

AGENDA

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

13 November 2024



You are hereby notified that a **Governance Committee Meeting** of Liverpool City Council will be held at **Liverpool Civic Place, 11.08 BOARDROOM WIRRIGA (GOANNA) LEVEL 11, 50 SCOTT STREET, LIVERPOOL NSW 2170** on **Wednesday, 13 November 2024** commencing at 1:00 pm.

Please note this meeting is closed to the public. The minutes will be submitted to the next Council meeting.

If you have any enquiries, please contact Civic and Executive Services on 8711 7781.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jason Breton".

Jason Breton
ACTING CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

ORDER OF BUSINESS

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Opening

Apologies

Declarations of Interest

Infrastructure and Planning Committee

NIL

Budget Committee

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Strategic Priorities Committee

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Strategic Performance Committee

NIL

Presentations by Councillors

Close

ITEM 01

Audited Financial Statements FY 2023-24

Strategic Objective	Visionary, Leading, Responsible Ensure Council is accountable and financially sustainable through the strategic management of assets and resources
File Ref	355040.2024
Report By	Vishwa Nadan - Chief Financial Officer
Approved By	Farooq Portelli - Director Corporate Support

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council has complied with all legislative requirements with respect to preparation, audit and lodgement of its financial statements for year ended 30 June 2024.

The Audit Office NSW has issued an unqualified audit opinion. Their report on conduct of the audit is also included as part of the financial reports.

The Audit Office NSW will issue the final management letter which will highlight control issues that were identified during the audit. This report will be shared with the Governance Committee when available.

The Financial Statements were placed on public exhibition to 31st October 2024. At the time of writing this report, Council did not receive any submissions. An update on submissions will be provided at the meeting. Copies of submissions will be referred to the Audit Office NSW and financial statements will be amended if necessary.

The report includes appendices which provides key budget variations contributing to the deficit 'Net Cost of Services' result of \$10.9m from original deficit budget of \$3.7m for the year ended 30 June 2024.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Governance Committee receives and notes the report.

REPORT

Legislative Requirements

The *Local Government Act 1993 No 30 (NSW)* stipulates certain requirements on the preparation, audit, and lodgement of Council's financial statements.

In summary:

1. Section 413 requires that Council must prepare financial reports for each financial year and must refer these for audit as soon as practicable after the end of that year.
2. Section 416 requires that Council financial reports for a year must be prepared and audited within the period of 4 months after the end of that year (i.e.. 31 October).
3. Section 418 requires Council to give public notice to include Council meeting date on which the financial statements will be presented and places where copies of audited reports will be kept available for public inspection.
4. Section 420 permits any person to make submission to Council with respect to its audited financial reports.
5. Section 422 mandates the Audit Office NSW to audit Councils financial statements








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The Audit Office NSW has issued an unqualified audit opinion. Their report on conduct of the audit is also included as part of the financial reports.

The Audit Office NSW will issue a final management letter which will highlight control issues that were identified during the audit. This report will be shared with the Governance Committee when available.

The Financial Statements were placed on public exhibition to 31st October 2024. At the time of writing this report, Council did not receive any submissions. An update on submissions (if any) will be provided at the meeting. Copies of submissions will be referred to the Audit Office NSW and financial statements will be amended if necessary.

In accordance with its Charter, Councils Audit, Risk & Improvement Committee (ARIC) which includes three independent members, is also required to review the financial statements both before and after audit. Specifically, they sought assurances tabulated overleaf:

Council has complied with accounting standards and external accountability requirements?	
Council's accounting policies and disclosures are appropriate?	
There are no high-risk unresolved external audit matters that will impact on the accuracy of the financial statements?	
All of the relevant financial information systems relied on for preparation of Council's financial statement (including key internal controls) are adequate, appropriate and operating effectively?	
Council is satisfied that all reasonable steps have been taken to ensure that financial statements are complete, accurate and reflect all material transactions, including any subsequent events?	
Council is satisfied that all expenditure from externally restricted funds has been expended for their specific purposes?	
All material balances in the financial statements that involves significant and/or complex accounting estimates or judgements have been identified and supported?	

Appendix 1 provides key budget variations from deficit 'Net Cost of Services' of \$3.7m to deficit \$6.9m projected at end of Q3.

Appendix 2 provides key budget variations from projected 'Net Cost of Services' of \$6.9m to actual deficit \$10.9m result for the year ended 30 June 2024.

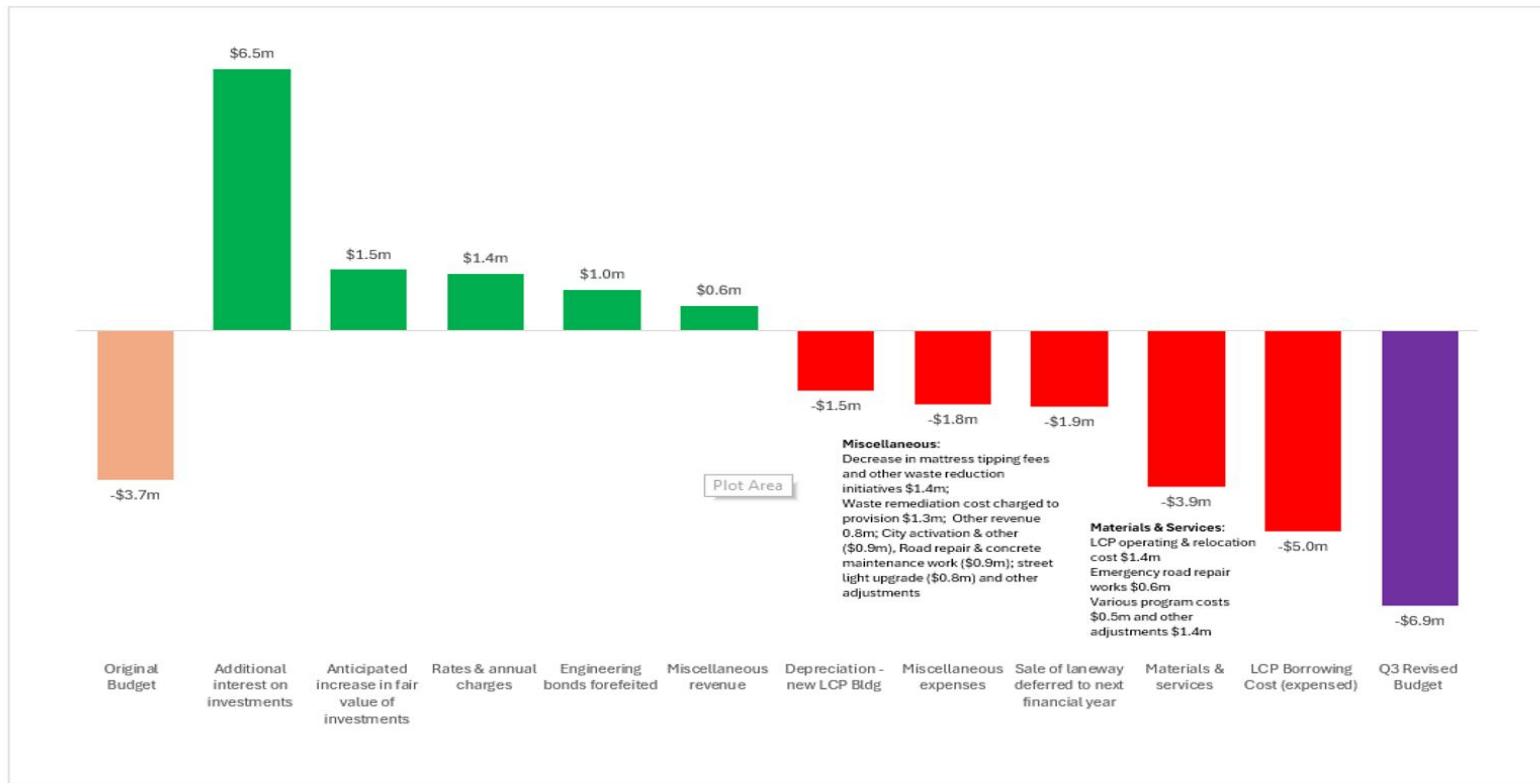
ATTACHMENTS

1. Audited Financial Statements 2023-24 (Under separate cover)

Appendix 1

Liverpool City Council

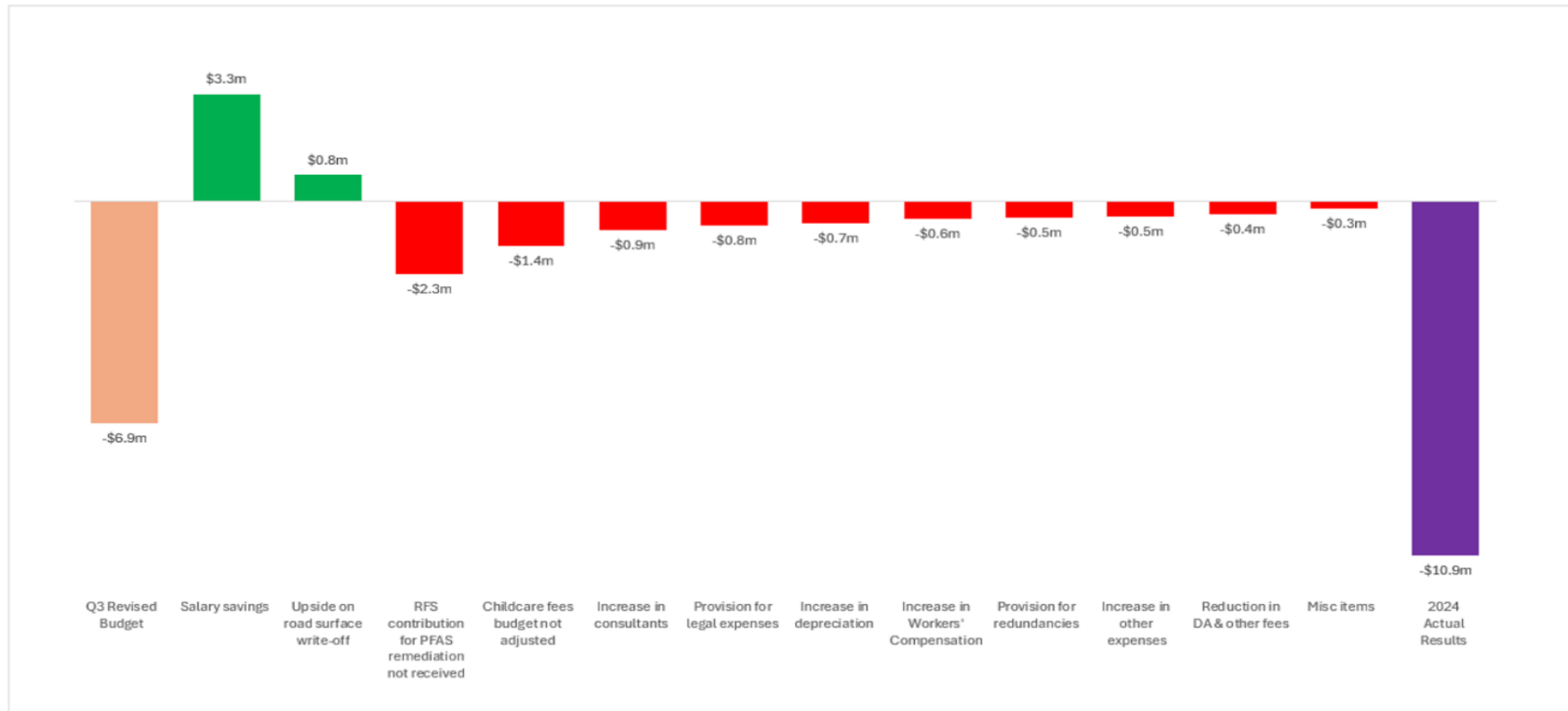
Net Operating Result projected $-\$6.9m$ (Quarter 3 review) against budget $-\$3.7m$



Appendix 2

Liverpool City Council

Actual Net Operating Result $-\$10.9m$ against projected $-\$6.9m$



ITEM 02	Review of Council's Financial progress, forecasts and assumptions
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Strategic Objective	Visionary, Leading, Responsible Ensure Council is accountable and financially sustainable through the strategic management of assets and resources
File Ref	355587.2024
Report By	Earl Paradeza - Senior Management Accountant
Approved By	Farooq Portelli - Director Corporate Support

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In June 2024 the Council adopted its 2024-25 operating budget with estimated revenue of \$417.4 million and expenditure of \$281.2 million. In terms of the net operating result before grants and contributions provided for capital purposes, Council budgeted for an operating surplus of \$2.6 million.

Based on Q1 Budget Review, Council resolutions, program initiatives, market trends and actual budget performance to 30 September 2024, Council is now projecting an operating deficit of \$11.6 million.

This report provides key variations and highlights key risks and opportunities that may impact on the projected result.

RECOMMENDATION

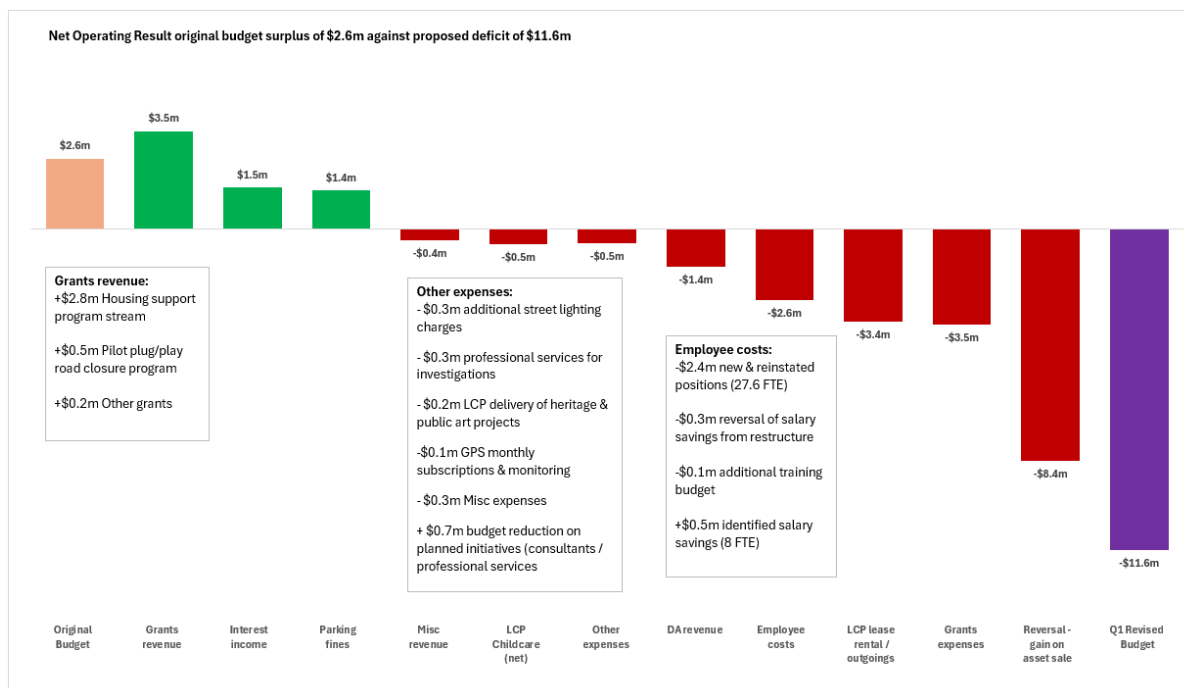
That the Governance Committee receives and notes the report.

REPORT

Budget Performance

In June 2024 the Council adopted its 2024-25 operating budget with estimated revenue of \$417.4 million and expenditure of \$281.2 million. In terms of the net operating result before grants and contributions provided for capital purposes, Council budgeted for an operating surplus of \$2.6 million.

Based on Q1 Budget Review, Council resolutions, program initiatives, market trends and actual budget performance to 30 September 2024, Council's revised projection is an operating deficit of \$11.6 million. Key variations noted are provided below:



Detailed analysis of both revenue and expenditure is provided as **Attachment 1**.














Operating Revenue

Budget performance of key sources of operating revenue were as follows:

Operating Revenue	YTD Budget \$'000	YTD Actual \$'000	Original Budget \$'000	Proposed Budget \$'000	Indicator
Rates & annual charges	70.618	63.073	181.623	181.497	👍
Other operating grants & subsidies	1.807	1.337	13.518	17.057	👍
Interest & investment income	3.743	4.347	14.971	16.471	👍
FAG grants	0.842	0.406	8.968	8.968	👍
Childcare fees & grants	2.031	1.855	10.251	8.936	👎
DA & other building fees	1.620	0.939	6.978	5.545	👎
Property rentals	2.437	1.569	9.703	7.242	👎
Parking fines	0.886	1.101	4.678	6.190	👍
Car parking fees	0.902	0.832	3.907	3.626	👍
Recovery - restoration works	0.629	0.724	2.518	2.518	👍
Ex-gratia income - Intermodal	0.000	0.000	2.346	2.346	👍
Net gain from disposal of assets	11.000	0.000	11.000	2.600	👎
Hire - community & recreational facilities	0.368	0.374	1.473	1.473	👍
Fair value increment on investments	0.000	0.931	0.000	0.000	👍

Operating Expenditure

Budget performance of key areas of operating expenses were as follows:

Operating Expenses	YTD Budget \$'000	YTD Actual \$'000	Original Budget \$'000	Proposed Budget \$'000	Indicator
Salaries including superannuation	25.807	25.349	98.037	99.848	
Tipping & waste services	9.827	8.815	39.307	39.307	
Utilities (electricity / water / gas)	1.861	1.489	7.443	7.744	
Software licenses	1.152	1.426	4.607	4.843	
Contributions - NSW Fire / SES / RFS	0.940	0.884	3.761	3.535	
Insurance	0.908	3.400	3.634	3.634	
Contracted labour (agency)	0.032	0.788	0.130	0.170	
Tipping (hazardous waste)	0.354	0.224	1.417	1.417	
Borrowing costs	2.846	2.237	10.063	10.063	
Professional services	1.113	0.251	3.703	6.757	
Workers compensation	0.531	0.437	2.125	2.125	
Overtime	0.385	0.997	1.540	1.540	
Consultants	0.238	0.438	0.952	0.783	

Risks & Opportunities

The following risks and opportunities have been identified with the potential to change the projected budget result for FY 2024/25.

- i) FAG Operating Grant [*Risk Probability: Low/Moderate*] – The NSW Grants Commission fully paid 2023/24 financial assistance grant in advance. Any change to their position for FY2024/25 is not known at this stage.
- ii) Net Loss from Disposal of Assets [*Risk Probability: Highly Likely*] – As part of the road renewal process, a portion of the road surface is scrapped off and then replaced. The replacement cost is capitalised, however, there is a written down value attached to the portion removed. The cost of write-off depends on the condition of the road at time of renewal and depth of surface removed. Budget includes a provision of \$2.5 million, however, the actual cost to June 2025 is not known.

Cash Reserves

At 30 September 2024, Council had \$385 million in cash and investments classified as follows:

	<i>Opening Balance 1 July 2024</i>	<i>Closing Balance 30 Sep 2024</i>
Externally Restricted		
S711 Contributions	276,762,833	287,560,133
City Development Fund	(586,980)	(86,412)
Domestic Waste Reserve	(1,332,628)	2,175,867
Environment Levy	6,534,668	6,810,134
Stormwater Reserve	1,135,927	1,318,640
Edmondson Park Reserve	2,992,324	3,029,031
Contribution Reserve	3,170,431	3,170,431
Grants Reserve - Capital	7,505,797	7,505,797
Grants Reserve - Operating	318,924	318,924
Deferred Grants Reserve - Capital	41,235,666	39,906,525
Deferred Grants Reserve - Operating	1,797,393	1,634,143
Western Sydney Infrastructure Grants Program	13,716,336	12,335,873
Total Externally Restricted	353,250,691	365,679,084
Internally Restricted		
Employee Leave Entitlement Reserve	4,672,000	4,672,000
Insurance Reserve	491,267	1,796,043
Parking Strategy Reserve	350,345	1,187,520
General Property Reserve	176,734	646,124
Carnes Hill Stage 2 Precinct Development Reserve	1,166,823	4,265,833
Moorebank Intermodal Company Ltd Ex-Gratia Funds	-	-
Total Internally Restricted	6,857,168	12,567,518
Unrestricted General Reserves		
Investments (Equity) in Civic Risk Mutual	6,518,000	6,518,000
Unrestricted available cash	0	0
Total Unrestricted General Reserves	6,518,000	6,518,000
Total Cash and Investments	366,625,859	384,764,603

ATTACHMENTS

1. 2024-25 Q1 Budget Review - Detailed Analysis

**Liverpool City Council
Summary Financial Results - Consolidated
For the period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025**

	2023-24 Annual Actual	2024-25 Original Budget	2024-25 Quarter 1 Request	2024-25 Q1 Proposed Budget	Variance (Q1 Proposed - Original Budget)	Comments
Net Operating Results Before Grants & Contributions for Capital Purposes	(10,958,321)	2,551,133	(14,180,594)	(11,629,461)	(14,180,594)	
Revenue						
Rates & Annual Charges	170,944,460	181,622,804	(125,800)	181,497,004	(125,800)	- \$66k Estimated council rates for LCP - \$60k Lower health inspection fees due to lower OSMS subdivided site
User Charges & Fees	18,006,643	20,357,883	(2,019,473)	18,338,410	(2,019,473)	- \$1.4m Reduction in development assessment fees - \$311k Reversal of projected LCP car parking fees - \$233k Reduction in section 603 certificate fees
Interest & Investment Revenue	17,640,111	14,971,272	1,500,000	16,471,272	1,500,000	+ \$1.5m Anticipated higher interest income on investments
Grants & Contributions - Operating	26,314,429	28,923,176	2,224,018	31,147,194	2,224,018	+ \$2.8m Housing support program stream from Dept of Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Art + \$450k Pilot Plug/Play Road Closure Program grant from Dept of Transport + \$99k Grant received from Dept of Enterprise, Investment and Trade + \$90k Grant received from State NSW for rates collaboration work (ESL) - \$1.3m Reduction in childcare grants due to LCP childcare not going ahead
Grants & Contributions - Capital (Others) *	57,301,797	73,705,004	(8,507,828)	65,197,176	(8,507,828)	- \$4.6m Construction on Edmondson Avenue on hold pending direction from DPIE - \$3.7m Construction works on Brickmakers Creek delayed and expected to commence July 2025 - \$1.7m Carnes Hill Recreation Precinct Stage 2 - Aquatic Centre project delay and change in scope. Construction expected to comment next financial year. - \$925k Unsuccessful TfNSW grants in relation to cycle ways + \$1.2m PSLP grant for Macquarie Street middle + \$835k Black Spot program & other grants from TfNSW
Grants & Contributions - Capital (s711) *	48,099,711	60,000,000	0	60,000,000	0	
Other Revenues	11,707,566	17,147,189	1,692,556	18,839,745	1,692,556	+ \$1.4m Anticipated increase in parking and other fines + \$172k Increase in recovering of LCP outgoings
Rental Income	4,832,557	9,702,992	(2,460,741)	7,242,251	(2,460,741)	- \$2.5m Reversal of projected LCP lease rental attributed to vacant floors
Net Gain from the Disposal of Assets	0	11,000,000	0	2,600,000	(8,400,000)	- \$8.4m Reversal of anticipated gain on disposal of asset
Fair value increment on Investments	1,746,143	0	0	0	0	
Total Revenue	356,593,417	417,430,320	(7,697,268)	401,333,052	(16,097,268)	
Expenses						

**Liverpool City Council
Summary Financial Results - Consolidated
For the period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025**

	2023-24 Annual Actual	2024-25 Original Budget	2024-25 Quarter 1 Request	2024-25 Q1 Proposed Budget	Variance (Q1 Proposed - Original Budget)	Comments
Employee Costs	92,116,416	103,339,422	1,886,851	105,226,273	1,886,851	+ \$2.4m New and reinstated positions (27.6 FTE) + \$394k Reversal of salary savings from planned restructure + \$238k Regrading of various positions + \$75k Additional training budget - \$507k Identified salary savings (8 FTE)
Borrowing Costs	7,005,264	10,062,640	0	10,062,640	0	
Materials & Services - Tipping & Waste Services	33,731,457	39,307,261	0	39,307,261	0	
Materials & Services - Other	67,209,560	63,321,799	5,294,654	68,616,453	5,294,654	+ \$2.8m Assessment of required infrastructure in Austral & Leppington North precincts funded from Housing Support Program Stream grant + \$969k Estimated LCP outgoings recoverable from tenants + \$450k Pilot plug/play road closure program funded from grant + \$301k Street lighting additional charges + \$300k Professional services for investigations + \$200k LCP delivery of heritage and public art projects + \$100k GPS monthly subscriptions and monitoring
Legal Costs	2,577,084	1,705,281	0	1,705,281	0	
Consultants	2,639,904	951,750	(168,540)	783,210	(168,540)	- \$150k Reduction of consultancy works on Developer Contributions - \$100k Reduction of consultancy works for Brickmakers Flood Mitigation + \$78k Various consultancy works for flood study, street design & emergency management
Depreciation	49,568,564	54,007,036	0	54,007,036	0	
Other Expenses	5,523,920	5,978,995	(421,811)	5,557,184	(421,811)	- \$226k RFS /SES contribution adjustments based on final assessments - \$196k Reversal of LCP lease incentives
Net Loss from the Disposal of Assets	1,778,062	2,500,000	8,400,000	2,500,000	0	
Revaluation decrement / impairment of IPP&E	0	0	0	0	0	
Total Expenses	262,150,231	281,174,183	14,991,154	287,765,337	6,591,154	
Net Operating Result	94,443,186	136,256,137	(22,688,422)	113,567,715	(22,688,422)	
Less: Grants & Contributions for Capital Purposes *	105,401,507	133,705,004	(8,507,828)	125,197,176	(8,507,828)	
Net Operating Results Before Grants & Contributions for Capital Purposes	(10,958,321)	2,551,133	(14,180,594)	(11,629,461)	(14,180,594)	

ITEM 03

Policy Review - Code of Meeting Practice

Strategic Objective	Visionary, Leading, Responsible Demonstrate a high standard of transparency and accountability through a comprehensive governance framework
File Ref	349597.2024
Report By	M'Leigh Brunetta - Civic & Executive Services Lead
Approved By	Tina Bono - Director Community & Lifestyle

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At the 16 October 2024 Council Meeting, Council resolved to complete a review of the Code of Meeting Practice Policy and report back to Council as a priority.

Council has conducted an internal review on the Code of Meeting Practice that will be presented for consideration, with the intent to report back as a priority to the next Council Meeting on 20 November 2024.

To achieve this deadline, simultaneously Council will facilitate an external review of the proposed Policy to ensure compliance is achieved.

The Model Code of Meeting Practice for Local Councils in NSW states that Councils must adopt a code of meeting practice within 12 months of the local government elections, and before adopting a new code must first exhibit a draft of the code for at least 28 days and provide members of the community at least 42 days to provide feedback.

In addition, it is proposed that the Governance Meeting on the 13 May 2025 be brought forward one (1) week to align to the 21 May Council Meeting date. This will ensure adequate briefing and administrative time and align all Council Meeting dates resolved for 2025.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Governance Committee:

1. Support the proposed changes to the Code of Meeting Practice;
2. Notes that an external review is being conducted simultaneously, and any further advice or recommendations will be shared with Councillors for consideration, prior to the 20 November 2024 Council Meeting;

3. Notes that before Council can adopt a new Code of Meeting Practice the draft must be exhibited for at least 28 days and provide at least 42 days for community feedback;
4. Bring the Governance Meeting on the 20 May 2025 forward one (1) week to align to the 21 May Council Meeting date.

REPORT

On the 16 October 2024 Council Meeting, Council resolved the following.

That Council:

1. *Confirms the Council meeting time to commence at 6:00pm rather than 2:00pm for each monthly meeting for 2025.*

2. *Confirms the Council meeting dates for the 2025 calendar year as follows:*

- *5 February 2025;*
- *26 February 2025;*
- *26 March 2025;*
- *23 April 2025;*
- ***** 21 May 2025;***
- *25 June 2025;*
- *23 July 2025;*
- *27 August 2025;*
- *24 September 2025;*
- *22 October 2025;*
- *19 November 2025; and*
- *10 December 2025.*

2. *Confirms the Governance Committee meeting time as 10am and the Briefing Sessions to be held directly following the Governance Committee meetings, and meeting dates for the 2025 calendar year as follows:*

- *28 January 2025;*
- *18 February 2025;*
- *18 March 2025;*
- *15 April 2025;*
- ***** 13 May 2025;***

3. *Note that the Code of Meeting Practice adopted 26 October 2022 requires clarification with regards to clauses 3.1 and 18.1.*

4. *Direct the Acting CEO that the Code of Meeting Practice is externally reviewed, and a report comes back to Council as a priority;*
5. *Fund the external review from General Funds;*
6. *Advertises the Council meeting dates and commencing times of Council meetings for the 2025 calendar year; and*
7. *Promotes and makes the community aware of the changes in the new year via social media channels.*

On being put to the meeting the Foreshadowed Motion (moved by Clr Karnib) became the motion and was declared CARRIED.

**** Note:** At the 16 October 2024 Council Meeting, Council amended the proposed report recommendation for the May 2025 to be brought forward to take place on the 21 May 2025. However, Council did not move the May 2025 Governance Meeting forward to align to this date. It is proposed that the 20 May 2025 Governance Meeting be moved forward one (1) to ensure adequate briefing notice and calendar alignment.

Model Code of Meeting Practice

The Model Code of Meeting Practice for Local Councils in NSW (the Model Meeting Code) is made under section 360 of the Local Government Act 1993 (the Act) and the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2005* (the Regulation).

This code applies to all meetings of councils and committees of councils of which all the members are councillors (committees of council). Council committees whose members include persons other than councillors may adopt their own rules for meetings unless the council determines otherwise.

A council's adopted meeting code must not contain provisions that are inconsistent with the mandatory provisions.

Councils must adopt a code of meeting practice that incorporates the mandatory provisions of the Model Meeting Code no later than 12 months of the local government elections.

Under section 361 of the Local Government Act 1993, before adopting a new code of meeting practice, councils must first exhibit a draft of the code of meeting practice for at least 28 days and provide members of the community at least 42 days in which to comment on the draft code.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Council resolved an external review be funded from General Funds. The review will ensure alignment to the Model Code of Meeting Practice for Local Councils in NSW.

CONSIDERATIONS

Economic	There are no economic and financial considerations.
Environment	There are no environmental and sustainability considerations.
Social	<p>Raise awareness in the community about the available services and facilities.</p> <p>Promote community harmony and address discrimination.</p> <p>Support access and services for people with a disability.</p> <p>Deliver high quality services for children and their families.</p>
Civic Leadership	<p>Undertake communication practices with the community and stakeholders across a range of media.</p> <p>Foster neighbourhood pride and a sense of responsibility.</p> <p>Facilitate the development of community leaders.</p> <p>Encourage the community to engage in Council initiatives and actions.</p> <p>Provide information about Council's services, roles and decision-making processes.</p> <p>Deliver services that are customer focused.</p> <p>Operate a well-developed governance system that demonstrates accountability, transparency and ethical conduct.</p>
Legislative	<p>Local Government Act 1993.</p> <p>Local Government Regulation 2005.</p>
Risk	The risk is deemed to be Low.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

ITEM 04

Grants Donations and Sponsorship Program

Strategic Objective	Healthy, Inclusive, Engaging Promote a harmonious community that celebrates its diversity
File Ref	349887.2024
Report By	Javeria Hoda - Community Development Worker Funding & Support
Approved By	Tina Bono - Director Community & Lifestyle

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council is committed to building strong and resilient communities in the Liverpool Local Government Area (LGA) and maximising social wellbeing. Council's Grants Donations and Community Sponsorship program helps achieve these goals by providing financial support to local community groups and not for profit organisations to develop leadership skills, increase participation in community activities and address identified social issues with financial contributions to deliver projects that benefit residents, build, or enhance the reputation of Liverpool City Council and support delivery of local priorities as outlined in Council's Community Strategic Plan.

This report provides a summary of the Grants Donations and Sponsorship Program and the Policy and processes in place to evaluate applications that deliver impactful programs to the broader community in the Liverpool LGA.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Governance Committee notes the Grants Donations and Community Sponsorship Program, Policy, and the Grant management process.

REPORT

Background

Council's grant programs provide a coordinated and integrated approach to growing Liverpool socially, culturally, economically, and environmentally. Each year, Council allocates a budget of \$477,000 towards the Grants Donations and Community Sponsorship program. Council's Grants program was fully exhausted in 2023-24 financial year (with the exclusion of the Sustainable Environment Grant).

The following table highlights the budget breakdown in terms of funds allocated to each Grant program:

Grant Program	Budget Allocation per FY
Sustainable Environment Grant	\$75,000
Community Grant (includes several sub-programs) <i>Kick Starter Grant</i> <i>Small Grants</i> <i>International Women's Day Grant</i> <i>International Day for People with Disability Grant</i> <i>NAIDOC Awards Grant</i> <i>Harmony Day Grant</i> <i>Liverpool Young Achiever Awards</i>	\$152,000
Community Sponsorship	\$150,000
Matching Grant	\$100,000
Total	\$477,000

The Grants Donations and Community Sponsorship Policy (the Policy) guides the Grants program, to ensure the use of public funds through an effective grant management process. The Policy highlights the eligibility criteria, expected community outcomes and the overall grant management process. The Policy has been updated several times over the years to ensure an effective program is in place that caters to the evolving needs of the community and Council's strategic direction.

Applications

All applicants must register with Council's online grants management system known as Fluxx. Registered community groups and organisations can submit applications through Fluxx. Applicants can use the portal to complete draft applications, track the progress of their application and access acquittal forms following the delivery of their project. Councils' assessment panel uses Fluxx to review, assess and manage applications. Council's current contract with Fluxx will expire in January 2025, with a tender process underway to determine a new online grant management system.

Eligibility

To be eligible for Council funding, applicants must:

- Be incorporated or auspice by an incorporated organisation;
- Be a non-profit community service organisation or group located in the LGA and/or principally providing services to the residents of Liverpool;
- Be able to supply a copy of their most recent financial statements and public liability documents; and
- Acquit previous Council grants and have no outstanding debts to Council.

Emerging community groups in the Liverpool LGA often face challenges in meeting the eligibility criteria, particularly in providing Public Liability Certificates and Audited Bank Statements. In cases like this, the Grants team work closely with the applicant to arrange an auspice. An auspice agreement occurs where an incorporated organisation agrees to apply for funding or resources on behalf of an applicant that is not incorporated. If the application is successful, the auspicing organisation receives funding on behalf of the applicant and is legally responsible for ensuring the delivery partner completes the program.

Community groups such as the African Women Community Support Group (AWCSG) partnered with an auspice organisation STARTTS to secure funding for the African Women's Dinner Dance; a vibrant community event celebrating women and culture.

As part of the application process, Councils Community Development Worker (Funding and Support) often meets with applicants who require additional support and guidance prior to applying. The grant development sessions are designed to informally discuss the application process, proposed project and Council's requirements in accordance the Policy. Applicants can raise any issues or challenges that may be deterring their application.

Assessment and Recommendation

All applications received by Council through the Fluxx portal are assessed by a designated evaluation panel. This includes the Community Development Worker (Funding & Support) and 2 other officers from the Community Recreation and Outcomes team. For all applications, the evaluation panel will consider the criteria of sustainability, value for money, evidence of a need for the project, the number of individuals participating in or benefiting from, and whether the organisation has the capacity to deliver the project. Evaluating officers also consider achievable outcomes that align with Council's Community Strategic Plan (CSP) related to cultivating *inclusive and engaging communities*.

Monthly reports to Councillors are recommendations made by the Community Development Worker (Funding and Support) on applications that successfully met the assessment criteria. The Grants Donations and Community Sponsorship Report outlines relevant information for Councillor consideration including applicant details, program name and outline, expected outcomes, program delivery period, funding requested, overall cost of delivering the initiative, and most importantly, Councils recommendation as per the assessment criteria.

For grant programs that are open for applications all year, recommendations will be made to the next available Council Meeting. For grant programs with specific funding rounds, recommendations will be made within three months of the closing date.

Council staff assessing applications are required to identify and manage any potential conflicts of interest in accordance with Council's Code of Conduct and Ethical Governance: Conflicts of Interest Policy. Council staff must ensure that any affiliation between them and the applicant is appropriately managed when assessing applications for funding.

Approval

The elected Council has the authority to approve grants, donations, and sponsorship. This occurs at monthly Council meetings, where Councillors choose to endorse funding towards proposed initiatives. For Grant programs that have a value of \$1000 or less, specific delegation is given to the CEO for approval as per the *insert law*

Councillors must ensure that any affiliation between them and the applicant is appropriately managed when reviewing and endorsing applications for funding. This may involve removing oneself from endorsing the outcome of a particular Grant application. For instance, if a Councillor has a family member that plays for a soccer club that has applied for event sponsorship, the Councillor should disclose any affiliation to Council through a Conflict-of-Interest disclosure.

Funding Agreements

All successful applicants are required to enter into a funding agreement before funds are released and before a project can commence. Council's support must be acknowledged on all promotional material. Council's logo pack is shared with successful applicants as part of the funding agreement, with a requirement for all promotional material to be approved by Council prior to publication. Applicants are also advised on the protocols to follow should they wish to engage a Councillor as part of their endorsed program. This includes duties such as opening ceremonies, presenting awards and delivering speeches.

Grant Programs

Council's grant programs provide a coordinated and integrated approach to growing Liverpool socially, culturally, economically, and environmentally. Programs funded through Council's grants are required to address local priorities and identify needs in the local community. Each grant type has its own unique criteria and priorities which applications must meet to receive funding. These priorities are highlighted in more detail below.

Council administers seven programs for the allocation of grants:

- **Kick-Starter Grants (funding up to \$500 and open all year round)**

This program supports individuals or unincorporated community groups to establish a social enterprise aimed at addressing priorities in Council's Community Strategic Plan or a project which promotes social inclusion and increased community participation. Applications can be made for funding of up to \$500 per financial year.

- **Small Grant (funding up to \$1,000 and open all year round)**

This program supports a range of small-scale community initiatives and projects that:

- Trial community capacity building programs or facilitate small-scale community awareness events;
- Increase engagement of individuals in academic, cultural, and environmental fields;

- Improve relative equality, resilience, and capacity of Liverpool’s diverse communities; and/or;
- Enhance positive social, cultural, or sustainability outcomes for local communities related to Council’s strategic priorities.

In 2024, several community organisations received a small grant to deliver International Women’s Day initiatives. Global Women in a local community group that celebrated International Women’s Day by delivering a health and wellbeing event targeting women and the importance of screening for Breast Cancer. The organisation partnered with Breast Cancer Australia to administer free breast checks and engage attendees with a panel discussion lead by Breast Cancer warriors.

• **Liverpool Young Achievers Awards (funding up to \$1,000, school term 3 & 4)**

The Liverpool Young Achiever Awards are prizes to students who have excelled in citizenship, academic studies, artistic endeavours, or sporting proficiency.

<p><u>Citizenship:</u></p> <p>1x \$1,000 for a high school student</p> <p>1x \$500 for a primary school student</p>	<p><u>Artistic Endeavours:</u></p> <p>1x \$1,000 for a high school student</p> <p>1x \$500 for a primary school student</p>
<p><u>Academic Studies:</u></p> <p>1x \$1,000 for a high school student</p> <p>1x \$500 for a primary school student</p>	<p><u>Sporting Proficiency:</u></p> <p>1x \$1,000 for a high school student</p> <p>1x \$500 for a primary school student</p>

The 2024 Liverpool Young Achievers program was successfully held on 7 November, with \$7,300 in prize money distributed across 16 schools from the Liverpool LGA.

• **Community Grant (up to \$10,000 open all year round)**

This program provides financial assistance to community groups and organisations for projects that foster partnerships and collaboration, build capacity, promote social inclusion, and increase community participation. Funding will support projects that address one of the following categories:

<p>Partnership and Collaboration</p>	<p>a) Improve connections and build social networks within the community; b) Improve collaboration and coordination of community support and services; and c) Strengthen governance and accountability in community organisations.</p>
<p>Community Health, Wellbeing, and Inclusion</p>	<p>d) Improve social, physical, and mental wellbeing through prevention and early intervention health and safety programs; e) Increase participation of people in community health and wellbeing activities and programs, including members of the community who are experiencing social disadvantage; and f) Facilitate inclusion and access to facilities, services, open spaces, and activities.</p>
<p>Community Education & skills Development</p>	<p>g) Facilitate access to education, training, and employment opportunities; and h) Improve opportunities for people to build confidence and develop their skills.</p>
<p>Connection to Local Heritage and Community Art Initiatives</p>	<p>i) Strengthen, promote, and preserve community connection to local heritage; and j) Facilitate creative art programs and initiatives that encourage self-expression and promote community place-making and artistic endeavors.</p>

Community Grants are one of the most popular and sought after funding programs. In 2024 Head Space delivered an outstanding program targeting mental health, wellbeing and suicide prevention in target youth groups within Liverpool. Workshops were designed in partnership with community mentors and delivered at Liverpool Boys Highschool and Lurnea Highschool. Students and the broader school community responded positively to the program that highlighted the importance of early intervention in vulnerable youth group and access to support services.

• **Community Sponsorship (funding up to \$10,000 open all year round)**

Council provides financial contributions of up to \$10,000 through Community Sponsorship to organisations that can support growth of the Liverpool community and enhance Council’s reputation. Applications to Council under this funding program can address Economic, Environmental, or socio-cultural benefit to the Liverpool LGA.

In 2024, highlights from the Community Sponsorship program included large scale community events that celebrated Liverpool’s rich cultural diversity. Events such as the Diwali Festival, Fiji Australia Day, and Ramadan Bazaar encouraged the broader community to participate in a vibrant cultural exchange. Through these events, Council has been able to achieve outcomes outlined in the Community Strategic Plan (CSP) around cultivating *inclusive and engaging communities*.

- **Matching Grant (up to \$15,000 open all year round)**

This program provides financial support to projects that build or strengthen communities within Liverpool. These projects focus on supporting the development and implementation of community capacity building activities, maintaining and conserving community assets, and providing opportunities for a broader cross section of the community to be involved in community and recreational activities. The Matching Grants program recognises community contribution towards a project and can offer up to \$15,000 support to match this contribution. Contributions from the community can be made in cash or value-in-kind. Council assesses in-kind contribution in the form volunteer/professional time, venue contribution, as well as any non-cash recourses such as equipment, expertise and access to stakeholders.

Programs can target key community areas including:

Arts	Contribute community art to a neighbourhood or work to increase the participation of residents within art-based programs/projects.
Capacity Building	Bring residents together and enhance participation in the community, including those who are experiencing social disadvantage, or provide benefits to address an identified community need.
Domestic Violence (DV)	Projects that increase awareness of DV, focus on prevention of DV or provide support to victims of DV in Liverpool.
Youth Engagement	Focus on increasing the ability of young people to obtain skills and qualifications or increase their active participation within the community.
Accessibility	Enhance and improve access options for the community, either through education, transport, disability access or connectivity.
Environment	Address environmental issues and concerns or contribute to environmental education and awareness.
Infrastructure	Projects that aim to upgrade, develop, or improve community infrastructure such as community centres, amenities buildings or sporting infrastructure. Note these grants cannot fund the improvement of privately owned facilities.
Community Safety	Address community safety and security issues. These projects can also include addressing perceptions of community safety.
Public Space Activation	Community activities that activate or diversify the night-time economy including pop up entertainment and night-time performances in public spaces
Sport Development	Contribute to the development of sporting groups or enhance participation in sporting and recreational activities.

In 2024, through the Matching Grants program Play Matters Australia delivered an evidence-based music therapy program *Sing&Grow* for young families in Austral. Through an effective partnership with the Community Hub at Austral Public School, the *Sing&Grow* program strengthened community capacity by facilitating the transition to school for children entering kindergarten, as well as increase parent/carer knowledge of child development.

- **Sustainable Environment Grant (up to \$5,000 open twice a year)**

The Sustainable Environment Grants program provides financial assistance to support schools and community groups to play an active role in reducing their impact on the environment. Council invites projects focused on environmental improvement, sustainability education, and the promotion of sustainable living as a way of life that provides benefit to the natural environment and local community.

In 2024, the sustainable environment grant enabled several schools to deliver projects that promote conservation and sustainable living. The Bush Tucker Garden at Newbridge Public School incorporated experiences that connect the school community with First Nations Peoples. Using QR codes placed near indigenous plants, visitors of the garden can learn about the health benefits of these plants and sustainable ways to incorporate these plants into your life.

2024 Program Trends

Over the past 12 months, community groups and not-for-profit organisations have identified the following needs, and as a result, delivered programs to address these gaps that evident in the Liverpool LGA:

- Youth wellness and wellbeing (physical and mental);
- Capacity building and skill development opportunities for young people and those living with a disability;
- Activities that reduce social isolation in seniors; and
- Support services and information exchange sessions for migrant and refugee women/CALD women.

In 2025, Council will further encourage projects and initiatives that prioritise these community needs by promoting funding opportunities that target key areas through a suite of grant programs including Youth Week, International Day for People with Disability and Harmony Week Grants.

Celebrating Community Success

All recipients of Council grants in 2023 – 2024 were invited to celebrate their achievement at the *Celebrating Community Success* event, held on 15 August 2024. The presentation, hosted at the Liverpool Council Chambers, showcased the success of over 80 community groups and organisations that have contributed to the Liverpool LGA through key activities and initiatives funded by Council.



Conclusion

Council’s Grants Donations and Community Sponsorship program will continue its commitment to build strong and resilient communities through financial support to local community groups and not for profit organisations. As Liverpool grows, Council aims to strengthen its contributions towards projects that benefit residents, increase participation in community activities, and address social issues.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Costs associated with this recommendation have been included in Council’s budget for the current year and long-term financial plan.

CONSIDERATIONS

Economic	There are no economic and financial considerations.
Environment	There are no environmental and sustainability considerations.
Social	Promote community harmony and address discrimination.

Civic Leadership	Encourage the community to engage in Council initiatives and actions. Operate a well-developed governance system that demonstrates accountability, transparency, and ethical conduct.
Legislative	There are no legislative considerations relating to this report.
Risk	There is no risk associated with this report.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil