

15 June 2026

Council budget backs roads and growth

Barunga West Council is inviting community feedback on a responsible financial plan designed to renew local roads and infrastructure, support growth and strengthen Council's long-term financial position.

Council has released its Draft 2026/27 Annual Business Plan and Budget, and Draft Long-Term Financial Plan 2026-2036, for public consultation.

Under the draft plan, Council is proposing an 8.4 per cent increase in general rate revenue for 2026/27. This is made up of the Adelaide Consumer Price Index figure of 4.9 per cent, a further 2.9 per cent general rate increase and 0.6 per cent growth in the number of rateable properties.

Council has also proposed a 14 per cent cap on increases in general rates for existing assessments to help limit the impact of property valuation movements on individual ratepayers.

Mayor Leonie Kerley said the draft plan reflected the difficult balance between affordability, service delivery and long-term infrastructure renewal.

"Council understands that cost pressures are being felt by households, businesses and primary producers across our region," Mayor Kerley said.

"At the same time, Council has a responsibility to maintain essential services, renew local roads and community assets, and make sure we are financially sustainable into the future. This draft plan is about being upfront with the community and making responsible decisions for the long-term benefit of Barunga West."

The draft budget forecasts operating income of \$9.86 million and operating expenditure of \$10.11 million, resulting in a forecast operating deficit of \$253,000.

The capital works program totals about \$3.81 million and includes investment in roads, land development, plant and equipment, wastewater infrastructure, community facilities and public open space.

Media Release



Major proposed projects include \$1 million for unsealed road renewals, \$400,000 for sealed road renewals, \$1.12 million for the Port Broughton Employment Zone, \$227,794 for the Bute Residential Land Development, \$509,000 for fleet and plant replacement, \$301,864 for Port Broughton Golf Club recycled water irrigation works and \$137,940 towards the Bayside Caravan Park electrical upgrade.

The Draft Long-Term Financial Plan outlines a pathway to improved financial sustainability, including a return to an operating surplus ratio above zero by 2028 and the repayment of all Council debt by 2031/32.

Chief Executive Officer Mark McDonald said the draft documents had been prepared after detailed consideration of Council's financial position, valuation movements, rating options and long-term asset renewal needs.

"These plans set out how Council proposes to fund essential services, renew infrastructure and meet its long-term financial responsibilities," Mr McDonald said.

"Council continues to focus on cost control, transparent financial reporting, asset renewal and responsible investment in infrastructure.

"We encourage residents, ratepayers and businesses to read the documents, ask questions and make a submission before the consultation period closes."

The Draft 2026/27 Annual Business Plan and Budget also sets out Council's proposed rating approach for the coming financial year, including the use of capital value, differential general rates, a fixed charge of \$435 per property and Community Wastewater Management System charges for Port Broughton, Bute and Fisherman Bay.

Public consultation is now open and will close at 5pm on Friday, 3 July 2026.

Residents can attend the next Council meeting at the Port Broughton Town Hall between 5.30pm and 6.30pm on Tuesday, 30 June 2026 to ask questions or make a submission.

Written submissions can be sent to:

Chief Executive Officer
Barunga West Council

Media Release

PO Box 3
PORT BROUGHTON SA 5522
or emailed to barunga@barungawest.sa.gov.au



The draft plans are available on Council's website at www.barungawest.sa.gov.au, with hard copies available from Council offices in Port Broughton and Bute.

Council will consider the Draft 2026/27 Annual Business Plan and Budget and Draft Long-Term Financial Plan 2026-2036 for adoption on 14 July 2026.

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