

MEDIA RELEASE

MID MURRAY COUNCIL REDUCES RATE INCREASE, STRENGTHENS FUTURE

Mid Murray Council has adopted its 2026/27 Annual Business Plan and Budget together with a new 10-year Long Term Financial Plan, reinforcing Council's commitment to long-term financial sustainability while limiting the average general rate increase for existing properties to 2.9 per cent.

The adopted Annual Business Plan and Budget delivers a balanced approach that continues Council's focus on financial sustainability while recognising the cost-of-living pressures facing the community.

Mid Murray Mayor Simone Bailey said the adoption of the Long Term Financial Plan was a significant milestone for Council and reflected the progress made over recent years.

"Only three years ago, Mid Murray Council was identified as potentially financially unsustainable," Mayor Bailey said.

"Since then, Council has worked incredibly hard to strengthen our financial position, improve efficiency and make the difficult decisions needed to secure our long-term future.

"The adoption of this Long Term Financial Plan demonstrates that we have a clear roadmap for the next decade. It allows us to continue investing in our communities while ensuring Council remains financially responsible and sustainable."

Following further review of Council's financial position during the budget process, the average general rate increase for existing properties was reduced from the 3.64 per cent proposed during public consultation to 2.9 per cent.

"We know many households continue to face cost-of-living pressures, so Council carefully considered every opportunity to reduce the impact on our ratepayers while maintaining the services and infrastructure our community relies upon," Mayor Bailey said.

"The work we've undertaken through our Sustainability Review, long-term financial planning and ongoing efficiency improvements is now delivering real benefits for our community.

"Financial sustainability isn't about cutting services for the sake of it. It's about ensuring Council can continue delivering quality services, maintaining infrastructure and investing in the future without placing unnecessary financial pressure on future generations."

The adopted Long Term Financial Plan forecasts continued improvements to Council's financial position over the next decade, including:

- an average operating surplus of 4.7 per cent across the 10-year planning period;
- borrowings reducing to no net debt by Year 10; and
- an average asset renewal ratio of 104 per cent, ensuring Council continues investing in the renewal of its infrastructure.

The plan also provides additional capacity in future years to invest in strategic planning, asset improvements and projects that position Council to secure external grant funding and continue improving community infrastructure.

The 2026/27 Annual Business Plan and Budget includes ongoing investment in essential infrastructure, community facilities and economic development initiatives across the district, while maintaining Council's focus on responsible financial management.

Mayor Bailey thanked the community for its ongoing interest in Council's planning for the future.

"These plans are about much more than just next year's budget," she said.

"They set the direction for Council over the next decade and ensure we continue making responsible decisions that benefit both current and future generations.

"I'm proud of the work Council and our staff have undertaken to get to this point, and I look forward to continuing to build a strong, financially sustainable future for the Mid Murray."

The adopted 2026/27 Annual Business Plan and Budget and Long Term Financial Plan are available on Council's website.

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