CIRCULAR HEAD COUNCIL

MEDIA RELEASE

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## Vision 2050 in Action: Council Releases Proposed Annual Plan and Budget

Circular Head Council is proposing significant investment in community recreation, health, economic development and waste reform through its proposed 2026/27 Annual Plan and Budget, released ahead of a Special Council Meeting on 2 July.

Mayor Gerard Blizzard said the proposed Annual Plan outlines Council's priorities for the coming year and reflects a strong focus on financial sustainability, fairness, community wellbeing and delivering on the long-term aspirations of Circular Head Vision 2050.

"Over the past 12 months, Councillors and staff have been working together to improve Council's financial position, to review how services are delivered and ensure our investment decisions align with the priorities identified by the community through Vision 2050," Mayor Blizzard said.

The proposed Annual Plan reflects Council's commitment to doing things differently, focusing on what is within its control, investing in community priorities and building a stronger future for Circular Head.

"The proposed Annual Plan sets out practical actions for the next 12 months while continuing to build a strong foundation for the future."

General Manager Paul Gardner said the proposed Budget continues Council's focus on reducing its operating deficit through efficiencies, organisational improvements and long-term planning.

"Council has been undertaking a significant organisational transformation process aimed at improving efficiency, customer experience and value for the community," Mr Gardner said.

"The proposed Budget demonstrates our commitment to responsible financial management while continuing to invest in the projects, services and advocacy that matter most to Circular Head."

Key initiatives proposed in the 2026/27 Annual Plan and Budget include:

- Progressing the new Smithton Health Hub through a public-private partnership
- Establishing a $2.1 million Community Recreation Fund to support improvements at West Esplanade, Smithton and new playground facilities at Kings Park, Stanley
- Funding a new Economic Development Officer position to progress the Economic Development Strategy

- Redeveloping Council's website
- Leading the development of a new Circular Head Waste Strategy
- Redesigning and upgrading the White Hills Transfer Station
- Supporting the development of the Child and Family Learning Centre
- Continuing advocacy for transport, housing, waste and regional infrastructure outcomes.

To support these investments and Council's long-term financial sustainability goals, the proposed Budget includes a 7.75 per cent increase in general rate revenue and introduces a proposed new Rating Strategy based on the principles of fairness and equity. The strategy recognises that different land uses place different demands on Council infrastructure and seeks to better align contributions with those impacts.

The proposed Annual Plan and Budget are designed to support the six themes of Circular Head Vision 2050 – Environment, Community, Economy, Place, Leadership and Governance – translating long-term community aspirations into practical actions and investments for the year ahead.

The agenda and supporting reports are now available on Council's website. Community members are encouraged to review the documents, understand the proposed initiatives and follow the discussion at the Special Council Meeting on 2 July 2026, either in person or via livestream.

*Authorised for general media distribution by Gerard Blizzard, Mayor, Circular Head Council.*

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