



dorset
C O U N C I L

2025/26 Annual Plan

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Minute: 108/2025

Introduction

Councils are required each financial year, under Section 71 of the *Local Government Act 1993*, to prepare an Annual Plan.

The Act provides general guidelines to produce the Annual Plan in that it should:

- Be consistent with the Strategic Plan
- Include a statement of the way the Council is to meet the goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan
- Include a summary of the estimates adopted under Section 82; and
- Include a summary of the major strategies to be used in relation to the Council's public health goals and objectives

The benefits of the Annual Plan are that it:

- Aids and supports the budget process
- Provides an analysis of financial resource allocation
- Gives a statement of the strategies to be implemented throughout the year to address strategic planning objectives
- Provides a list of operational targets to be achieved

A copy of the Annual Plan is provided to the Director of Local Government and the Director of Public Health. A copy is also available at the Dorset Council office for inspection by the public.

Document Linkages

The Annual Plan is directly linked to the current Dorset Council Strategic Plan and the current Dorset Council Financial Management Strategy and Long-Term Financial Plan.

The focus of the Strategic Plan is on the overall strategic objectives of Council, over a ten-year period, while the Annual Plan lists the actions Council is committed to undertaking this year to meet the commitments in the Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan is goal based and documents Council's mission, vision, governance structures, principles, strategies and benefits of attaining strategies.

The Dorset Council 2025/26 Annual Plan identifies key actions that will be reported on a quarterly basis throughout the year.

How to Read the Annual Plan

The Annual Plan outlines Council's high-level actions for the year and is directly linked to Department Plans that identify tasks associated with meeting the Actions outlined in the Annual Plan and strategies identified in the Strategic Plan.

Annual Budget Process

- Provides the annual blueprint for budget fiscal management of the Council.
- Allows for annual review of allocation priorities and links with the Annual Plan.
- Incorporates both capital and operating expenditure programs.

Financial Management Strategy and Long-Term Financial Plan

- Sets out the broad financial objectives of the Council over a 10-year period.
- Classifies major financial categories and departmental projects and activities in accordance with Strategic Plan.

Reporting Process

- Quarterly Annual and Financial Reports detail the status of the Action Plan items.

2025/26 Action Plan

The following pages of the Annual Plan provide details on additional goals, outcomes and objectives that the Council is seeking to undertake and complete as activities in addition to its annual business.

Activity	Focus Area	Strategic Reference	Actions / Initiatives / Deliverables	Responsible Team	Indicative Quarter	Progress and Status ¹
1	Dorset Strategic Plan 2023-2032	13.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Plan Strategic Plan progress report and status update 	Governance	June 2026	
2	Scottsdale: Future Ready	8.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Township Plan Austins Road scheme amendment Light Industrial precinct scheme amendment Conduct feasibility study in relation to enclosure options for the Scottsdale Aquatic Centre Recreation Ground / Railway Precinct Master Plan Rail Trail progress report to Council 	Governance Development Services Development Services Governance Governance Governance	December 2025 June 2026 June 2026 June 2026 December 2025 Quarterly	
3	Key Operational Deliverables	10.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual Report 2024/25 Long Term Financial Plan Annual Plan 2026/27 Budget Estimates 2026/27 Rates Resolution 2026/27 Fees and Charges 2026/27 Council Quarterly Financials 	Corporate Services and Governance	December 2025 June 2026 June 2026 June 2026 June 2026 June 2026 Quarterly	
4	Municipal Tourism Marketing Strategy	8.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalisation of Strategy and Plan Defining responsibilities and actions 	Governance	September 2025 December 2025	
5	Priority Projects Plan	9.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish new plan Half-yearly reporting including project status 	Governance	December 2025 December 2025 June 2026	
6	Blue Derby Foundation Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) reporting	9.4	Half-yearly reporting	Governance	December 2025 June 2026	

¹ ● Completed

● In Progress (% complete)

● Not Achieved

Activity	Focus Area	Strategic Reference	Actions / Initiatives / Deliverables	Responsible Team	Indicative Quarter	Progress and Status ¹
7	Future of Local Government Review	12.2	Submission for draft Local Government Amendment Bill	Governance	September 2025	
8	Board of Inquiry requirements	13.2	Reporting to the Minister for Local Government per Direction 10	Governance	July 2025 October 2025 January 2026	
9	Councillor Learning and Development Plan	13.2	Establish and implement a training matrix and budget for Councillor learning and development	Governance	September 2025	
10	Policy 41 – Council Meeting Procedures	10.1	Review, adopt and implement	Governance	September 2025	
11	New Policy - Dispute Resolution	10.1	Establish, adopt and implement	Governance / Corporate Services	September 2025	
12	New Framework – Conduct of Elected Members	10.1	Establish, adopt and implement	Governance / Corporate Services	September 2025	
13	Waste Strategy	14.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FOGO Review Review of cartage operations 	Infrastructure	September 2025 September 2025	
14	Bridport: Future Ready	7.2	Pre work and scoping of draft Structure Plan	Development Services	March 2026	
15	Bridport New Port / River Entrance and Marina	9.2, 9.3	Liaise with MAST and consultants in development of feasibility assessment	Development Services	March 2026	
16	Derby: Future Ready	7.2	Prepare scope and attain funding for master plan	Development Services and Governance	December 2025	
17	Policy 27 - Youth	10.1	Review, adopt and implement	Development Services	May 2026	
18	Policy 2 – Payment of Councillor Expenses and Provision of Facilities	10.1	Review, adopt and implement	Corporate Services	December 2025	
19	Policy 17 – Corporate Credit Card	10.1	Review, adopt and implement	Corporate Services	March 2026	
20	Policy 39 – Community Consultation and Communications	10.1, 13.4	Review, adopt and implement	Corporate Services	December 2025	
21	Policy 50 – Gifts and Benefits	10.1	Review, adopt and implement	Corporate Services	December 2025	
22	Policy 52 – Related Party Disclosure	10.1	Review, adopt and implement	Corporate Services	December 2025	
23	Policy 56 - Bridport Seaside Caravan Park	10.1	Review, adopt and implement	Corporate Services	September 2025	
24	Audit Panel	10.2, 13.2	Review tenure and composition of Panel	Corporate Services	December 2025	
25	Asset Management Strategy	10.3	Review, adopt and implement	Corporate Services	June 2026	
26	Council Owned Asset Review	4.1, 4.2	Commence review of service levels and program for asset acquisitions and disposals	Corporate Services and Infrastructure	June 2026	
27	Land Improvement Asset Management Plan	10.3	Develop, adopt and implement	Corporate Services	December 2025	
28	Building Asset Management Plan	10.3	Review, adopt and implement	Corporate Services	December 2025	

Underlying Surplus Calculation

	Note	2025/26 Budget \$'000	2024/25 Forecast Actuals \$'000	2024/25 Revised Budget \$'000
Total Operating Income		18,354	17,716	17,546
Expenses (excl depreciation)		13,666	12,729	12,852
Depreciation		6,028	5,702	5,564
Total Expenses		19,694	18,431	18,416
Underlying Surplus/(Deficit)		(1,340)	(715)	(870)
Underlying Surplus as a % of Underlying Income		(7.3%)	(4.0%)	(5.0%)

Council's operating budget for the 2025/26 financial year estimates an underlying deficit of \$1,340,000. This represents a decrease of approximately \$0.6 million from forecast actuals and an increase of \$0.5 million on revised budget estimates for the 2024/25 financial year.

The expected cash to be generated from the 2025/26 operational budget is \$4.7 million, compared to \$5.0 million in the 2024/25 financial year.

The cash generated from operating activities is one of the most important figures for Council as it indicates the amount of cash that is available from everyday operations to fund future capital and infrastructure works within the Municipality.

The estimated \$4.7 million to be generated in the 2025/26 financial year is slightly less than the \$5.5 million (net of external funding) required for Council's proposed capital renewal program due to the acceleration of essential renewal works from future work plans. This has been accounted for in Council's Long-Term Financial plan and it is expected that future operating cash flows will sufficiently cover the required capital renewal spend in future years.

An additional \$3.4 million to be received in capital grant funding will further assist Council to complete the proposed \$12.6 million Capital Works Program in the 2025/26 financial year.

Analysis of Budget Estimates

The key drivers for 2025/26 budget estimates are:

Income

Rates and charges have increased by \$637,000 on forecast actuals as a result of a 4.9% increase to Council's general rate revenue base (with some additional income expected from organic growth), an increase to the minimum general rate and an increase in rates received from properties used for forestry purposes.

Other income has decreased by \$113,000 on forecast actuals due to the impact of a number of one-off transactions in the 2024/25 financial year (e.g. insurance reimbursements) that have inflated forecasted results.

User charges have increased by \$104,000 on forecast actuals primarily due to an increase in income expected from camping fees, which includes \$42,000 expected from camping sites at Derby, to be forwarded on to the Blue Derby Foundation (net of any costs to Council).

Interest income has decreased by \$69,000 on forecast actuals as a result of expected decreases in interest rates during the 2025/26 financial year.

Operating grants and contributions have decreased by \$34,000 on forecast actuals as a result of the receipt of one-off funding from the Tasmanian Relief and Recovery arrangements to assist with storm recovery in the 2024/25 financial year.

Council's fees and charges are set in accordance with section 205 of the Local Government Act 1993 and have increased, on average, by 3.5%.

Expenditure

Materials and services have increased by \$427,000 on forecast actuals due to a continued focus on proactive road maintenance and operational works in the 2025/26 financial year.

Depreciation has increased by \$326,000 on forecast actuals as a result of asset revaluations/indexation changes, revised useful life estimates and the addition of new assets from Council's capital works program.

Employee Costs have increased by \$323,000 on forecast actuals due to the expected increase to wages as per Council's Enterprise Bargaining Agreement, an increase in workers compensation insurance and annualising any new or reclassified roles that were recruited during the 2024/25 financial year.

Other expenses have increased by \$155,000 predominantly as a result of expected increases in state levies, licences and taxes and professional development for the 2025/26 financial year.

Statement of Profit and Loss

	Notes	2025/26 Budget \$'000	2024/25 Forecast Actuals \$'000	Actual Variance % Movement	2024/25 Revised Budget \$'000	Budget Variance % Movement
Operating Income						
Rates and Charges	1	11,157	10,520	6.1%	10,512	6.1%
Statutory Fees	2	208	195	6.7%	196	6.1%
User Charges	3	1,552	1,448	7.2%	1,483	4.7%
Grants and Contributions	4	4,669	4,702	(0.7%)	4,562	2.3%
Interest	5	280	349	(19.8%)	300	(6.7%)
Other Income	6	236	349	(32.4%)	260	(9.2%)
Income from Water Corporation	7	252	233	8.2%	233	8.2%
Total Operating Income		18,354	17,796	3.1%	17,546	4.6%
Capital Income						
Capital Grants	4	3,632	3,468	4.7%	3,904	(7.0%)
Gain/(loss) on disposal of assets	8	-	(80)	(100.0%)	(2)	(100.0%)
Total Capital Income		3,632	3,388	7.2%	3,902	(6.9%)
Total income from continuing operations		21,986	21,184	3.8%	21,448	2.5%
Expenses						
Employee costs	9	6,746	6,423	5.0%	6,511	3.6%
Materials and services	10	4,539	4,112	10.4%	4,225	7.4%
Finance costs	11	98	66	48.5%	72	36.1%
Other expenses	12	2,283	2,128	7.3%	2,044	11.7%
Depreciation	13	6,028	5,702	5.7%	5,564	8.3%
Total Expenses		19,694	18,431	6.9%	18,416	6.9%
Surplus/(Deficit)		2,292	2,753	(16.8%)	3,032	(24.4%)
<i>less: Capital Grants</i>	4	<i>(3,632)</i>	<i>(3,468)</i>	<i>(4.7%)</i>	<i>(3,904)</i>	7.0%
<i>less: Storm event operational funding</i>		<i>-</i>	<i>(332)</i>	<i>(100.0%)</i>	<i>-</i>	0.0%
<i>add: Storm event operational expenditure</i>		<i>-</i>	262	<i>(100.0%)</i>	<i>-</i>	0.0%
Underlying Surplus/(Deficit)		(1,340)	(785)	70.8%	(872)	53.7%

2025/26 Capital Expenditure Budget | Summary

A Capital Works Program totalling \$12.6 million is recommended. The 2024/25 capital budget was \$10.0 million (including budget variations), however \$1.9 million of this budget is expected to be carried forward into the 2025/26 financial year.

Total Capital Expenditure Budget

	Renewal \$'000	New & Upgrade \$'000	Overhead Wages Allocation \$'000	Total Budget \$'000
Bridges	481	546	127	1,154
Roads	4,916	293	645	5,854
Stormwater	-	284	34	318
Buildings	353	147	61	561
Land Improvements	88	720	99	907
Plant and Equipment	1,417	91	185	1,693
IT and Communications	47	168	26	241
Carry Forward Projects	799	894	211	1,904
Total	8,101	3,143	1,388	12,632

Funding the Budget

	Total Budget \$'000	External Funding \$'000	Council Funding \$'000
Bridges	1,154	-	1,154
Roads	5,854	2,161	3,693
Stormwater	318	-	318
Buildings	561	60	501
Land Improvements	907	538	369
Plant and Equipment	1,693	283	1,410
IT and Communications	241	-	241
Carry Forward Projects	1,904	311	1,593
Total	12,632	3,353	9,279

Further capital projects that are approved subject to the receipt of external funding total \$0.4 million. Of this amount, \$0.3 million is to be received via external grant funding and \$0.1 million will be funded by Council.

Capital Expenditure approved subject to funding

	Total Budget \$'000	External Funding \$'000	Council Funding \$'000
Plant and Equipment	10	5	5
Roads	230	184	46
IT and Communications	119	114	5
Total	359	303	56

If all external funding is received the Capital Works Program will total \$13.0 million for the 2025/26 financial year, of which Council will fund a total of \$9.3 million.

2025/26 Capital Expenditure Budget | Highlights

Roads

Council's total capital expenditure for roads amounts to \$5,854,000.

Key projects include:

- Annual resheeting and reseal program;
- Golconda Road safety upgrade and renewal; and
- Ferny Hill Road landslip repair (storm damage).

Plant and Equipment

Council's total capital expenditure for plant and equipment amounts to \$1,693,000. Major purchases include:

- Flocon truck replacement;
- 13 tonne excavator replacement; and
- Fleet vehicle replacements.

Land Improvements

Council's total capital expenditure for land improvements amounts to \$907,000.

Key projects include:

- Netball court upgrades Scottsdale, Bridport & Derby (Stage 1);
- Scottsdale Sports Precinct Master Planning; and
- Scottsdale Aquatic Centre covered pool feasibility study.

Buildings

Council's total capital expenditure for buildings amounts to \$561,000. Key projects include:

- Electrical switchboard upgrade at Bridport Seaside Caravan Park (Stage 1);
- Amenities/shower renewal at Scottsdale Aquatic Centre; and
- Renewal of the Branhholm Hall kitchen (co-contribution to be received from the Pines Committee).

Bridges and Stormwater

Council's total capital expenditure for bridges and stormwater amounts to \$1,472,000. Key projects include:

- Storm damage repairs on Bridge 1508 Garibaldi Road, Pioneer;
- Upgrade Bridge 1569 Jensen's Road, North Scottsdale;
- Renewal of timber bridges 1589 Sledge Track, West Scottsdale and 1594 Greeta Rd, Nabowla; and
- Stormwater network design and installation for locations in Scottsdale, Branhholm & Winnaleah.

IT and Communications

Council's total capital expenditure for IT and communications amounts to \$241,000. Key projects and purchases include:

- Cyber security upgrades (HTTPS Authority Implementation);
- PC and laptop replacements; and
- GIS App development.

Carry forward projects:

Council's total carry forward amounts to \$1,904,000. Key projects to be completed include:

- Purchase of Volvo Hooklift Truck;
- Scottsdale Railway Station restoration; and
- Updates to playgrounds at the Lions Adventure Playground, Bridport & the Scottsdale Children's Reserve.

Public Health Goals and Objectives

Enhancing the quality of life of the Dorset Community is one of the Council's key roles. The facilitation and provision of quality services promotes health and well-being, education and learning.

The Community and Development Team is responsible for ensuring Council meets its health and environmental obligations under the *Public Health Act 1997*, the *Food Act 2003*, the *Environmental Management and Pollution Control Act 1994*, the *Local Government Act 1993* and the *Building Act 2016*.

The key objectives of the department are:

- Regulate a range of activities in accordance with the legislative requirements, including Food Businesses, Public Health Risk Activities (e.g. body piercing), Places of Assembly, Regulated Systems (e.g. cooling towers), Private Drinking Water Suppliers and Commercial Water Carriers.
- Provide educational material and training on health related topics
- Monitor recreational water quality in swimming pools, spas and popular beaches
- Investigate incidents of notifiable disease
- Provide Immunisation Services and deliver an approved program in high schools
- Provide Waste Management Services including sharps disposal
- Assess on-site wastewater management system designs and regulate the installation of those systems
- Undertake nuisance abatement and incident investigation
- Investigate various public and environmental health incidents and nuisances

Council acknowledges the contribution the community makes in ensuring quality public health services are provided for Dorset residents.