

Annual Business & Budget 2026/27

Long Term Financial Plan 2026/27 to 2036/37

Submissions Summary Report

June 2026

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Introduction

On 20 May 2026 Council publicly notified the Annual Business Plan & Budget and Long Term Financial Plan for public consultation and invited submissions.

Three (3) submissions were received at the close of the engagement period.

Council has prepared a Submissions Summary Report, which lists the main points made by each submitter, and what outcome they seek from Council's decisions. All non-confidential submissions are available in **Appendix 2**.

It should be noted that the Response and Action columns are draft recommendations presented to Council as part of the decision-making process. Consequently, Council may resolve to accept them with or without amendments in the final document.

Privacy

Please note that only the name and location of each submitter is detailed in the report. All personal details in the original submission contained in the appendices are redacted to maintain privacy.

Any commentary that is considered defamatory or inappropriate have been redacted.

Annual Business Plan 2026/27 Submission Summary and Response

Walker Flat & Districts Progress Association, Walker Flat

Submission#/Point #	Provision	Submission Point Summary	Decision Sought	Response	Action
1.1	NA	We are concerned that your method of raising rates revenue is unfair to the disadvantaged members of our community. Announcing that the average General Rate will increase by 3.64% does not help those who will be paying residential rates at 8% (average \$110) higher while the cost of living concession is up by \$6.30 per year.	This year's CPI was 4.1%. Why has council decided that a cap of rates rise at 20% is acceptable?	The 20% discretionary rebate is to give relief in the situation of rapid changes in valuations, or anomalies in valuations for individual properties Example - if a property's valuation was to double in one year, the rate increase would be capped at a 20% increase. There is no correlation between the general rate increase or CPI to the percentage of the capped rate increase. Council's <i>Rating Policy</i> contains the capping percentage and is tabled annually for Council's consideration.	Tabled in Council Report
1.2	NA	We believe that it is time for Council to adjust the proportion of rates paid by different land use codes. Over 16% of rateable properties in the council area are vacant.	Does not support rate rise.	For Council's consideration, to undertake a Rating Review that would include increasing the rate in the dollar to be higher than the other land usages.	Council to consider proposing an increase of the rate in the dollar for vacant land. Legislation requires that public consultation would need to be undertaken.

		We suggest that council increase rates on these properties that are not being used to house people or produce income. This would encourage more building, and increase the number of ratepayers in the district. We also suggest a lower rate for permanent residents on low incomes. This could be offset by a slightly higher rate on investment properties and second residences, which would be a much fairer way to achieve equity.		Council is restricted (by legislation) to only be based on the land use of the land and/or the locality of the land. Council could possibly pass a rebate for permanent residents on low incomes, The issue is that the Council is unable to easily identify residents that are permanent and what constitutes a low income. In addition, about 10% to 11% of all tax-paying individuals are associated with, or receive income from, a trust that are used to minimise personal income.	
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Name Supplied, Mannum

Submission#/Point #	Provision	Submission Point Summary	Decision Sought	Response	Action
2.1	NA	As a growing community we need to support and encourage our residents to live and work within the Mid Murray region. Given the space constraints of the Mannum Kindergarten/Rural Care, how does council plan to support the		The Federal Government: is responsible for funding and subsidies for kindergartens. They regulate national policies, such as the Australian Government Department of Education or federal family assistance programs.	Tabled in Council Report

		communities need for an expansion to the current childcare service?		Mid Murray Council applies a 100% rebate to the Mannum Kindergarten general rates. Council is always willing to advocate for improvements to the community infrastructure needs and services to foster population growth.	
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Name Supplied, Mannum

Submission#/ Point #	Provision	Submission Point Summary	Decision Sought	Response	Action
3.1	NA	I am happy with the way council is heading. I would like rates to be even lower if possible as I am a pensioner and my pension certainly doesn't go up by CPI each year. Each year it is getting harder and harder. Could council look at decreasing spending rather than increasing council rates?		Council is conscious of the ongoing financial strain in the present environment, especially with people on low or fixed incomes. The current draft long term financial plan only seeks to increase rates by CPI in 2027/28 and forward years.	Tabled in Council Report

Long Term Financial Plan 2026/27 to 2036/37 Submission Summary and Response

Nil Responses were received for the Long Term Financial Plan 2026/27 to 2036/37

Appendix 1 – Public Notification

Notification of the Public Consultation

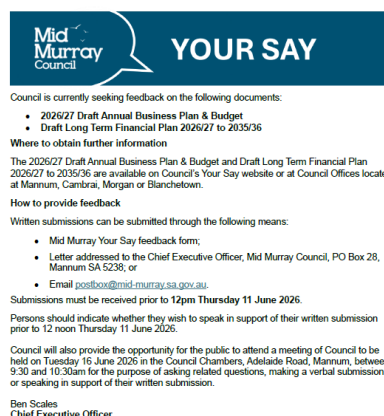
The Council promoted the engagement through Facebook, Council Website, advertisements in local newspapers and subscriber emails. Members of the community were invited to provide their feedback on the Your Say Survey or via a written submission.

Council provided the following engagement activities during the engagement process:

- Placed on the council website from Wednesday 20 May 2026
- Facebook posts run on 22 & 29 May 2026 and 4 & 10 June 2026



- Media Release emailed to Council's subscriber list and Media Distribution List
- Advertisements placed in Leader Newspaper, Murray Pioneer and Murray Valley standard

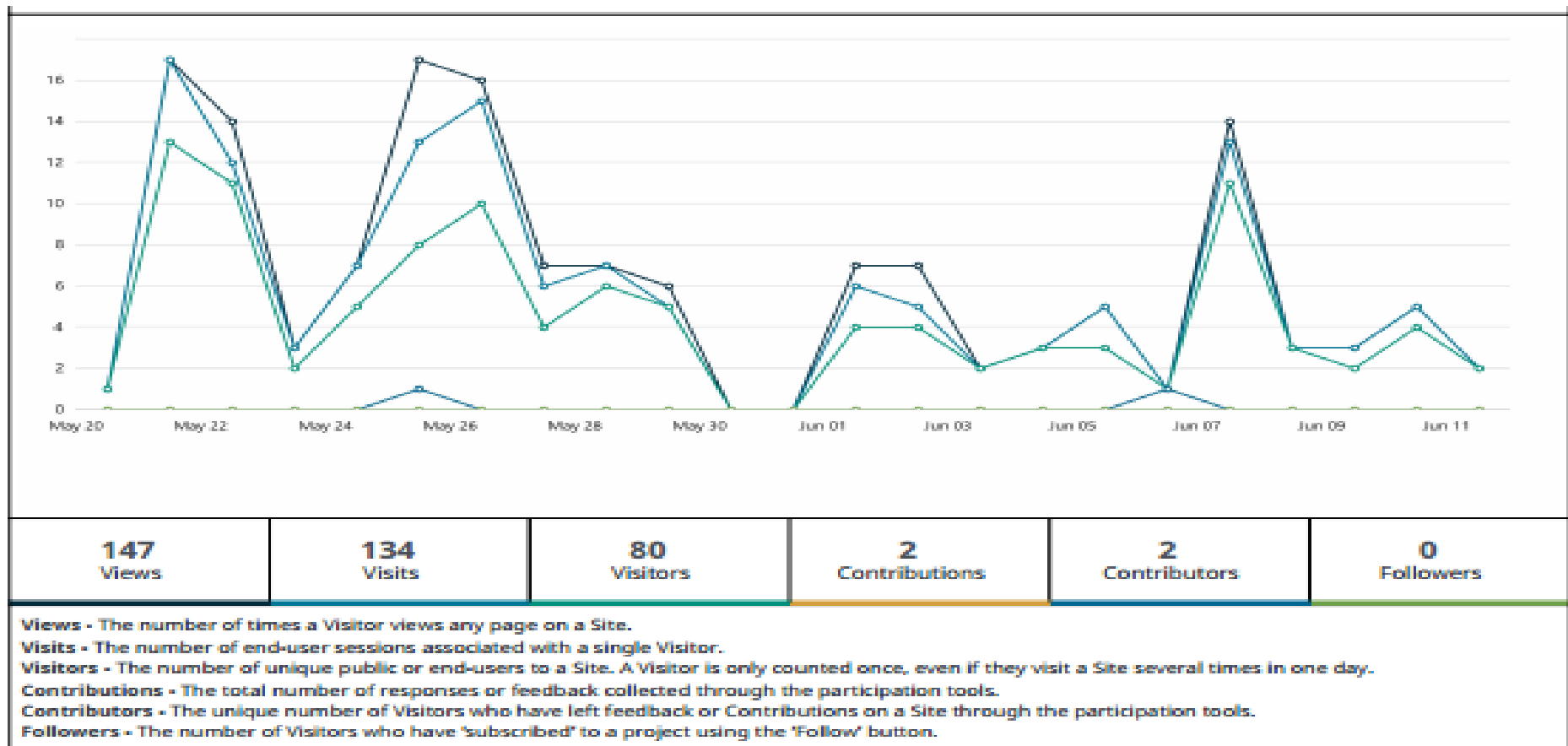


Response rate

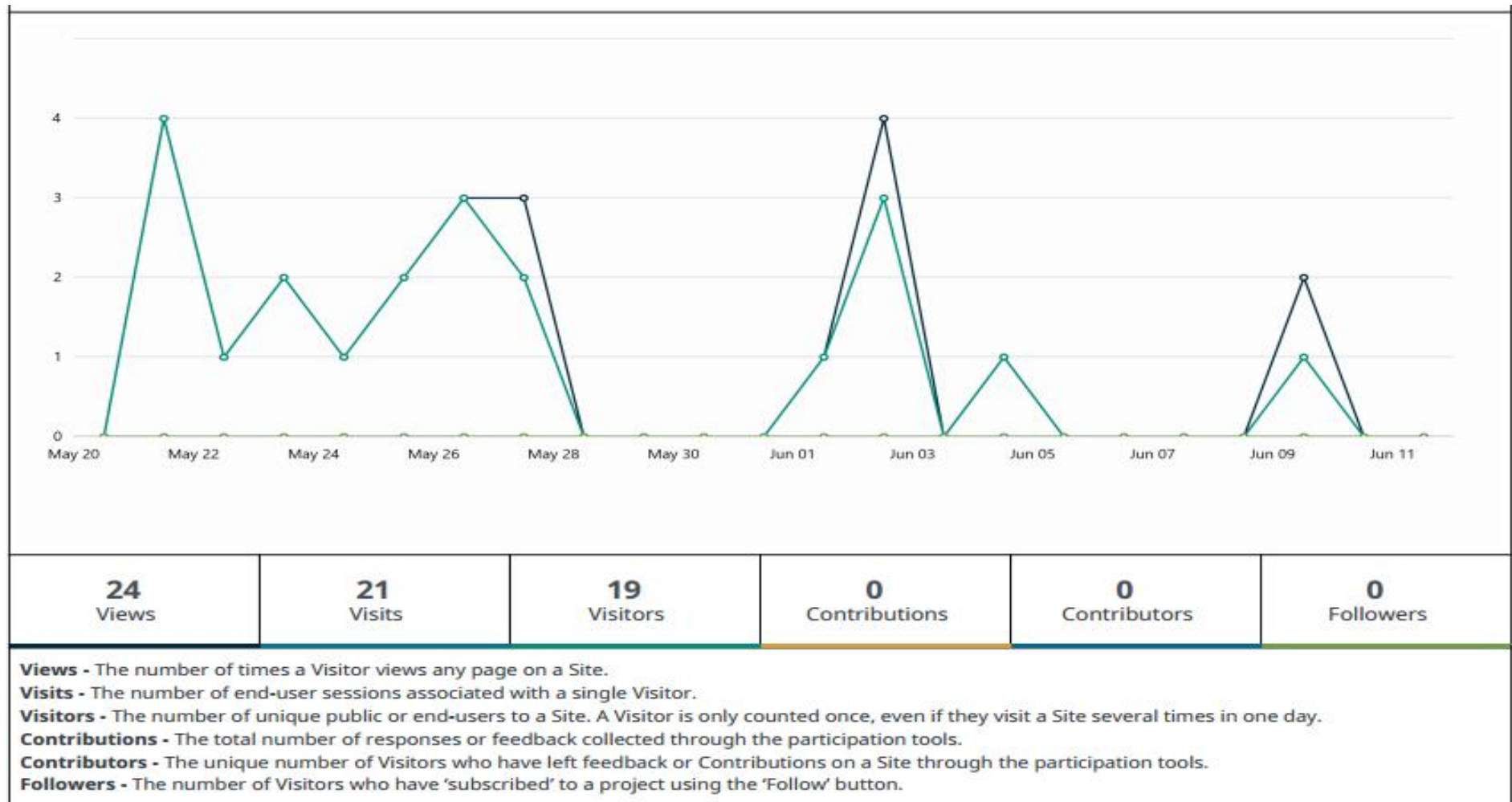
During the consultation period, the following feedback and submissions were received:

- One (1) written submission were received for the ABP and no written submissions were received for the LTFP.
- From the “Your Say” website, two (2) submissions were received for the ABP and no written submissions were received for the LTFP.

Draft Annual Business Plan & Budget 2026/27



Draft Long Term Financial Plan 2026/27 to 2036/37



21 May 2026



MEDIA RELEASE

MID MURRAY COUNCIL BUDGET BALANCES TODAY'S NEEDS WITH FUTURE SUSTAINABILITY

Mid Murray Council will strike a balance between meeting its community's needs today and continuing to build a sustainable, positive future for the district in its annual budget.

The Council's *Draft 2026/27 Annual Business Plan and Budget* includes a 3.64% average general rate increase – reduced by 1% from the initial proposed 4.64% increase for existing property owners – in response to current cost of living pressures affecting the Mid Murray community.

The draft plan sets out Council's priority projects, services, programs and other initiatives for the year ahead and has been released for community consultation.

Mid Murray Mayor Simone Bailey said the *Draft 2026/27 Annual Business Plan and Budget* prioritises continuing Council's work to enhance financial sustainability, while also delivering essential services, programs and infrastructure for the district.

"Council recognises the current challenging economic environment, and the impact rising costs are having on our community, as well as on Council's own operations," Mayor Bailey said.

"As a result of this, we have reduced our proposed annual general rate increase by 1%, and we will find comparable savings within the budget to offset this decrease.

"Council has worked hard over the past three years to find great efficiency and savings across our operations. While reducing rate increases is not something we can do every year without impacting on our long-term sustainability and ability to deliver essential services and projects, we do recognise that this year we are facing extraordinary financial pressures driven by global factors including the conflict in the Middle East, and local factors such as recent drought."

As a result of Council's prudent budgeting and managed spending in recent years, a small budget deficit is projected for the 2026/27 financial year. Council's budgeted operating deficit before capital revenues for 2026/27 is \$26,000. An ongoing reduction is also predicted in Council's net budget financial liabilities in future years, with an estimate of 18% for 2026-27, slightly increasing from a projected 14% in 2025-26, with both forecasts being well below the maximum benchmark of 100%. Under Council's Long-Term Financial Plan, debt will continue to reduce over 10 years to 11% in 2035/36.

Projects for the year ahead as outlined in the *Draft 2026/27 Annual Business Plan and Budget* include:

- Finalise Stage 2 outcomes of our Sustainability Review.
- Progress the implementation of the Swan Reach township CWMS.
- Rural recycling and township green waste assessment and project.
- Swan Reach boat ramp upgrade project and finalise design for Blanchetown boat ramp upgrade.
- Open Space flood remediation.
- Implement the *Community Development Strategy* and develop Community Action Plans.
- Implement the *Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2026-2030*.
- Implement the *Growth Management and Housing Strategy*.
- Progression of Mannum Dock Discovery Centre and Morgan Landseer Museum interpretation and collections program.
- Deliver the *Mid Murray Tourism Precinct* Planning project.

MEDIA CONTACT:

Mid Murray Council Chief Executive Officer Ben Scales
P: (08) 8569 0100 | E: postbox@mid-murray.sa.gov.au

- Finalise implementation of Mid Murray Female Sports Facility project at the Mannum Oval Sporting Complex.



These include projects funded by State or Federal Government grants.

Ensuring Council's services meet the needs of the Mid Murray community is one of the leading priorities in the *Draft 2026/27 Annual Business Plan and Budget*. This year, Council will progress the rural recycling and township green waste assessment project to determine the most appropriate service options for the community into the future.

Over recent years, Council has developed plans and strategies to support its Strategic Plan goal of enhancing the livability of the Mid Murray. These will be implemented in the coming year to guide positive change in areas such as disability access and inclusion, volunteer management, reconciliation, community development, and regional public health. These are important foundations for building positive community accessibility, connectivity, and wellbeing.

Council will support the district's future prosperity by developing and putting in place an Economic Development Strategy, and implementing its Growth Management and Housing Strategy to support sustainable, well-planned development.

Tourism, heritage and the district's environment will be supported through a range of initiatives. The Mid Murray Tourism Precinct Planning project will assist in strengthening the local tourism industry to capitalise on growing interest in the Mid Murray as a visitor destination. Council will also support the protection of the area's night skies – and Australia's first International Dark Sky Reserve – by continuing to implement its *Dark Sky Strategy and Action Plan*.

Mid Murray's heritage riverboats will be supported through the official launch of the PS Canally, upgrades to the PS Marion, and the progression of the Mannum Dock Discovery Centre and the Morgan Landseer Museum interpretation and collections program.

Public consultation on both the *Draft 2026/27 Annual Business Plan and Budget* is now open and ends 12noon on Thursday 11 June 2026.

To read the *Draft 2026/27 Annual Business Plan and Budget*, and to find out how to have your say, visit www.mid-murray.sa.gov.au

- ENDS -

MEDIA CONTACT:

Mid Murray Council Chief Executive Officer Ben Scales
P: (08) 8569 0100 | E: postbox@mid-murray.sa.gov.au

Appendix 2 - Submissions

Annual Business Plan 2026/27

Walker Flat & Districts Progress Association

[REDACTED]

To: Mid Murray Council

Re: the Draft 2026/2027 Annual Business Plan and Budget

We are concerned that your method of raising rates revenue is unfair to the disadvantaged members of our community.

Your stated goals of sustainability, liveability, and prosperity are not achievable for all when every basic cost of living is rising far faster than income.

Since 2025, housing costs have increased by an average of \$50 per week, while the minimum wage has risen by \$32 and the single pension by \$15

Announcing that the average General Rate will increase by 3.64% does not help those who will be paying residential rates at 8% (average \$110) higher while the cost of living concession is up by \$6.30 per year.

This year's CPI was 4.1%. Why has council decided that a cap of rates rise at 20% is acceptable?

In your reasoning for using the Capital Valuation method, it states – "Equity principle of taxation requires taxpayers of greater wealth pay more than those of lesser wealth - Property value is a relatively good indicator of wealth"

We wish to point out this can only be true if it is not being used to actually live in.

Housing "wealth" is not applicable or accessible to someone who uses their home for shelter.

As you are aware, the Mid Murray community is in the lowest 11% of all areas in the whole of Australia for SEIFA relative socio-economic disadvantage.

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, 32.3% of households in our council area – 1/3 of ratepayers- have an income under \$650 per week or \$34000 per year.

Your decision to claw an extra one and a quarter million dollars this year in revenue from 5861 households is neither sustainable nor prosperous for those ratepayers.

We believe that it is time for Council to adjust the proportion of rates paid by different land use codes.

Over 16% of rateable properties in the council area are vacant.

We suggest that council increase rates on these properties that are not being used to house people or produce income.

This would encourage more building, and increase the number of ratepayers in the district.

We also suggest a lower rate for permanent residents on low incomes. This could be offset by a slightly higher rate on investment properties and second residences, which would be a much fairer way to achieve equity.

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Kendra Radford

Secretary

Response No:
1

Contribution ID: 836

Member ID:

Date Submitted: Jun 06, 2026, 02:15 PM

Q1 Do you wish to remain anonymous?

Multi Choice

Yes

Q2 First and Last Name

Short Text

[REDACTED]

Q3 Address

Short Text

[REDACTED]

Q4 Phone

Telephone

[REDACTED]

Q5 Email

Email

[REDACTED]

Q6 Did you find the Draft 2026/2027 Annual Business Plan & Budget easy to understand?

Multi Choice

Yes

Q7 Any other comments

Long Text

I am happy with the way council is heading. I would like rates to be even lower if possible as I am a pensioner and my pension certainly doesn't go up by CPI each year. Each year it is getting harder and harder. Could council look at decreasing spending rather than increasing council rates?

Q8 How satisfied are you with the Draft 2026/2027 Annual Business Plan & Budget.

Multi Choice

Unsatisfied

Q9 Any other comments

Long Text

As per last comment, please look at cutting back expenditure rather than increasing rates

Q10 Do you wish to make a representation in person by attending the meeting of Council to be held on Tuesday 16 June 2025, between 9:30 and 10:30am

Multi Choice

No

Response No:
2

Contribution ID: 831

Member ID:

Date Submitted: May 25, 2026, 02:02 PM

Q1 Do you wish to remain anonymous?

Multi Choice

Yes

Q2 First and Last Name

Short Text

Q3 Address

Short Text

Q4 Phone

Telephone

Q5 Email

Email

Q6 Did you find the Draft 2026/2027 Annual Business Plan & Budget easy to understand?

Multi Choice

Yes

Q7 Any other comments

Long Text

As a growing community we need to support and encourage our residents to live and work within the Mid Murray region. Given the space constraints of the Mannum Kindergarten/Rural Care, how does council plan to support the communities need for an expansion to the current childcare service?

Q8 How satisfied are you with the Draft 2026/2027 Annual Business Plan & Budget.

Multi Choice

Unsatisfied

Q9 Any other comments

Long Text

Q10 Do you wish to make a representation in person by attending the meeting of Council to be held on Tuesday 16 June 2025, between 9:30 and 10:30am

Multi Choice

No

Long Term Financial Plan 2026/27 to 2036/37

Nil Submissions received