a) *include a summary of the Council's long-term objectives (as set out in its strategic management plans); and*
- (b) *include an outline of—*
 - (i) *the Council's objectives for the financial year; and*
 - (ii) *the activities that the Council intends to undertake to achieve those objectives; and*
 - (iii) *the measures (financial and non-financial) that the Council intends to use to assess the performance of the Council against its objectives over the financial year; and*
- (c) *assess the financial requirements of the Council for the financial year and, taking those requirements into account, set out a summary of its proposed operating expenditure, capital expenditure and sources of revenue; and*
- (d) *set out the rates structure and policies for the financial year; and*
- (e) *assess the impact of the rates structure and policies on the community based on modelling that has been undertaken or obtained by the Council; and*
- (f) *take into account the Council's Long-Term Financial Plan and relevant issues relating to the management and development of infrastructure and major assets by the Council; and*
- (g) *address or include any other matter prescribed by the Regulations.*

At its meeting held on 16 January 2023, the Council endorsed the objectives and parameters which will apply in the development of the draft 2023-2024 Annual Business Plan and Annual Budget.

This report is to advise the Audit & Risk Committee of the process which has been endorsed by the Council.

RELEVANT STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS & POLICIES

The Council's Strategic Management Plan, *CityPlan 2030: Shaping Our Future*, the Long-term Financial Plan and Whole-of-Life Asset and Infrastructure Management Plans, provide the basis and framework upon which the Council's Annual Business Plan and Budget is based.

FINANCIAL AND BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

The Council's Long-Term Financial Plan, sets out the Council's financial goal as, "A City which delivers on our Strategic Outcomes by managing our financial resources in a sustainable and equitable manner", in short to be financially sustainable.

The Local Government Association of South Australia defines financial sustainability as:

- "A Council's long-term financial performance and position is sustainable where planned long-term service and infrastructure levels and standards are met without unplanned increases in rates or disruptive cuts to services."
- The key elements to the definition are
 - ensuring the maintenance of a Council's high priority expenditure programs, both operating and capital;
 - ensuring a reasonable degree of stability and predictability in the overall rate burden; and,
 - promoting a fair sharing in the distribution of Council resources and the attendant taxation between current and future ratepayers.

In simple terms, financial sustainability means positioning the Council so that it can continue to provide quality services, programs and facilities and maintain the Council's infrastructure to a defined service standard, with stable rate increases (removal of sudden increases) and ensuring inter-generational equity.

The Council's Annual Business Plan and Budget is required to contain objectives and financial parameters which will deliver a responsible budget and meet the reasonable needs of the community on an equitable and "value for money" basis. For the 2023-2024 Financial year, the Council's 2021-2031 Long-Term Financial Plan, projects an Operating Surplus of \$1,355,000 based on a Rate Revenue increase of 4.55%.

It should be noted that the target Operating Surplus includes Grant Income of \$362,000 which is expected to be received in the 2023-2024 Financial Year under the Roads-to-Recovery Program and will be included in the Capital Projects budget to be spent on a Capital Road Project(s).

EXTERNAL ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

The Annual Business Plan and Budget will have an economic impact on property owners and suppliers of goods and services to the Council, the level of which will be dependent on the final decisions taken in respect to the level of income, and subsequently the Rate increase required to meet proposed expenditure.

SOCIAL ISSUES

Nil.

CULTURAL ISSUES

Nil.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

Nil.

RESOURCE ISSUES

Nil.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Financial Management and Annual Business Plan preparation processes are governed by the *Local Government Act 1999* and Regulation 6 of the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 2011*. All budget documentation will need to be prepared in accordance with the relevant statutory requirements.

CONSULTATION

- **Elected Members**
Not Applicable.
- **Community**
Not Applicable.
- **Staff**
Not Applicable.
- **Other Agencies**
Not Applicable.

DISCUSSION

2023-2024 Annual Business Plan

The Annual Business Plan is the Council's statement of the intended services, programs, facilities and objectives set by the Council for a given financial year. It is based upon the objectives and strategies set out in the Council's Strategic Plan *CityPlan 2030: Shaping Our Future*, the Long-term Financial Plan and the Whole-of-Life Infrastructure and Asset Management Plans.

The Council's Strategic Plan, *CityPlan 2030: Shaping Our Future*, sets out the Council's Outcomes in respect to Social Equity, Cultural Vitality, Economic Prosperity and Environmental Sustainability, together with objectives and strategies for each Outcome.

Pursuant to Section 123(2) (b) (i), the Annual Business Plan must contain a series of objectives for the financial year. To be effective the annual objectives should be in line with the outcomes contained in the *City Plan 2030: Shaping Our Future* and assist the Council in delivering on the financial outcomes set out in the Long-Term Financial Plan.

The following objectives have been endorsed by the Council to be incorporated into the 2023-2024 Annual Business Plan.

Social Equity

An inclusive, connected, accessible and friendly community

- Our cost-effective services are welcoming, inclusive, and socially connected all ages and abilities.
- Our infrastructure assets are maintained and renewed in line with Councils Whole of Life Infrastructure framework.
- Deliver programs and activities which result in an engaged and participating community.
- Engage disabled, aged, youth and varied cultures in the life of the City through a variety of events and programs.
- Rates are fair and equitable for our residents and ratepayers.

Cultural Vitality

A culturally rich and diverse City, with a strong identity, history and 'sense of place'

- Promote a healthy cultural life and creative expression through the use of public art and events that complement the City's cultural heritage.
- Provide opportunities for the community to contribute to the social and creative life of the City through events, activities, arts and cultural initiatives.

Economic Prosperity

A dynamic and thriving centre for business and services

- Support the development of a prosperous local economy.

Environmental Sustainability

A leader in environmental sustainability

- Ensure urban development undertaken enhances the environmental, social and cultural character of our City.
- Maximise the use of the City's open space by providing a range of active and passive open space recreation opportunities.
- Promote recycling and environmentally sustainable practices throughout the City.
- Consider innovative infrastructure solutions which minimise the impact on the environment.

Organisational Excellence

- Ensure best use of Council resources by innovative, efficient and effective service provision.
- Demonstrate Business Excellence Principles.
- Financially sound organisation.

The assessment of new projects, services, programs and activities will be assessed against both the Annual Business Plan objectives and *City Plan 2030* objectives and strategies.

The 2023-2024 Annual Budget

To ensure that the Council delivers its financial objectives and in accordance with the Council's standard practice, the draft 2023-2024 Annual Budget will be developed with reference to and within the framework of the Long-Term Financial Plan, which, based on the components of the rate revenue increase set out in the Budget and Financial Implications above, sets out a target Operating Surplus of \$1,355,000.

To ensure the Council's financial targets are achieved, the Annual Budget must be set with reference to similar key influences and assumptions. The influences and assumptions relating to external economic conditions and internal policy decisions are set out below.

Key Influences

- maintenance and renewal program for existing infrastructure assets, including roads, footpaths, Council owned properties and open spaces, are consistent with the *Whole-of Life Infrastructure and Asset Management Plans*;
- commitment to major projects which span more than one (1) financial year;
- initiatives and major projects which are undertaken need to contribute to the Vision, strategic direction and the wellbeing of our City as set out in the *CityPlan 2030: Shaping Our Future*;
- previously recognised ongoing operational savings are to be maintained;
- to continue to implement the principles and practices of the Business Excellence Framework (i.e. Continuous Improvement of the organisations procedures and process to ensure the "best value" is achieved);
- prudent financial management to ensure ongoing financial sustainability; and
- decisions will be informed and based on the best available evidence and information at the time.

Key Assumptions

The Annual Budget incorporates three (3) components of the Council Operations, these being:

- Recurrent Income and Expenditure (Recurrent Budget)
- Operating Projects (Operating Projects Budget); and
- Capital Projects (Capital Budget).

As in previous years, the preparation of the Annual Budget will be undertaken in two (2) stages. The first stage will be the preparation on the Recurrent Budget, which incorporates the revenues and expenditure required to provide the "Business as Usual" services. The second stage will focus on the Capital and Operating Project budget.

Rate Revenue Increases

As in previous years, for the initial review of the draft Recurrent Budget, no increase in rate revenue will be taken into account in the analysis. Notwithstanding this, it should be noted, that the financial projections set out in the Council's Long-Term Financial Plan is based on a Rate Revenue increase of 4.55%.

Maintaining Existing Services at Current Service Standards

The draft Recurrent Budget is proposed to be based on a "business as usual" assumption, which means that the Council will continue to provide the existing services, programs and facilities at the current service levels, unless otherwise determined by the Council. This is not to say that the existing services, programs and facilities will be continued to be delivered in the same way. It should be noted that service levels, and the associated budget will be adjusted to reflect ongoing operating cost adjustments resulting from projects completed during the 2022-2023 Financial year.

The "business as usual" assumption does not take into account any change in direction or service levels in response to community expectations, legislative requirements, changing economic conditions or any changes which the Council may wish to make. Such changes will be accounted for in the Council's Operating & Capital Projects Budget.

Cost Escalation

Materials, Contracts and Other Expenses

The Adelaide CPI for the June 2022 Quarter and September 2022 Quarter was 6.4% and 8.4% respectively. An alternative measure for cost escalation is the Local Government Price Index (LGPI). As the nature of the price movement associated with goods and services consumed by Local Government is different to the goods and services consumed by the 'average household', the LGPI is a reliable and independent measure of the inflationary effect on price changes in the South Australian Local Government sector. The LGPI is similar in nature to the CPI, however it represents the movements of prices associated with the goods and services used by Local Government in South Australia (to deliver services to its community) as opposed to the goods and services consumed by the 'average metropolitan household'. The LGPI considers both recurrent and capital expenditure. The change in the recurrent component from the previous year of the LGPI for South Australia to June 2022 is 3.8% and as at September 2022 is 4.5%.

The State Government recently released the 2022-2023 Mid-year Budget Review, which forecasts the Adelaide CPI at 7.25% for the remainder of 2022-2023, reducing to 4.0% for the 2023-2024 financial year. The Federal Government expects inflation to ease gradually to 3.50% by June 2024.

After consideration of both the LGPI and the community's expectation that increases should only move by the CPI forecast, the Council has endorsed that the **maximum** expenditure increase for 2023-2024 across the Materials, Contracts and Other Expenses component of the Budget, be set at 8.0%, which has been determined with reference to the current movements in the Adelaide CPI and the LGPI Index for recurrent expenditure. It should be noted that this may change as the Budget process progresses.

It should also be noted that in some circumstances, there may be cost increases in excess of the 8% target (i.e. Solid Waste Levy, fuel charges and materials costs) and in other circumstances, there will be no or minimal cost increases.

Wages and Salaries

Wages and Salaries and other associated employee on-costs will be indexed in line with the current Enterprise Agreements, which is currently set at 5.0% (from 1 November 2022 then 3% from 1 November 2023) for the *Municipal Officers Enterprise Agreement* (indoor staff) and 2% for *The Local Government Workers Enterprise Agreement* (outdoor staff). It should be noted that *The Local Government Workers Enterprise Agreement* (outdoor staff) expires in November 2023. As negotiations will not commence until after the adoption of the 2023-2024 Budget, for the purpose of developing the Wages and Salaries budget, the indexation factor will be increased to 5.0% in line with the *Municipal Officers Enterprise Agreement*. It should be noted that in-line with the *Superannuation Guarantee (Administration) Act 1992*, superannuation guarantee payments will increase to 11% of eligible earnings.

Fees and Charges

At its meeting held on 6 March 2023, the Council considered the draft Fees and Charges for 2023-2024 which are not set by legislation, and resolved the following:

That the draft Schedule of Fees and Charges for the 2023-2024 financial year set out in Attachment A be adopted 'in principle', with the following amendments:

1. *the meeting hire fees for the Norwood Concert Hall for community organisations not be increased;*
2. *the Parks and Reserves hire fees for not-for-profit/community group gatherings not be increased; and*
3. *the Swimming Centre fees not be increased.*

Excluding the fees associated with the three (3) facilities above, the proposed increase to all other Fees and Charges is based on the weighted average of the recommended increase in Material & Contracts and the Wages and Salaries Indexation.

Capital Expenditure

Capital Expenditure relates to the purchasing, building, upgrading and renewing of the Council's assets. Capital Expenditure is funded from depreciation, borrowings and grant funding (where available). For asset renewals the main funding source is depreciation. For new assets and upgrades, the main funding source is borrowings and grant funding. The draft Annual Budget will assume that the Council will borrow to fund new assets and the upgrading of existing assets, with the renewal of assets being funded through depreciation.

Assuming that the Reserve Bank of Australia maintains cash rates at the current level of 3.6%, the interest rates on new borrowings are forecast to be between 5.01% per annum and 6.0% per annum, depending on the term of the borrowings. The interest rate on investment income is forecast at 3.8% per annum.

New Operating and Capital Projects

The assessment of new projects, both Operating and Capital, which are put forward for consideration, will be based on the objectives contained in *CityPlan 2030: Shaping Our Future*, the Council's Long Term Financial Plan and the Infrastructure and Asset Management Plans and the annual objectives set out above.

All new proposed Projects are to be considered and approved within the constraints of the Long-Term Financial Plan. New services and "one-off" Operating Projects are funded through Rate Revenue increases, grant funding or by expenditure savings. New Capital Projects will be funded via Grant Funding (if secured), borrowings or cash reserves.

Carry Forward Projects

Where Operating Projects are not completed within budgeted scheduled timeframes, future deficits can eventuate, as the Rate Revenue is raised in the year the project is initially approved. As part of the draft 2023-2024 Budget, the cost to complete the Operating Projects from prior financial years will be carried forward to the 2023-2024 Financial Year, however the estimate of Carried Forward Projects will be excluded for rate modelling purposes. In this respect, estimates will be based on the 2022-2023 Third Quarter Budget Update, with the associated operational impacts being built into the determination of the 2023-2024 Operating Result.

The draft Recurrent Budget (prior to any increase in Rate Revenue being determined by the Council together with the Operating and Capital Projects) was presented to Elected Members at a Workshop which was held on 14 March 2023. The draft Recurrent Budget and the Capital and Operating Projects are proposed to be considered by the Council at a Special Council Meeting which is scheduled for 11 April 2023.

Budget Management Principles

As in previous years, the Council recognises that it needs to exercise “budget discipline” if it is to achieve its financial outcomes that are set out in the Annual Business Plan and Budget and continue to achieve and maintain financial sustainability.

To date, the approach which has been taken by this Council once the Annual Business Plan and Budget has been adopted, includes:

- no new recurrent operating expenditure or projects approved without being matched by an increase in operating revenue (i.e., Grants/Fee for Service) or a reduction in expenditure, elsewhere within the Council’s operations;
- expenditure over-runs are offset by deferral of discretionary expenditure or expenditure savings elsewhere within the Council’s operations;
- income shortfalls to be matched by operating expenditure savings; and
- no new capital expenditure that requires additional borrowings.

Noting that there may be some urgent issues that require urgent attention however once the Budget is adopted, these should be the exception rather than the rule.

Budget Timetable

Pursuant to Section 123 of the Act and Regulation 6 of the Regulations, the Council is required to adopt the Annual Business Plan and Annual Budget after 31 May for the ensuing financial year and except in a case involving extraordinary administrative difficulty, before 31 August for the financial year.

As set out in Table 1 below, a proposed budget timetable has been developed to ensure that the Council is in a position to adopt the 2023-2024 Annual Business Plan and Annual Budget at the Council meeting to be held on 3 July 2023.

TABLE 1: KEY BUDGET PROCESS ACTIVITIES 2022-2023

Key Steps	Dates
Budget process, parameters and objectives adopted	Monday 16 January 2023 (Council Meeting)
Fees and charges adopted in principle by the Council	Monday 6 March 2023 (Council Meeting)
Budget Workshop with Elected Members	Tuesday 14 March 2023
Budget Council Meeting	Tuesday 11 April 2023 (Special Meeting)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Recurrent Budget considered</i> • <i>Operating and Capital Projects considered</i> 	
Draft Annual Business Plan, rating model and projects carried forward and Infrastructure Whole of Life endorsed	Monday 1 May 2023 (Council Meeting)
Draft Annual Business Plan available for viewing by the public	Friday 5 May 2023
Meeting to receive public submissions on the Annual Business Plan	Monday 29 May 2023
Consideration of public submissions	Tuesday 13 June 2023 (Special Council Meeting)
Adoption of Annual Business Plan and Budget	Monday 3 July 2023 (Council Meeting)

Pursuant to Section 123 (3) of the Act, prior to the adoption of the Annual Business Plan, the Council must undertake public consultation for a minimum period of twenty-one (21) days. At the conclusion of the public consultation period, a public meeting is to be held where members of the community can ask questions and make submissions regarding the draft Annual Business Plan. During the public consultation period, the Council must make available copies of the draft Annual Business Plan at its Principal place of business.

In respect to the community consultation on the Annual Business Plan, a Public Meeting is proposed to be held on Monday, 29 May 2023 to allow members of the community to present their comments and feedback to the Council on the content of the Annual Business Plan and Budget.

As part of the consultation process, and following the Council's endorsement of the draft 2023-2024 Budget, the draft 2023-2024 Budget will be presented to the Audit & Risk Committee on 8 May 2023.

This will provide the opportunity for the Committee to consider and make any recommendations regarding the draft Budget to the Council for the Council's consideration as part of the final adoption of the Budget.

OPTIONS

Not Applicable.

This report is presented to the Audit & Risk Committee for information purposes only.

CONCLUSION

The development of the 2023-2024 Annual Business Plan and Budget should form the platform to position the Council to achieve ongoing Financial Sustainability. Financial Sustainability is not a number on the Income Statement, it is a strategy. Therefore, strategies need to be developed that integrate into the Council's planning and are supported by longer term planning, with any future decisions made being consistent with and supporting the strategy.

COMMENTS

Nil.

RECOMMENDATION

That the report be received and noted.

Cr Clutterham moved:

That the report be received and noted.

Seconded by Ms Sandra Di Blasio and carried unanimously.

8. CONFIDENTIAL REPORTS

8.1 TENDER EVALUATION - EXTERNAL FINANCIAL AUDIT SERVICES

RECOMMENDATION 1

That pursuant to Section 90(2) and (3) of the *Local Government Act 1999* the Council orders that the public, with the exception of the Council staff present, be excluded from the meeting on the basis that the Council will receive, discuss and consider:

(k) tenders for the supply of goods, the provision of services or the carrying out of works;

and the Council is satisfied that, the principle that the meeting should be conducted in a place open to the public, has been outweighed by the need to keep the receipt/discussion/consideration of the information confidential.

RECOMMENDATION 2

Under Section 91(7) and (9) of the *Local Government Act 1999*, the Council orders that the report and discussion be kept confidential for a period not exceeding five (5) years and that this order be reviewed every twelve (12) months.

Under Section 91(7) and (9) of the *Local Government Act 1999* the Council orders that the minutes be kept confidential until the contract has been entered into by all parties to the contract.

Cr Piggott moved:

That pursuant to Section 90(2) and (3) of the Local Government Act 1999 the Council orders that the public, with the exception of the Council staff present [Chief Executive Officer, General Manager, Governance & Civic Affairs and Acting Manager, Finance], be excluded from the meeting on the basis that the Council will receive, discuss and consider:

(k) tenders for the supply of goods, the provision of services or the carrying out of works;

and the Council is satisfied that, the principle that the meeting should be conducted in a place open to the public, has been outweighed by the need to keep the receipt/discussion/consideration of the information confidential.

Seconded by Cr Clutterham and carried unanimously.

Cr Piggott moved:

Under Section 91(7) and (9) of the Local Government Act 1999, the Council orders that the report and discussion be kept confidential for a period not exceeding five (5) years and that this order be reviewed every twelve (12) months.

Under Section 91(7) and (9) of the Local Government Act 1999 the Council orders that the minutes be kept confidential until the contract has been entered into by all parties to the contract.

Seconded by Ms Stefanie Eldridge and carried unanimously.

9. OTHER BUSINESS
Nil

10. NEXT MEETING
Monday 8 May 2023

11. CLOSURE
There being no further business the Presiding Member declared the meeting closed at 8.04pm.

Mayor Robert Bria
PRESIDING MEMBER

Minutes Confirmed on _____
(date)