Questions and Answers for Council Meeting – 24 February 2026

WAVERLEY COUNCIL

Item No.	Subject	Councillor	Questions and Answers
CM/6.2/26.02	Q2 Budget Review – 2025-2026	Cr Fabiano	Recovery Risk – What level of confidence do officers have that the projected income losses from event cancellations will be eligible for reimbursement, and what is our contingency if recovery funding is only partially approved? Response from Tara Czinner, Director, Corporate Services: The General Manager has continued to have very positive engagement with the NSW Recovery Authority and reimbursement for expenditure. A number of events were cancelled out of respect and security concerns, this has also resulted in a reduction in projected event income and user parking charges. Council is encouraging visitors to Bondi Beach and contingency, should the grant be unsuccessful, may require a review of budget at Q3.
CM/6.2/26.02	Q2 Budget Review – 2025-2026	Cr Fabiano	Operating Sustainability - With the Operating Performance Ratio forecast at –0.37%, what is the projected trajectory of this ratio over the next three years under current assumptions? Response from Tara Czinner, Director, Corporate Services: The reduction in OPR is as a result of the Bondi Beach Incident and increased depreciation expenses (non-cash items). As per the LTFP our projected trajectory is anticipated to continue to meet the OLG benchmarks (which have been removed from Code) noting that Council continues to invest in an ICT Modernisation and Cyber security strategy.
CM/6.2/26.02	Q2 Budget Review – 2025-2026	Cr Fabiano	Reserve Adequacy - Following the reduced transfer to reserves, do officers consider our reserve levels sufficient to absorb a comparable second shock within the next 12 months? Response from Tara Czinner, Director, Corporate Services: Reserves are utilised in line with Council's reserve strategy. Council may wish to defer or cancel projects to increase reserve balance.
CM/6.2/26.02	Q2 Budget Review – 2025-2026	Cr Fabiano	Structural Reliance on Vacancy Savings - To what extent is the maintained operating expense position reliant on staff vacancy savings, and is that sustainable without affecting service delivery? Response from Tara Czinner, Director, Corporate Services: There is no structural reliance on vacancies. Most vacancies are backfilled by agency and/or temporary appointments. Council does encourage its staff to take their annual leave entitlements for their health and wellbeing and employee leave balance.
CM/6.2/26.02	Q2 Budget Review – 2025-2026	Cr Fabiano	Capital & Debt Exposure - With capital expenditure deferrals and a new loan supporting the program, how does this affect our debt service ratio and long-term financial flexibility? Response from Tara Czinner, Director, Corporate Services: Our capital expenditure deferral aligns with the program phasing. The loan for the Bronte SLC was deferred to align with the program phasing and as a result a reduction in the current year interest repayments. As per previous Council decisions, borrowing forms part of a sound financial sustainability strategy.
CM/6.2/26.02	Q2 Budget Review – 2025-2026	Cr Fabiano	The Grants, Subsidies and Contributions for Capital has been revised down by $8.7m for the year. Is there more detail on this? Response from Tara Czinner, Director, Corporate Services: Grants and contributions have been revised down. Our budget always anticipates possible grant funding, and we prepare scenarios of spends if we were successful, or not, in possible grant funding. The $8.7m consists of $1,850,939 (see change in Assets and Operations Budget Statement page 76). As at Q1 it was identified that there was no specific grant funding available. It was discussed at the Capital Works Review Committee and agreed to pause the projects or only spend Council funding and remove at Q2. Also, a reduction of $6,819,740 (see change in Planning Sustainability budget statement page 74). This is attributed to the reduction in VPA contributions.
CM/6.2/26.02	Q2 Budget Review – 2025-2026	Cr Fabiano	Can we see a refreshed forecast of all of Council's key financial metrics for 2028/29, the first year beyond the loan drawdown? Response from Tara Czinner, Director, Corporate Services: Revised key metrics will be reviewed at the time of preparation of the LTFP which is reviewed annually.

CM/6.2/26.02	Q2 Budget Review – 2025-2026	Cr Lewis	The summary of changes for the Capital Works Program on page 68 includes reductions of $3,030,000 as a result of unsuccessful grants for Crowded Place CCTV, Safety by Design and new EV charger program. The attachment on page 80 sets out the respective amounts and the reductions/amendments as: $1,600,000 (of the budgeted $1,725,000) $400,000 ($800,000) $350,000 ($350,000) a. How will these reductions impact on each of the projects (noting the EV charger program is a 100% reduction) b. Does the Crowded Place CCTV project include security cameras at Bondi Beach? c. When were we notified that each of the grant requests was unsuccessful? Response from Tara Czinner, Director, Corporate Services: These three projects were anticipated grants. As at Q1 it was identified that there was no specific grant funding available. It was discussed at the Capital Works Review Committee and agreed to pause the projects or only spend Council funding and remove at Q2. With regards to each project: Crowned Place CCTV – Network Architecture review (in line with Council resolution) progressed. No new CCTV cameras installed. Safety by Design – progressing design and procurement based on council funding across both 25/26 and 26/27 – focus to secure north and south and of promenade at Bondi beach. EV charger program – no new Council installed public EV chargers however we continue to deliver public EV chargers under previous grant funding.
CM/6.2/26.02	Q2 Budget Review – 2025-2026	Cr Lewis	The report states there is a reduced capital income of $8.7m to $22.9m. The tables are hard to read in their current format. Where do I find the breakdown of the $8.7m? Response from Tara Czinner, Director, Corporate Services: The $8.7m consists of: $1,850,939 (see change in Assets and Operations Budget Statement page 76) plus $6,819,740 (see change in Planning Sustainability budget statement page 74). This is attributed the change in capital works program grants and the reduction in VPA contributions.
CM/6.2/26.02	Q2 Budget Review – 2025-2026	Cr Lewis	The report states there will be a reduction of transfers to reserves (replenish) by $5.7m attributed to the planning receipting schedule reassessment and that $1.2m will be applied from the reserves to support the revised FY2025-26 budget. The table on page 72 records that the actual YTD transfers to reserves is $27.626m against a total budget figure of $31.165m. If the revised Q2 figure is $25.882m where in the budget is the difference accounted for: that is, the difference between the current $27.626m and the proposed adjustment to $25.882m? Response from Tara Czinner, Director, Corporate Services: With respect to the transfer to the reserves on the Budget statement on page 72 the difference between the actuals and the proposed budget relates to the use of the reserves in particular from the Domestic Waste fund and the self-funding business unit i.e. cemeteries and affordable housing program i.e. anticipated expenses have not been incurred whilst the income has been received.
CM/6.2/26.02	Q2 Budget Review – 2025-2026	Cr Lewis	Where do I find a schedule of the planning receipt schedule reassessments? Response from Tara Czinner, Director, Corporate Services: With respect to the Planning agreement schedules this can be located https://www.waverley.nsw.gov.au/council/access_to_information/other_registers
CM/6.2/26.02	Q2 Budget Review – 2025-2026	Cr Merten	On page 69, it's stated that $1.2 million will be applied to support the revised FY 2025-26 budget. Is this $1.2 million from the unrestricted reserve? If so, what's the balance of the reserve after this transfer? If not, which reserve does the $1.2 million come from? Response from Tara Czinner, Director, Corporate Services: Page 91 details the projected reserve balances. Reserves are applied in accordance with our Reserves strategy. Internal allocations refer to identified programs of work and forward plans. The details is listed in the Variance column namely SAMP infrastructure, social housing and Centralised reserve. The balance is approximately $97m which is detailed in the PYE column.
CM/6.2/26.02	Q2 Budget Review – 2025-2026	Cr Merten	On p79, there's an amount of (7,560) against the Tamarama Life Saving Storage Facility in the Q2 Amendment column. Why is there no cost/amount in the Current Budget column?

			Response from Tara Czinner, Director, Corporate Services: With respect to the original budget for Tamarama Life Saving – The SAMP building program is budgeted annually based on a 10 year plan of renewal works across the portfolio. A $67,000 budget was allocated for planned works across our Surf Clubs and Ancillary Coastal Facilities. We needed to undertake unplanned roller door repairs to the IRB store at the beach. We have balanced across this category of buildings by reprioritising works, in this case from the North Bondi Bus Terminus adjustments are often made when clarity of costs, prioritisation for asset maintenance and unanticipated costs.