

ORDINARY MEETING

25 MARCH 2026

6.1**CEO MONTHLY REPORT**

EO | 93/1/2 | #7831569

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council notes:

1. The status of Council Resolutions;
2. The CEO Monthly Update; and
3. The Monthly Activity Review – February 2026.

Outstanding Council Resolutions

Since the previous reporting period 7 resolutions have been completed, leaving 7 open resolutions. See below table:

| Date of Meeting | Type of Meeting | Report Title | Directorate |
|------------------------|------------------------|---|--------------------|
| 23/07/2025 | Ordinary | Prejudicial Matter - Infrastructure Agreement Between Cairns Regional Council and PPNQ Developments Pty Ltd for the discretionary waiver of levied charges for Catalytic Development Under the development and investment incentive support policy for tourist attraction and tourist park at 4L AND 900L Captain Cook Highway, Kewarra Beach – Division 9 <i>Advice provided to Developer confirming that the Change Application needs to be finalised before IA can be signed.</i> | PGS |
| 26/11/2025 | Ordinary | Contract 3011 – Waste and Recycling Kerbside Collection Services <i>Negotiations with the selected contractor ongoing</i> | FBS |
| 11/02/2026 | Ordinary | Contract 3018 Tenure Arrangement for Tobruk Pool - Lease H & K, Part of Lot 317 SP244364 370 Sheridan St North Cairns <i>In Progress: working through next transition, lease starts April.</i> | LC |
| 25/02/2026 | Ordinary | Reef Eye Ferris Wheel - New Tenure Arrangement <i>In progress: working through agreement process.</i> | LC |
| 25/02/2026 | Ordinary | Bridge Dual Naming Proposal for Fisheries Bridge, Goldsborough <i>In progress.</i> | CIA |
| 11/03/2026 | Ordinary | Community Partnerships Grant Round 17 <i>In progress: Agreements to be sent out for signing/return.</i> | LC |
| 11/03/2026 | Ordinary | Speakers Corner <i>In progress: CEO to sign and Governance to upload to websites.</i> | LC |

CEO Monthly Update

International Women's Day:

Council's 2026 International Women's Day celebration was held on 7 March with a sellout crowd of 250 people. For the first time, we partnered with Cairns Central to deliver an evening event held at the centre of the shopping centre. The celebrations included guest speakers, music, fashion and the annual Women's Day awards. An accessible ticket price of \$49 attracted diverse attendees including female leaders, professionals, community groups, young people and older people.

The Woman of the Year (25 years and over) was presented to Sr Faye Kelly, for her role as an educator, spiritual guide and advocate, supporting people on society's margins through hospital visits, home care and pastoral leadership. Christine Norman received a Highly Commended award for her mentoring and empowerment of women through sport.

The Young Woman of the Year (24 years and under) was presented to Summer Adams, who at just 12 years old has supported several wildlife and domestic violence community groups. Ella Fisher received a Highly Commended award for establishing an inclusive football program for primary students, including those with disability.

The Women's Recognition Award (\$2K prize) was presented to Caitlin Sands, who has dedicated more than a decade to developing the dance skills of Indigenous youth in the Cairns community.

Cairns Water Security Stage 1 (CWSS1):

Cairns Regional Council acknowledges and congratulates John Holland and the entire team for achieving one million work hours without a Lost Time Injury (LTI). This is a significant safety milestone and a clear reflection of the strong safety and wellbeing culture that the teams have established and maintained on site. This achievement demonstrates an approach to effective safety collaboration with local, national and international suppliers on a project that is crucial for the future of Cairns.

A congratulatory letter has been forwarded to John Holland Project Directors.

Destination Far North Queensland Advisory Committee:

The CEO has accepted an invitation to join Bree James MP, Mark Olsen (CEO Tourism Tropical North Queensland), Richard Barker (CEO Cairns Airport), on the Destination Far North Queensland Advisory Committee. The Committee has been established by Bree James MP to provide a structured forum for key stakeholders to offer strategic advice, insights, and recommendations to support tourism development and promotion initiatives across Far North Queensland.

The Committee is advisory in nature and does not hold decision-making authority but enables members and stakeholders to develop unified positions on tourism matters, for the betterment of the Cairns tourism industry.

Local Government (Empowering Councils) Amendment Bill 2026:

The Local Government (Empowering Councils) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2026 (the Bill) was passed through Parliament on 5 March 2026 and is now awaiting Royal Assent.

An initial information session for Councillors was held on Monday 16 March 2026.

The CEO is scheduled to attend a Queensland Local Government CEOs Forum in Brisbane on 27 March, where the implementation of the Bill and its impact on Council policies and governance will be a key topic.

Monthly Activity Review – February 2026

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Monthly Activity Review – February 2026
DM#[7831570](#)



Ken Gouldthorp
Chief Executive Officer

Monthly Activity Review

93/1/2 | #7831569 / #7831570

February 2026

The data contained within this review relates to the following:

- Community and Civic Events
- Cultural & Community Events
- Library Loans & Program
- Community Activity
- Vandalism costs
- Cairns Infrastructure and Assets Customer Requests
- Planning Growth and Sustainability Updates
- Major Projects and Initiatives
- Economic Development and Advocacy Highlights
- Economic Snapshot

Ken Gouldthorp
Chief Executive Officer

Community and Civic events

Cairns Taipans C150 half-time activation

Date: 12 February 2026

Venue: Cairns Convention Centre

Attendance: 3,500

Time: 6:30pm – 8:30pm

Purpose: As part of Council's broader sponsorship of the Cairns Taipans and the Cairns Celebrates 150 Years program, a halftime activation was delivered during the game. Children from the audience were invited onto the court and tasked with capturing 150 orange, 3D-printed Taipans snakes. Prizes were awarded to the winning team.



3,500 people



Citizenship Ceremony

Date: 26 February 2026

Venue: Cairns Performing Arts Centre

Attendance: 590

Time: 10:00am – 12:00pm

Purpose: Cairns Regional Council citizenship ceremonies formally welcome new Australian citizens into the local community. The ceremonies celebrate the commitment individuals have made to Australia and recognise the cultural diversity that strengthens Cairns, while marking an important milestone as new citizens are welcomed as active members of the community. Delivered on behalf of the Department of Home Affairs.



590 people



Cultural & Community Events

December 2025, January & February 2026

Community Partnerships

December to April are traditionally our quietest event months of the year.

| Month | Type | Number | Attendance |
|----------|---------------|----------|------------|
| Feb 2026 | Multicultural | 1 event | 4,616 pax |
| Jan 2026 | Community | 1 event | 1,860 pax |
| Dec 2025 | Community | 5 events | 6,920 pax |

Creative Venues

Events may include Launches, Exhibitions, Workshops, Classes, Performances, NFP Meetings or Rehearsals, Private Functions, Art Residencies, and Community Events.

| Month | Event information |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| Feb 2026 | 37 Events / 10,051 Attendees |
| Highlights: Three sellout music performances at CPAC entertained 2,779 attendees. Traditionally quiet events period. In comparison to Feb 2025 number of events has dropped however attendance overall remains comparable despite Court House and Mulgrave Gallery events attendance no longer reported. | |
| Jan 2026 | 35 Events / 19,141 Attendees |
| Highlights: Nine sellout Choral Society (Priscilla Queen of the Desert) performances at CPAC drew almost 8,000 attendees. This is a traditionally quiet events period. In comparison to Jan 2025 number of events has dropped however attendance overall has increased. This is due to Court House and Mulgrave Gallery events now no longer reported (CGP transition) combined with a significant drop in the number of small events (workshops / meetings) being held across galleries and BGVC compared to same time last year. | |
| Dec 2025 | 39 Events / 17,031 Attendees |
| Highlights: Carols in the Park @ Munro Martin Parklands 6,000. Strong audiences at end of year dance school performances. 6 events @ CPAC audience total 3,607 Attendance has decreased in line with fewer events (including cessation of markets and movie nights) during traditionally quiet events period. Tanks Precinct closed over 7 days during Christmas shutdown. | |

Library Loans & Programs

December 2025, January & February 2026

February 2026

All loans: 48,129 (Physical: 36,502 Digital: 11,627)

All library attendance: 49,746 (49,696 door and 50 outreach)

Library attendance and loans are down from January 2025 due to Smithfield Library refurbishment closure. Digital loans have increased 24% on the same period last year.

Library program attendance: 2,756 across 101 inhouse and outreach programs.

Library program attendance remains steady in comparison to the same reporting period last year.

January 2026

All loans: 53,679 (Physical: 39,681 Digital: 13,998)

All library attendance: 44,688 (no outreach this month)

Library attendance and loans are down on January 2025 due to CRC closure period and Smithfield Library refurbishment closure. Digital loans have increased 20% on the same period last year.

Library program attendance: 2,545 across 69 inhouse programs (no outreach January).

Library program attendance increased 22% compared to January 2025 despite new year closure and refurbishment impacts. The higher figures this year are due to an increased number of programs delivered in-house on weekdays, author talks on weekends, increased attendance at the temporary children's space at Stratford, and increased self-directed activities and facilitated programs across the school holidays.

December 2025

All loans: 45,555 (Physical: 35,150 Digital: 10,405)

All library attendance: 40,381 (Door: 39,981 and Outreach: 400)

Overall statistics were lower compared with December 2024 which shows the impact of Smithfield Library closure, though there has been a slight decrease in library attendance and loans.

Library program attendance: 2,773 across 99 inhouse & outreach programs.

The number of library programs delivered was comparable with December 2024 and had slightly higher program attendance. The library's outreach and community partnership efforts continue to draw levels of participation and includes additional programming surrounding events such as Tanks Markets Pop Up Library.

Community Activity

December 2025, January & February 2026

Active Living Classes

| Month | Classes | Attendance | Weather Cancellations |
|----------|---------|------------|-----------------------|
| Feb 2026 | 18 | 1105 | 10 classes |
| Jan 2026 | 7 | 929 | 0 classes |
| Dec 2025 | 53 | 1507 | 5 classes |

Community Spaces bookings

Total figures for Dec 2025 to February 2026 period

| Location | Stats |
|---------------------|--|
| City Venues & Parks | There were 1152* total bookings for the period including 451 park/foreshore bookings; 224 sporting field bookings and 549 Commercial Activities (fitness classes/workshops). <i>*This excludes Esplanade and Barlow Park.</i> |
| Esplanade Lagoon | 314,483 people enjoyed the Lagoon |
| Barlow Park | 15,470 people attended events in this period |
| Community Halls | There were 819 bookings across the community halls with 16,414 users attributed during this period. |
| Go Clubs | There were no Workshops held within this period. |

Council Assets – Vandalism Costs

| 2025/26 VANDALISM & GRAFFITI COSTS | FEBRUARY | FEBRUARY YTD |
|---|-----------------|---------------------|
| Business Area | (\$'000) | (\$'000) |
| Facilities Maintenance | 11 | 78 |
| Community Spaces | 51 | 305 |
| Works | 13 | 101 |
| TOTAL | 75 | 485 |

Cairns Infrastructure and Assets

Customer Requests – February 2026



125

Footpaths and
cycleways



17%



234

Roads and road
furniture



7%



47

Graffiti removal



41%

Percentages indicate movement on last month.

Planning, Growth & Sustainability

Strengthening Regional Partnerships to Combat Illegal Dumping

Since 2022 Council, through the Local Government Illegal Dumping Partnership Program, has received funding from the Department of Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation (DETSI) to engage a dedicated Illegal Dumping Compliance Officer within our Local Laws Compliance Team. The objective of this funding and the engagement of this officer is to develop Council capabilities regarding illegal dumping investigations and enforcement, improve intelligence and data on illegal dumping activities through ongoing reporting, identify ways of working across government to prevent and mitigate illegal dumping and build collaboration across state and local governments. This collaboration has facilitated the investigation of 1,498 illegal dumping reports which have led to almost 1.4 million litres of illegally dumped waste being removed from the Cairns environment.

DETSI has recently announced the Fighting Illegal Dumping Partnership Program Round 1A which provides Councils with the opportunity to apply for funding for the next 3 years which enables continued positive collaboration regarding illegal dumping. Council thanks the Department of Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation for providing this opportunity to Council and continuing to collaborate positively regarding such an important issue.



Underutilised Industrial Site to Become New Medium-Density Residential Precinct

A combined development application has been approved by Council for the transformation of 39 & 39A Law Street, Cairns North, paving the way for a new, higher density residential development over the site.

The site, currently zoned Open Space under *CairnsPlan 2016* but historically used as an abandoned railway storage yard and wholesale storage area, will transition to a residential-focused precinct through a Preliminary Approval that varies the Planning Scheme. This approval replaces the existing Open Space zoning and earlier self-storage-oriented approvals with a new residential precinct aligned with the Medium Density Residential zone.



The development involves three key components, being:

- A Preliminary Approval to Vary the Effect of the Planning Scheme to establish the Law Street Residential Precinct to support residential uses consistent with the Medium Density Residential Zone;
- A Development Permit for Reconfiguring a Lot to facilitate a Boundary Realignment and access easement to provide Future Lot 1 with additional development area; and
- A Development Permit for a Material Change of Use to allow for the construction of a 24-unit residential development on Future Lot 1.

Together, these approvals enable the conversion of an underutilised industrial parcel into a new medium-density residential precinct, supporting urban renewal and housing supply in Cairns North.



Major Projects & Initiatives

February 2026



Resource Recovery 2040 Roadmap

- Kerbside Collection Contract awarded November 2025 – Mobilisation meetings have commenced.
- Residual Waste Tender has been finalised with a report to be presented to Council 25 March

Cairns Water Security Stage 1

- Water Treatment Plant construction is ongoing, with all structures now out of the ground and roof installation to all buildings in progress.
- 5ML reservoir construction works complete, including external staircase and internal wall structure.
- 8ML reservoir roof construction is ongoing.
- Approximately 3km of the 30km of pipeline remaining to be installed.
- Connection of new pipes to the existing network underway.
- Reinstatement works, including driveways and turf to commence where pipelaying has been completed.



Smart Water Meter Project

- 40,000 + smart water meters installed, out of 55,000 scope
- SWM project rollout team installed 158 meters last month
- Potential leaks are being identified by the new smart water meters and customers contacted accordingly

Economic Development & Advocacy Highlights – February

Economic Development

- Council welcomed an update on the Cairns South State Development Area from the Queensland Government's Coordinator General on Wednesday 18 February 2026.

Major Events & Film

- **2022 Games Roadmap for Cairns** – broad stakeholder consultation conducted throughout January & February; 'have your day' survey in market until 11 March 2026.
- **Cairns Rainforest Rumble** – new event launched with registrations open from 16 February.
- **Australian Festival of Chamber Music** – tickets on sale launched by British violinist and Artistic Director Jack Liebeck.

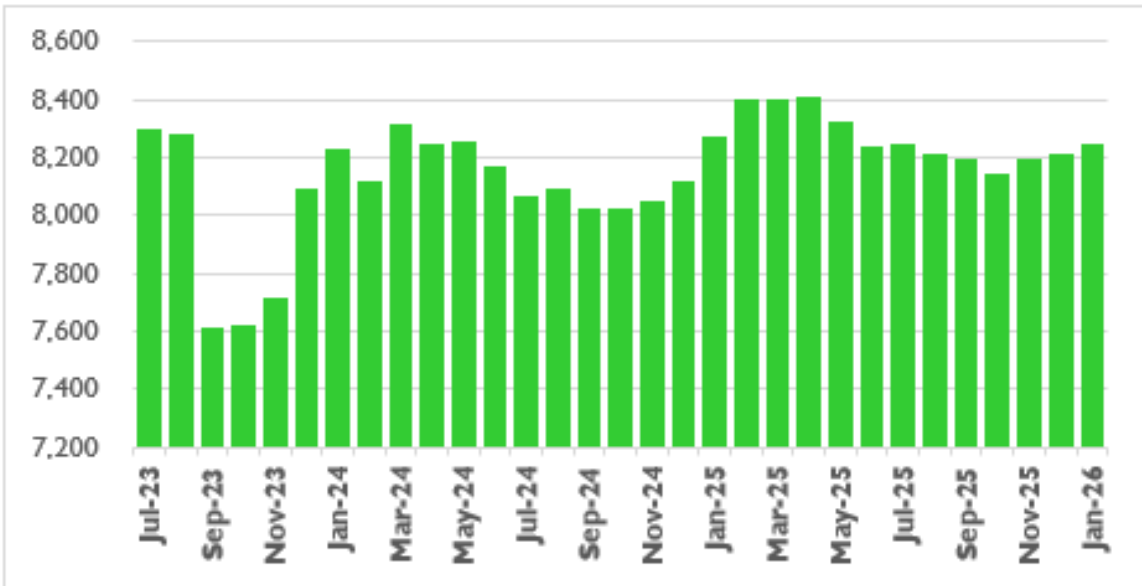
Advocacy

- Queensland Government's Residential Activation Fund open for Round 2 projects.



Economic snapshot

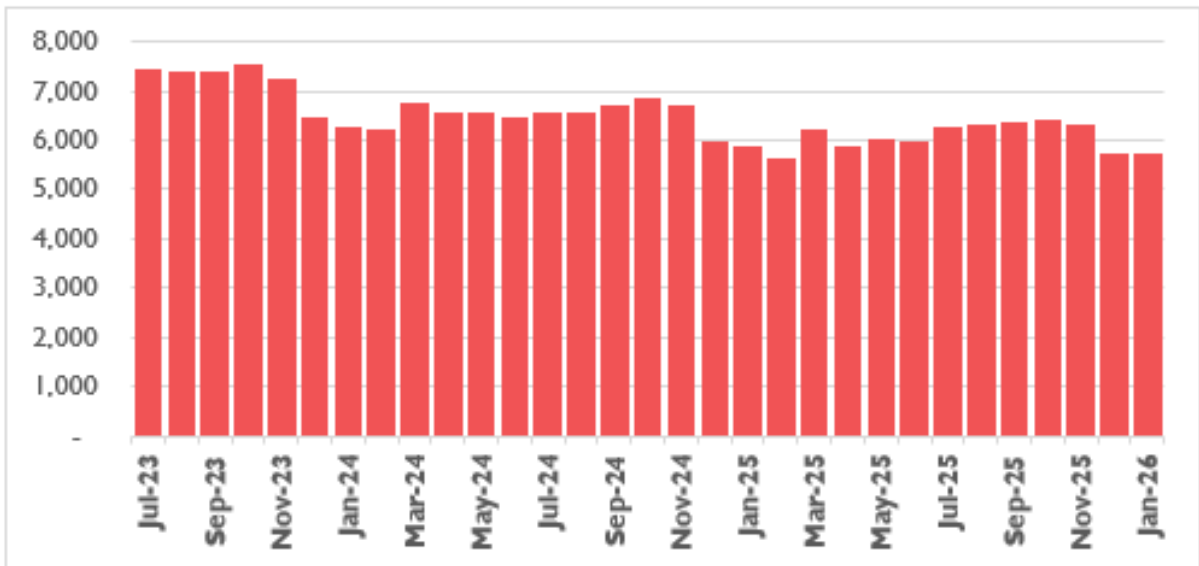
Job Seeker Recipients (CNS)



Most recent JobSeeker recipient #s

Jan-26
8,245

Monthly Job Advertisements (FNQ)



Most recent FNQ Job Ad #s

Jan-26
5,684