TOWN OF COTTESLOE

SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING

UNCONFIRMED MINUTES

SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING
HELD IN THE
Council Chambers, Cottesloe Civic Centre
109 Broome Street, Cottesloe
6:00 PM Tuesday, 11 August 2026

MARK NEWMAN
Chief Executive Officer

24 August 2026

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1 DECLARATION OF MEETING OPENING/ANNOUNCEMENT OF VISITORS

The Presiding Member announced the meeting opened at 6:00 pm.

I would like to begin by acknowledging the Whadjuk Nyoongar people, Traditional Custodians of the land on which we meet today, and pay my respects to their Elders past and present. I extend that respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples here today.

2 DISCLAIMER

The Presiding Member directed the public's attention to the Disclaimer and the paragraph that advises that formal meetings of Council will be audio/visually recorded.

3 ATTENDANCE

Elected Members

Mayor Melissa Harkins
Deputy Mayor Sonja Heath
Cr Lorraine Young
Cr Helen Sadler (via electronic means)
Cr Chilla Bulbeck
Cr Brad Wylynko
Cr Jeffrey Irvine
Cr Michael Thomas
Cr Kirsty Barrett

The Presiding Member advised that Cr Sadler had declared that Cr Sadler's method of remote attendance would allow her to maintain communication and enable her to fully participate in the meeting, and that she were able to maintain confidentiality for any part of the meeting that was closed.

Officers

Mr Mark Newman	Chief Executive Officer
Mrs Vicki Cobby	Director Corporate and Community Services
Mr Shaun Kan	Director Engineering Services
Mr Paul Neilson	A/Director Development and Regulatory Services
Ms Jacquelyne Pilkington	Governance and Executive Office Coordinator

3.1 APOLOGIES

Nil

Officers Apologies

Nil

3.2 APPROVED LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Cr Helen Sadler – Attended Electronically

3.3 APPLICATIONS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE

SCM006/2026

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Moved Cr Irvine **Seconded Cr Bulbeck**

That Cr Thomas be granted a leave of absence from 27 October to 28 October 2026

Carried 9/0

SCM007/2026

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Moved Mayor Harkins **Seconded Cr Young**

That Cr Irvine be granted a leave of absence from 15 September to 25 September 2026

Carried 9/0

4 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Nil

5 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY PRESIDING MEMBER WITHOUT DISCUSSION

Nil

6 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

6.1 RESPONSE TO PREVIOUS PUBLIC QUESTIONS TAKEN ON NOTICE

Nil

6.2 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Nil

7 PUBLIC STATEMENT TIME

Nil

8 PRESENTATIONS

8.1 PETITIONS

Nil

8.2 PRESENTATIONS

Nil

8.3 DEPUTATIONS

Nil

9 REPORTS

9.1 REPORTS OF OFFICERS

CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

9.1.1 ADOPTION OF THE 2026/2027 ANNUAL BUDGET

Directorate:	**Corporate and Community Services**
Author(s):	**Vicki Cobby, Director Corporate and Community Services**
Authoriser(s):	**Mark Newman, Chief Executive Officer**
File Reference:	**D26/93038**
Applicant(s):	
Author Disclosure of Interest:	**Nil**

SUMMARY

The 2026/27 Budget has been developed to deliver the Town's strategic priorities while maintaining long-term financial sustainability and service levels. The budget forecasts a balanced result, a significantly improved operating position, and an $8.0 million capital works program, including the commencement of the Foreshore Redevelopment project. It incorporates a range of measures to strengthen the Town's financial capacity, including appropriate adjustments to rates, fees and charges, targeted reserve utilisation and rationalisation, and investment in key infrastructure and community assets. The budget also positions the Town to meet future challenges through continued strategic planning, asset renewal, and responsible financial management. The draft 2026/27 Annual Budget is attached for Council consideration and adoption.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION IN BRIEF

For Council to adopt, by Absolute Majority, the 2026/27 Annual Budget along with the supporting schedules.

BACKGROUND

Under the *Local Government Act 1995*, Council is required to adopt an Annual Budget between 1 June and 31 August each financial year.

Budget workshops were conducted between April and August 2026 to set the budgetary direction and inform the development of the 2025/26 Annual Budget. These workshops included detailed presentations and documentation, which provided Elected Members with opportunities to ask questions and offer direction to the Administration in developing the draft budget and its various components.

OFFICER COMMENT

The budget has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 1995*, the Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996, and Australian Accounting Standards. It reflects the principles and feedback discussed with Elected Members during the budget workshops, with a focus on long-term financial sustainability, maintaining service levels, and delivering the priorities contained within the Council Plan. This includes the commencement of the Foreshore Redevelopment project, a significant community infrastructure investment that is substantially funded through external grants. The budget provides for the strategic use of reserve funds to support the Town's contribution to the project.

In preparing the budget, consideration was given to the Town's current Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP) and the strategic direction and priorities it contains. While some proposed budget allocations differ from those included in the current LTFP, the LTFP will be reviewed and updated during the 2026/27 financial year to reflect Council's adopted priorities, project timing and financial assumptions.

The Draft Statutory Budget is provided as **Attachment (a)**.

The Town proposes a balanced budget for 2026/27, with neither a surplus nor a deficit. The estimated opening cash surplus for 2025/26 is $720,000, representing the budgeted surplus following the 2025/26 mid year budget review and savings recognised from operating expenditure. The final figure for the 2025/2026 cash surplus will be determined through end-of-year processing and audit.

The proposed General Rates are determined after considering all other sources of revenue, available reserve funding, expenditure requirements, efficiency and savings measures, and associated cost increases.

Below are the key inclusions in the proposed 2026/27 Annual Budget:

1. Operating Budget

The draft operating budget provides for the Town's day-to-day operations. The net operating position, reported as 'Amount attributable to operating activities' in the Statement of Financial Activity, represents the surplus remaining after operating expenses are deducted from operating revenue. The 2026/27 Budget projects an amount attributable to operating activities of $1,725,850. This is a significant improvement on the previous two financial years, which forecast operating surpluses of $312,671 and $95,973 respectively. These earlier levels provided limited capacity to fund the Town's capital program from operating revenues and were not considered sustainable over the longer term. The projected result reflects a strengthening of the Town's underlying financial position and increases its capacity to fund capital expenditure and reserve contributions from internally generated funds, reducing reliance on reserves, grants and borrowings.

Significant movements in revenue and expenditure include:

The budget provides for an average increase in general rates revenue of 4.9 per cent. As 2026/27 is a gross rental valuation (GRV) revaluation year, the impact on individual ratepayers will vary depending on the outcome of the revaluation process. A new rating category has also been introduced for unhosted short term rental accommodation (STRA) to better reflect the additional costs and demands these properties place on Town services and infrastructure. In addition, increases to minimum rates have been applied to better align the minimum contribution from each property with the cost of services provided and with practices adopted by comparable local governments. The budget also includes an estimated $100,000 in interim rates revenue. As a result of these combined factors, plus natural growth, through subdivisions and new builds, the total rates revenue is forecast to increase by $874,905, compared with the 2025/26 Budget.

Grants, subsidies and contributions are budgeted to increase by $180,142, primarily due to funding received through the WA Tree Recovery Grant program to support the replacement of trees affected by the Polyphagous Shot-Hole Borer, together with funding under the Bus Shelter Maintenance Assistance Scheme and modest increases in other recurring grants and contributions.

Fees and charges revenue is budgeted to increase by 11.2 per cent, reflecting a number of factors. These include the introduction of paid parking within the Town Centre, which is expected to generate a new revenue stream and is partially offset by a reduction in infringement revenue, the application of CPI-based increases to a range of discretionary fees and charges, and a revised allocation of rental income to ensure it is recognised within fees and charges rather than other revenue categories. Further information on the Town's fees and charges is provided later in this report.

Interest revenue is budgeted to increase due to higher investment returns and increased cash balances available for investment across municipal funds and reserves. This includes $431,810 in reserve interest earnings, which is budgeted to be credited back to reserve balances.

Other revenue is budgeted to decrease, primarily due to the reclassification of a portion of lease income to the fees and charges revenue category. The remaining budgeted revenue largely comprises cost recoveries associated with leased properties and reimbursement income received for the provision of Ranger Services to other local governments.

Employee costs are budgeted to increase by 3.8 per cent, reflecting the 3.5 per cent salary increase under the Industrial Agreement 2024, incremental salary progression, and staffing levels consistent with the Town's Workforce Plan of 66.8 FTE. Employee costs also include superannuation, long service leave provisions, workers' compensation insurance, recruitment expenses, training and development, staff amenities, and professional memberships.

Materials and contracts expenditure is budgeted to remain relatively consistent with the previous year. This reflects the completion or deferral of a number of significant operating projects, including the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) implementation, which is nearing completion, as well as planning-related projects that have been deferred pending the State Government's improvement planning process associated with train station precincts. These include the Local Planning Strategy, Cottesloe Village Centre Precinct Plan, and the Town Planning Scheme No. 4. Other projects completed include the land, building and infrastructure revaluation and the implementation of the People and Culture software.

These reductions have largely offset CPI-related increases across existing materials and contracts budgets, together with funding allocated to a range of new and continuing initiatives, including the review of the Long Term Financial Plan, Council Plan update, IT and Heritage reviews, Coastal Hazard Risk Management and Adaptation Planning (CHRMAP), tree planting programs, the Regional Transport Strategy, and the update of the Asset Management Plan.

Finance expenses are budgeted to decrease as a result of the ongoing repayment of the Grove Library loan, with interest costs reducing in line with the declining loan balance.

Insurance expenses are budgeted to increase due to higher insured asset values following the recent property revaluation, growth in the Town's vehicle fleet, and a 10 per cent increase in motor vehicle insurance premiums.

Other expenditure is budgeted to increase primarily due to the correct classification of Town contributions within this expenditure category. The increase also reflects reviewed remuneration for Elected Members and members of the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee. There is more detail on Elected Member remuneration later in this report. In addition, the budget includes the Town's contribution to ProCott, which is funded through the differential rate applied to Town Centre commercial properties.

2. Capital Budget

A capital works program totalling $8,044,500 entailing investment in infrastructure, land and buildings, plant and equipment and furniture and equipment is proposed. For the full list of Capital Works please see **Attachment (c)**.

Key Capital Projects in 2026/27 are listed below;

Foreshore Redevelopment Project - Commencement	4,000,000
Marine Parade Shared Path – continued works	1,675,000
Plant, machinery and equipment replacement	510,000
MRRG – Eric St (Hammersley to Charles)	423,000
Civic Centre Playground	300,000
New Parking meters – Town Centre	250,000
Harvey Field cricket nets and basketball court upgrade	112,000

3. Surplus at the start of the financial year

The opening balance, referred to in the Statement of Financial Activity as the “Surplus at the start of the financial year” is $720,000. This also represents the preliminary estimate of the surplus for the 2025/26 financial year after the end of financial year transactions have been processed and audited.

4. Reserves

The Town is forecasting a net decrease in reserve balances of $929,688 as at 30 June 2027. This reduction is primarily attributable to the utilisation of $1.333 million from reserves to fund the commencement of the Foreshore Redevelopment project. The forecast reserve movement also includes budgeted interest earnings of $431,810, together with additional reserve contributions of $200,000 to the Foreshore Redevelopment Reserve and $100,000 to the Information Technology Reserve.

As part of the 2026/27 budget process, officers have undertaken a review of the Town's reserve structure and recommend a number of changes to improve administrative efficiency, enhance transparency and ensure reserves continue to align with their intended purpose.

(i) Amalgamation of the Civic Centre Reserve, Library Reserve and Property Reserve

It is proposed that the Civic Centre Reserve, Library Reserve and Property Reserve be consolidated into a single Buildings Reserve. While each reserve was originally established for a specific purpose, all three support the renewal, replacement, upgrade and development of Town-owned buildings and property assets. The amalgamation will simplify reserve management while maintaining the existing purpose of the funds and supporting the ongoing investment required to ensure the Town's facilities remain fit for purpose and continue to meet community expectations.

(ii) Amalgamation of the Right of Way Reserve into the Infrastructure Reserve

The Right of Way Reserve has substantially fulfilled its original purpose and now retains only a modest balance. As rights of way form part of the Town's broader infrastructure network, alongside roads, footpaths, drainage and other public infrastructure assets, it is proposed that the reserve be amalgamated into the Infrastructure Reserve. This change will improve administrative efficiency and does not alter the intended purpose of the funds.

(iii) Amalgamation of the Public Open Space Reserve and Recreation Precinct Reserve

It is proposed that the Public Open Space Reserve and Recreation Precinct Reserve be amalgamated and renamed the Public Open Space and Recreation Reserve. Both reserves support investment in public open space, recreation areas, playgrounds, sporting facilities and associated community infrastructure. Given the similar purpose of the reserves and the relatively small balance remaining in the Recreation Precinct Reserve, there is limited benefit in maintaining separate reserves. The proposed change does not alter the intended purpose of the funds.

(iv) Closure of the Legal Reserve and Transfer to the Foreshore Redevelopment Reserve

The purpose for which the Legal Reserve was established has been fulfilled and the associated risk no longer exists. As a result, there is no ongoing requirement to maintain a separate reserve for this purpose. Officers consider that retaining funds in a reserve without an identified future liability limits Council's ability to allocate resources to current strategic priorities. It is therefore proposed that the reserve be closed and its remaining balance transferred to the Foreshore Redevelopment Reserve. This proposal involves a change to the purpose of the funds and has been disclosed in Note 9(c) of **Attachment (a)**.

In addition to the reserve restructuring proposed above, reserve funds are budgeted to support a number of capital projects during 2026/27, including the Civic Centre air-conditioning renewal, replacement of administration office printers, right of way improvements, and the Civic Centre playground project. Together with the Town's contribution towards the commencement of the Foreshore Redevelopment project, total reserve funding of $1,661,500 is included in the budget.

The Reserves Accounts are detailed in Note 9 of the Draft Statutory Budget - **Attachment (a)**.

5. Fees and Charges

As a general principle, fees and charges have been reviewed and adjusted to reflect inflationary cost pressures, with most fees increasing broadly in line with the Consumer Price Index (CPI). Where applicable, fees have been rounded to the nearest whole dollar.

Waste charges were subject to a detailed review to ensure they accurately reflect the cost of service delivery. As a result, the standard three-bin waste service charge has increased by $32, representing a 5.26 per cent increase. All other waste charges have generally increased by 5 per cent prior to rounding.

The framework underpinning venue hire fees and charges has also been reviewed, resulting in improved governance, policy guidance and administrative oversight. A Council-endorsed *Local First* approach has been incorporated, providing clear assessment criteria to determine community benefit, support consistent decision-making, and align event support, pricing structures and venue allocation with the Town's Strategic Community Plan and broader community outcomes.

The draft 2026/27 Fees and Charges schedule can be viewed as **Attachment (b)**.

6. Elected Member Remuneration

The Salaries and Allowances Tribunal, established under the *Salaries and Allowances Act 1975*, determines the fees and allowances payable to Elected Members through the *Local Government Chief Executive Officers and Elected Council Members Determination No. 1 of 2026*. Elected Member remuneration was increased in 2026/27 to improve alignment with comparable local governments and to recognise the significant time, commitment and expertise contributed by Elected Members. A further increase will be proposed in 2027/2028 to complete this alignment. The ICT allowance has been increased to the maximum amount permitted under the determination to ensure Elected Members continue to receive an appropriate level of ICT support, noting that the value of any Town-provided ICT equipment must be deducted from the allowance.

	Maximum allowed	Proposed budget	% of maximum
Telecommunications Allowance	3,500	3,500	100%
Meeting Attendance Fee	18,977	17,300	91%
Mayor's Meeting Attendance Fee	29,379	28,335	96%
Mayor's Allowance	42,837	33,072	77%
Deputy Mayor Allowance	10,709	8,268	77%

An itemised list per Elected Member can be viewed at Note 10 of **Attachment (a)**.

7. Loans

Provision has been made in the 2026/27 Budget for a loan of $250,000 to fund the acquisition and installation of new parking meters within the Town Centre as part of the implementation of paid parking. The introduction of paid parking is expected to generate a new revenue stream for the Town, which is anticipated to fund the future loan repayments.

It is proposed that the loan be drawn down towards the end of the 2026/27 financial year. Accordingly, no loan repayments or interest costs have been included in the 2026/27 Budget. Should paid parking revenue be sufficient to fund the required capital expenditure, or if the 2025/2026 operating surplus exceeds expectation, the loan may not be required.

Repayments of the existing Grove Library loan will continue during 2026/27, with the outstanding balance forecast to reduce to $1,015,130 as at 30 June 2027. The loan is scheduled to be fully repaid in September 2029.

8. Carried Forward projects

A number of capital works projects budgeted for completion in 2025/26 were not finalised by 30 June 2026 and will be carried forward into the 2026/27 financial year. The associated project budgets and funding sources will also be carried forward, with a budget amendment to be presented to Council in September or October 2026 to recognise the corresponding revenue and expenditure within the 2026/27 Budget.

ATTACHMENTS

9.1.1(a) DRAFT Statutory Annual Budget for the year ended 30 June 2027 [under separate cover]

9.1.1(b) DRAFT Schedule of Fees and Charges for the year ended 30 June 2027 [under separate cover]

9.1.1(c) DRAFT Capital Works Program [under separate cover]

CONSULTATION

At the Special Council Meeting held 14 July 2026, Council resolved of its intention to raise the following differential general rates and minimum rates for the 2026/27 financial year:

Differential Rate Category	***Rate in the $***	***Min Rate***
Residential Improved	*0.05279*	*$1,200*
Residential Vacant	*0.06300*	*$1,700*
Residential STRA	*0.06300*	*$1,700*
Commercial Improved	*0.06300*	*$1,700*
Commercial Vacant	*0.06300*	*$1,700*
Commercial Town	*0.07538*	*$1,750*
Industrial	*0.06300*	*$1,700*

In accordance with section 6.36 of the *Local Government Act 1995*, local public notice was provided with submissions invited until 7 August 2026. No submissions were received prior to the preparation of this report.

STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Act 1995

s6.2 Local Government to prepare annual budget

Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996

Regulations 22 to 33 of the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996* contain the requirements for the form of the budget document and the information to be contained within it.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

There are no perceived policy implications arising from the officer's recommendation.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

This report is consistent with the Town's *Council Plan 2023-2033*.

Priority Area 4: Our Leadership and Governance - Strategic leadership providing open and accountable governance.

Major Strategy 4.3: Deliver open, accountable and transparent governance.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Resource requirements have been incorporated into the budget presented for adoption.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

There are no perceived sustainability implications arising from the officer's recommendation.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

Failure to adopt the annual budget by 31 August would constitute non-compliance with section 6.2 of the *Local Government Act 1995*. Delayed adoption may affect the implementation of the Town's operational and capital works programs and postpone the issue of rates notices, potentially impacting revenue collection and cash flow management.

VOTING REQUIREMENT

Absolute Majority

SCM008/2026

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION AND COUNCIL RESOLUTION

Moved Mayor Harkins Seconded Cr Young

THAT Council by ABSOLUTE MAJORITY

1. **ADOPTS the Budget for the year ended 30 June 2027, as attached, including:**
    a. **Statement of Comprehensive Income;**

b. **Statement of Cash flows;**

c. **Statement of Financial Activity; and**

d. **Notes to and forming part of the Budget, including the 2026/2027 Schedule of Fees and Charges.**

2. **IMPOSES the following differential general rates and minimum payments on the Gross Rental Valuations;**

Differential Rate Category	***Rate in the $***	***Minimum Payment***
GRV – Residential Improved	***0.05279***	***$1,200***
GRV – Residential Vacant	***0.06300***	***$1,700***
GRV – Residential STRA	***0.06300***	***$1,700***
GRV – Commercial Improved	***0.06300***	***$1,700***
GRV – Commercial Vacant	***0.06300***	***$1,700***
GRV – Commercial Town	***0.07538***	***$1,750***
GRV – Industrial	***0.06300***	***$1,700***

3. **SETS the following dates for payment of rates:**

a. **Option 1 – One payment. Payment in full by 6 October 2026.**

b. **Option 2 – Four instalments. This option incurs an administrative fee of $30.00 and interest charges at 5.5%.**

First instalment 6 October 2026

Second Instalment 8 December 2026

Third Instalment 16 February 2027

Fourth Instalment 20 April 2027

4. **IMPOSES late payment interest of 10%, calculated on a daily basis in accordance with section 6.51 (1) of the *Local Government Act 1995,* to be charged on rates payments which are outstanding from the due date. Late payment interest will not apply to entitled pensioners or eligible seniors.**

5. **IMPOSES a combined 3 bin service annual fee of $640.00 for residential properties:**

a. **a once per week service of 240L green bin for FOGO;**

b. **a once per fortnight service of a 240L yellow bin for recyclable household rubbish; and**

c. **a once per fortnight service of a 120L red bin for general household rubbish.**

6. SETS the following charges to residential properties for additional waste services (per annum GST inclusive):

a. General Waste – each service per fortnight (120L bin) - $332.00;

b. General Waste – each service per week (660L bin) - $2,276.00;

c. Recycling – each service per fortnight (240L bin) - $90.00; and

d. FOGO Waste – each service per week (240L bin) - $201.00.

7. SETS the following charges to commercial properties (per annum GST inclusive):

a. General Waste – each service per week (240L bin) - $703.00;

b. General Waste – each service per week (660L bin) - $2,636.00;

c. Recycling – one service per fortnight (240L bin) - $170.00;

d. Recycling – one service per week (240L bin) - $323.00; and

e. Green Waste – one service per fortnight (240L bin) - $202.00

8. ADOPTS a Telecommunications Allowance of $3,500 for Elected Members as per section 5.99A of the *Local Government Act 1995*.

9. ADOPTS Members Attendance Fees – set an annual meeting attendance fee of $17,300 for Council members and $28,335 for the Mayor as per section 5.99 of the *Local Government Act 1995*.

10. ADOPTS the Mayor's Allowance of $33,072 and the Deputy Mayor's Allowance of $8,268 as per sections 5.98 and 5.98A of the *Local Government Act 1995*.

11. MAINTAINS the materiality levels of 15% and $25,000 for the monthly reporting of significant variances of income and expenditure in the Statement of Financial Activity.

Carried by Absolute Majority 9/0
For: Mayor Harkins, Deputy Mayor Heath, Young, Sadler, Bulbeck, Wylynko, Irvine, Thomas and Barrett
Against: Nil

10 ELECTED MEMBERS MOTIONS OF WHICH PREVIOUS NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN

Nil

11 NEW BUSINESS OF AN URGENT NATURE INTRODUCED BY DECISION OF MEETING BY:

11.1 ELECTED MEMBERS

Nil

11.2 OFFICERS

Nil

12 MEETING CLOSED TO PUBLIC

12.1 MATTERS FOR WHICH THE MEETING MAY BE CLOSED

12.2 PUBLIC READING OF RECOMMENDATIONS THAT MAY BE MADE PUBLIC

13 MEETING CLOSURE

The Presiding Member announced the closure of the meeting at 6:12 pm.