



Mayor's message

As we present the 2026/27 Budget for the Bundaberg Region, I want to speak candidly with our community about the environment in which this budget has been developed and the difficult decisions that have been required to secure our region's financial future.

Across Australia and around the world, communities are facing ongoing economic uncertainty. Rising fuel costs, supply chain disruptions and increasing contractor and material prices are placing sustained pressure on the cost of delivering essential infrastructure and services. Here in the Bundaberg Region, we are not immune to these global challenges.

In preparing this year's budget, Council has taken a prudent and forward-focused approach. We have carefully considered the impact of escalating costs, particularly in areas such as road construction, plant hire and key materials like pipes and petrochemical-based products. Based on current projections, some of these costs have risen

significantly and, in many cases, unpredictably.

To responsibly manage this risk, Council has made the deliberate decision to allocate additional funding within the budget to help absorb these pressures. This step reflects our commitment to ensuring we can continue delivering the critical services our community relies on, be it maintaining our road network, managing waste services or progressing important capital works projects.

Council has also had to make difficult decisions about prioritisation. While we would like to deliver all projects at once, the reality of the current economic climate means we must focus on what is most essential and what will deliver the greatest long-term benefit to our region. This has involved balancing immediate community needs with the responsibility to maintain financial sustainability for the future.

Importantly, our approach is guided by a clear objective: to protect service levels while building resilience against ongoing volatility. We are working closely with suppliers and contractors, reviewing our programs and seeking

efficiencies wherever possible, without compromising safety or quality.

Council understands that cost pressures are also being felt by households and businesses across our region. Like many of you, Council is tightening its belt, planning carefully and adapting to a changing economic landscape. We remain committed to transparency and accountability in how we manage public funds and make decisions on behalf of our community.

Despite the challenges, I am confident in the region's future. We are a resilient people with a strong sense of community and a proven ability to adapt. This budget reflects not only the realities we face today, but also our determination to continue investing in the region's growth, liveability and long-term prosperity.

On behalf of my fellow Councillors, I thank our community for its understanding and ongoing support as we navigate these complex times together.

Mayor Helen Blackburn
Bundaberg Regional Council