



Performance Plan

Cairns Regional Council business units
2025-2026



Acknowledgment of Country

Cairns Regional Council acknowledges the First Peoples within our region who are the Traditional Custodians of this country: the Djabugay; Yirriganydji; Bulawai; Gimuy Walubara Yidinji; Mandingalbay Yidinji; Gunggandji; Dulabed and Malanbara Yidinji; Wanyurr Majay; Mamu and NgadjonJii peoples.

We pay respect to Elders past, present and future and extend that respect to all other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians within our region.

Our vision

Shaping a tropical future

Our values



Trust

Honouring the trust of our residents, each other and staff



Responsibility

Transparency and responsibility to our community



Cairns-ness

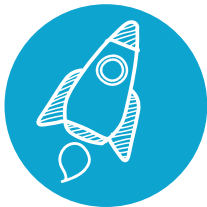
Pride in who we are and where we live



Resilience

Adapting, enduring, growing stronger

Our focus



Robust economy

Supporting a diversified and growing economy



Natural assets

Promoting, protecting and enhancing our iconic natural environment now and for generations to come



Design for livability

A place-based approach that celebrates our community



Community and culture

Fostering a vibrant, healthy and inclusive community



Focused council

Delivery for community through strong governance and informed decision making

Annual Performance Plan

Cairns Water business unit

Cairns Water's mission

To deliver quality and reliable water and wastewater that meet the needs of our community. In all undertakings, Cairns Water strives to achieve service provision to the Cairns community in a manner which maximises both Council and community ideals. This is achieved through economic, social, and environmental objectives being assessed in all stages of Cairns Water's operations from long term planning through to operational delivery.

Cairns Water - commercial business unit

Water and wastewater services are conducted in a Commercial Business Unit of Cairns Regional Council known as Cairns Water. This Annual Performance Plan encompasses the requirements set out in the *Local Government Regulation 2012* for Commercial Business Units, as well as the requirements for the Annual Report which is prepared in accordance with the *Local Government Regulation 2012*.

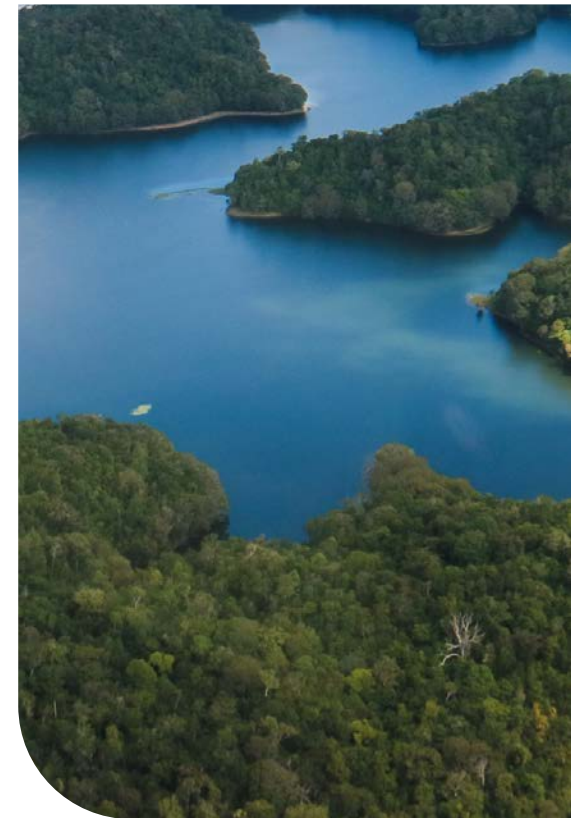
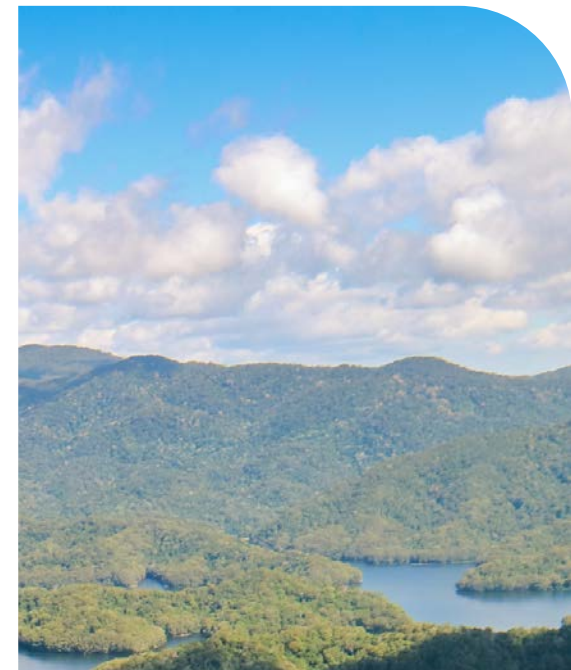
Delegations

Cairns Water has delegations in a variety of legislation. Delegations for staff working in the Cairns Water Business Unit are available through the RelianSys system.

Registers

The following registers are maintained by Council for Cairns Water:

- Cairns Infrastructure and Assets Directorate Business Risk Register;
- Drinking Water Quality Risk Register;
- Register of Delegations available in the RelianSys system;
- Corporate Register - gifts;
- Register of AGENDA Items and Resolutions;
- Asset Register;
- Drinking Water Quality Management Plan Risk Management Improvement Program;
- Environmental Risk Register;
- Cairns Infrastructure and Assets Directorate Legal Register; and
- Drinking Water Quality Critical Customer Register.



Water and wastewater services

Cairns Water

1. Unit Objectives

Cairns Regional Council's Utility Services Branch efficiently and effectively treats water to meet and exceed Australian Drinking Water Guidelines. Cairns Water delivers a quality and reliable water supply from major reservoirs to customer connections.

Cairns Water also aims to:

- Provide reliable collection of wastewater from properties and ensure delivery in an environmentally sound manner to the Wastewater Treatment Plants;
- Efficiently and effectively treat wastewater by recovering useable streams for recycled use; and
- Limit discharge to waterways.

2. Nature and Extent of Business Activity

Cairns Water conduct works on:

- Water supply intakes;
- Water Treatment Plants;
- Reticulation mains;
- Reservoirs;
- Pumps;
- Residential connections;
- Wastewater stations;
- Collection mains; and
- Wastewater Treatment Plants.

All works are executed in line with Water Standard Operating Procedures, industry best practice and Cairns Regional Council's legislative requirements.

3. Non-financial targets

Cairns Water is required under the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008 to implement Customer Service Standards. It is a requirement of this legislation that the standards be formally reviewed every 5 years and submitted to the Regulator. The 5-yearly review has been conducted by Council in June 2025, prior to submission to the Regulator.

4. Major capital works (proposed major investments)

Major capital works for Cairns Water are set out in Council's annual budgeted capital expenditure program which is adopted in June or July each year.

5. Outstanding and proposed borrowings

Cairns Water has outstanding borrowings from Economic Development Queensland of \$562.5K.

6. Principal assets

Cairns Water operates nine water supply schemes. The main water sources are the Copperlode Falls Dam and Behana Creek which supply the area from Gordonvale to Palm Cove. The small southern communities draw water from several intakes on local streams.

Cairns Water manages six wastewater schemes. The distinct catchment areas within Cairns are serviced by six plants as follows: Marlin Coast, Northern, Southern, Edmonton, Gordonvale, and Babinda. The Wastewater Treatment Plants are a combination of activated sludge and biological treatment processes, with the two larger plants (Northern and Southern) also having membrane filtration processes. The smaller plants treat effluent to a secondary standard, while the larger plants treat to tertiary standards. The management of the systems is covered by a development approval issued by the Department of Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation.

Principal assets include:

Water supply	
Major water sources	Copperlode Falls Dam (Lake Morris), Behana Creek
Major water treatment plants	Freshwater Creek, Tunnel Hill
Kilometres of water mains	~2330km*
Water pump stations	52*
Water reservoirs	68*
Intakes	9*

*Data sourced from DM #4954376, Asset Management Plan – Water Assets

Wastewater	
Major Wastewater Treatment Plants	6**
Sewerage Pump Stations	184**
Kilometres of Sewer Mains (including gravity sewer mains, pressure mains and vacuum mains)	~1355.8km**

**Data sourced from DM #4954281, Asset Management Plan – Wastewater Assets

7. Key deliverables / additional services

Cairns Water is responsible for the provision of water and wastewater services to consumers throughout the Cairns Region, including the following:

- Reticulated treated water services;
- Planning, design, documentation and construction of water and wastewater services infrastructure;
- Demand management services, including meter testing;
- Water laboratory;
- Water, recycled water, and wastewater reticulation maintenance services;
- Maintenance of community facilities at Copperlode Falls Dam;
- Development assessment;
- Reticulated wastewater services including wastewater treatment and by-product disposal;
- Treated effluent and biosolids for re-use purposes;
- Plumbing and trade waste services;
- Review of plumbing applications;
- Hydraulic information;
- As-constructed information; and
- Maintenance of systems.



8. Service indicators

Performance indicators listed below were implemented when the Customer Service Standards were reviewed in June 2025.

*QG KPI	Performance indicator	Performance measure	Target threshold
QG 4.5	Total water main breaks (S)	Breaks per 100km /year	≤18
QG 4.6	Total sewerage main breaks and chokes (S)	Breaks and chokes per 100km/year	≤16
QG 4.7	Incidence of unplanned interruptions – water (S)	Water Interruptions Per 1000 properties	≤120
QG 4.8a	Average response time for water bursts	Hours	≤2
	Average response time for water leaks	Hours	≤24
QG 4.9a	Average response time for sewerage main breaks	Hours	≤2
	Average response time for sewerage main chokes	Hours	≤24
QG 4.10	Water Quality Complaints (S)	Per 1000 properties/year	≤3
QG 4.11	Total water and sewerage complaints (S)	Per 1000 properties/year	≤10

*Codes relate to Queensland State Government water KPIs and definitions outlined in the State-wide Information Management System (SWIM).



Cairns Water and the community

1. Community service obligations

- Rates Based Financial Assistance for Water and Sewerage rates.

Cairns Water also engages in the following activities for the benefit of the community:

- Maintenance of Copperlode Falls Dam facilities;
- Water concessions for patients receiving home dialysis;
- Concealed Water Leakage Rebate program;
- Provision of communications relating to major projects and operations;
- Provision of resources on water, wastewater and stormwater education and community engagement through Council's Water Education webpage, which includes:
 - STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Maths) activities - Easy-to-manage projects all about water, to encourage critical thinking skills and scientific processes while having fun;
 - Water Wonders - Engaging water education activities for children under 5 years old, for kindy programs, early learning centres and at home learning; and
 - Mobi's Catchment Challenge - Fun online learning tools to encourage individuals and schools to access and understand live data from a gauging station located in Saltwater Creek.

2. Cost of, and funding for, the community service obligations

The Community Service Obligations of Cairns Water are 100% funded by Council.

Activities	Description of the nature of the community service obligation	Cost of CSO \$'000
Water	Water rates based financial assistance	64
	Total	64
Wastewater	Sewerage rates based financial assistance	1,071
	Total	1,071
	Total	1,135

Note: Figures included in the above table represent the 2025/26 budget which was adopted by Council on 25th June 2025.



Cairns Water financials

1. Notional capital structure, and treatment of surpluses

Cairns Water is a wholly owned commercial business unit of Cairns Regional Council. Cairns Water's notional capital structure is via 100% equity funding from Council. Any surplus earned by a business unit of Council is returned as a dividend to Council. This return is in recognition that business units have been established to further the good governance of the region. Funds earned by Council through dividends are utilised to provide enhanced services and infrastructure to the Cairns region.

2. Capital works - expenditure by program

Note that the details included in the table below reflect the budget which was adopted by Council on 25th June 2025.

Capex program	2025/2026 budget \$'000
Wastewater services	32,934
Water Services (excl CWSS)	28,019
Cairns Water Security Stage 1	260,059
TOTAL	321,012

3. Funding of capital works

For the 2025/26 financial year, the capital works program will be funded through a combination of developer contributions, Council contributions and Council borrowings.

4. Proposed major investments

Cairns Regional Council is developing the Cairns Water Security Stage 1 (CWSS1) project to deliver a new drinking water supply to the Cairns community. It will augment existing supplies from Copperlode Falls Dam, Behana Creek, and Council's smaller rural intakes. The CWSS1 total budget as endorsed by Council is \$472M.

The project involves building a new water intake at the Mulgrave River, Gordonvale, in addition to Council's existing intake at Behana Creek. New pipelines from each source will then take the water to the new Water Treatment Plant at north Gordonvale. It is one of the largest capital works projects ever undertaken by Cairns Regional Council.

Key components of the project are:

- A new water intake on the Mulgrave River, Gordonvale;
- A new Water Treatment Plant and water reservoirs at north Gordonvale;
- A network of new pipelines to take raw water from the water intake to the water treatment plant, and treated water from the treatment plant to the Cairns residents; and
- Associated works to improve the treatment of the existing Behana Creek water supply.

5. Financial targets

Note that the details included in the table below reflect the budget which was adopted by Council on 25th June 2025.

Performance measure - budget to actual	Target	Frequency	Q1 \$'000	Q2 \$'000	Q3 \$'000	Q4 \$'000	2025/26 Budget \$'000
Operating revenue	Budget	Quarterly	48,712	46,099	46,236	42,847	183,894
Operating expenses	Budget	Quarterly	25,317	25,751	25,784	26,974	103,826
Net Operating result	Budget	Quarterly	23,395	20,347	20,452	15,873	80,068
Capex	Budget	Annually					321,012

Cairns Water reports to Council

Cairns Water reports to Council will contain both financial and non-financial information and such information will be reported to Council either at ordinary meetings or at relevant Council committees.

Annual Performance Plan Cairns Resource Recovery business unit

Cairns Resource Recovery's mission

To deliver quality and reliable waste and resource recovery services that meet the needs of our community. In all undertakings Cairns Resource Recovery strives to achieve service provision to the Cairns community in a manner which maximises both Council and community ideals. This is achieved through economic, social, and environmental objectives being assessed in all stages of Cairns Resource Recovery's operations from long term planning through to operational delivery.

Cairns Resource Recovery - commercial business unit

Waste and resource recovery services are conducted in a Commercial Business Unit of Cairns Regional Council known as Cairns Resource Recovery. This Annual Performance Plan encompasses the requirements set out in the *Local Government Regulation 2012* for Commercial Business Units, as well as the requirements for the preparation of the Annual Report.

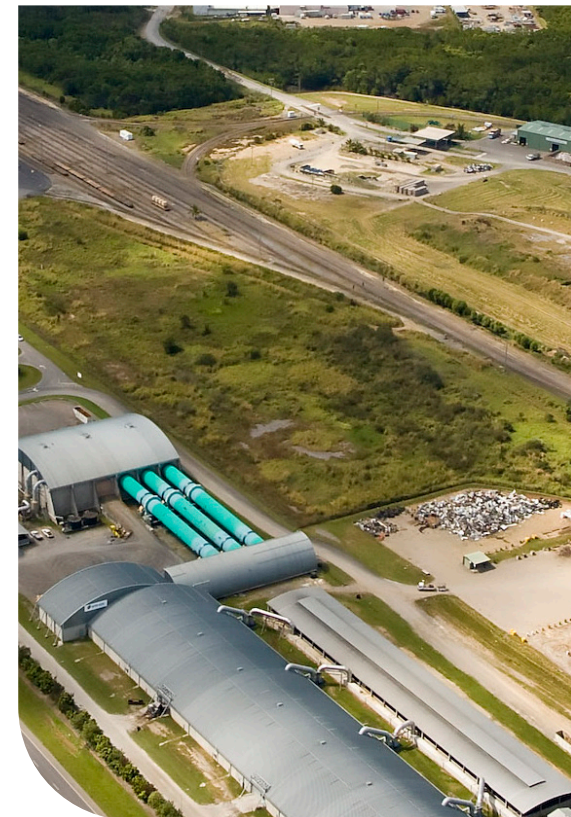
Delegations

Cairns Resource Recovery has several delegations covering a variety of legislation. Delegations for staff working in the Cairns Resource Recovery Business Unit are available through the RelianSys system.

Registers

The following registers are maintained by Council for Cairns Resource Recovery:

- Cairns Infrastructure and Assets Directorate Business Risk Register;
- Register of Delegations available in the RelianSys system;
- Corporate Register - gifts;
- Resource Recovery Agenda and Resolution Register;
- Asset Register;
- Environmental Risk Register; and
- Cairns Infrastructure and Assets Directorate Legal Register.



Waste services

Cairns Resource Recovery (CRR)

1. Unit Objectives

In February 2018 Cairns Regional Council adopted the Waste Reduction and Recycling Strategy 2018 – 2027 (the Waste Strategy). The Waste Strategy sets out how the waste and resource recovery needs of the Cairns region will be met over the next 10 years and provides a strategic direction for moving Cairns towards a future in which landfills are the last option.

It puts a priority on reducing waste and minimising the amount sent to landfill. It emphasises the importance of community engagement and encourages avoidance of waste, maximising the recycling of materials that are left and supporting the move towards a circular approach.

At the heart of the strategy is the need to change our perception of waste. We all need to start viewing waste as a potential resource and think about how we can use it more efficiently.

The five objectives focus on addressing the current resource recovery and waste management challenges and opportunities in the Cairns region, as follows:

- Provide education and awareness: empowering our community to embrace waste avoidance, reduction, and reuse;
- Reduce waste: where Council and community take responsibility for reducing their own waste and using resources effectively;
- Maximise resource recovery: to reduce landfill disposal through resource recovery opportunities;
- Secure our future needs: where our capacity and capability to manage future waste is secured; and
- Advocacy and collaboration: to lead strategic alliances and partnerships to support best practices in waste management.

Changing waste and recycling legislation and regulation will shape the Cairns Resource Recovery business and operating strategies adopted by Council over the 2025/2026 financial year, including:

- Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2011
- Waste Reduction and Recycling Regulation 2023
- National Waste Policy Action Plan;
- National Plastics Plan;
- Federal Recycling and Waste Reduction Act 2020 (National Export Ban).
- Queensland Energy from Waste Policy;
- Queensland Waste Management and Resource Recovery Strategy
- Queensland Organics Strategy and Action Plan 2022 - 2032
- Queensland Waste Disposal Levy;
- Queensland Container Refund Scheme (Containers for Change)

2. Nature and extent of business activity

Cairns Resource Recovery is responsible for the collection and recovery of solid waste and recyclables. Cairns Resource Recovery is a Significant Business Activity under the provisions of the Local Government Regulation 2012.

The Waste Reduction and Recycling Strategy vision is:

“Innovative waste management providing economic, social, and environmental benefits for the tropical north Queensland region”.

The Cairns Resource Recovery operational business comprises of the following key business areas:

Waste and Recycling Collection (under contract)

- 62,000 weekly waste collections with 50,000 tonnes of waste collected per year.
- 70,000 fortnightly recycling collections with 10,000 tonnes of recycling collected per year.

Transfer Stations

- Five (5) transfer stations with 50,000 tonnes of waste received per year.
- Buy Back Shop
- One (1) Buy Back Shop retail shop with 1,000 tonnes of material reused per year.

Materials Recovery Facility

- One (1) Materials Recovery Facility with 13,000 tonnes of recycling processed per year.

Glass Processing Facility

- One (1) Glass Processing Facility with 10,000 tonnes of glass processed per year.

Regional Waste Management (under contract and includes Mareeba and Douglas Shire Councils)

- One (1) Advanced Resource Recovery Facility with 65,000 tonnes of received per year.

Overall, for the Cairns local government area, approximately 109,000 tonnes per year is received with 62,000 tonnes diverted from landfill (47% diversion rate) and 47,000 tonnes landfilled.

3. Non-financial targets

Cairns Resource Recovery have non-financial targets relating to resource recovery outlined in the Waste Reduction and Recycling Strategy, as follows:

- Reduce Municipal Solid Waste (Domestic) waste generation per capita by 5% by 2027;
- Reduce Municipal Solid Waste (Domestic) waste to landfill by 15% by 2027;
- Increase the Municipal Solid Waste (Domestic) recovery rate to 70% by 2027; and
- Increase the Council generated waste recovery rate (to be established).
- A full copy of the Waste Reduction and Recycling Strategy is available on Council's website.

Under the Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2011, Cairns Resource Recovery does not have a legislative requirement to supply levels of service that customers can expect. However, as a best practice and improvement strategy, several Cairns Resource Recovery levels of service have been incorporated into the Cairns Water and Resource Recovery Customer Service Standards. These standards are formally reviewed every 5 years and reported on annually. The standards were reviewed by Council in June 2025.

4. Major capital works (proposed major investments)

Major capital works for Cairns Resource Recovery are set out in Council's annual budgeted capital expenditure program which is adopted in June or July each year.

5. Outstanding and proposed borrowings

Cairns Resource Recovery has no outstanding or proposed borrowings.

6. Principal assets

Cairns Resource Recovery manages a range of solid waste operations, activities and services across the region including kerbside waste and recycling collection contracts, a regional waste management contract (through an Advanced Resource Recovery Facility), a material recovery facility, glass processing facility, transfer stations, drop bin sites and landfills. Principal assets include:

Materials recovery facility	Portsmith
Regional container processing facility	Portsmith
Waste transfer stations	Babinda Gordonvale Portsmith Smithfield Bramston Beach
Buy Back Shop	Portsmith
Landfills (closed)	Portsmith White Rock Babinda Gordonvale Yorkeys Knob Machans Beach
Waste disposal	Contractual arrangement with a commercial entity Veolia to accept and dispose of all Council waste at an Advanced Resource Recovery Facility

7. Key deliverables

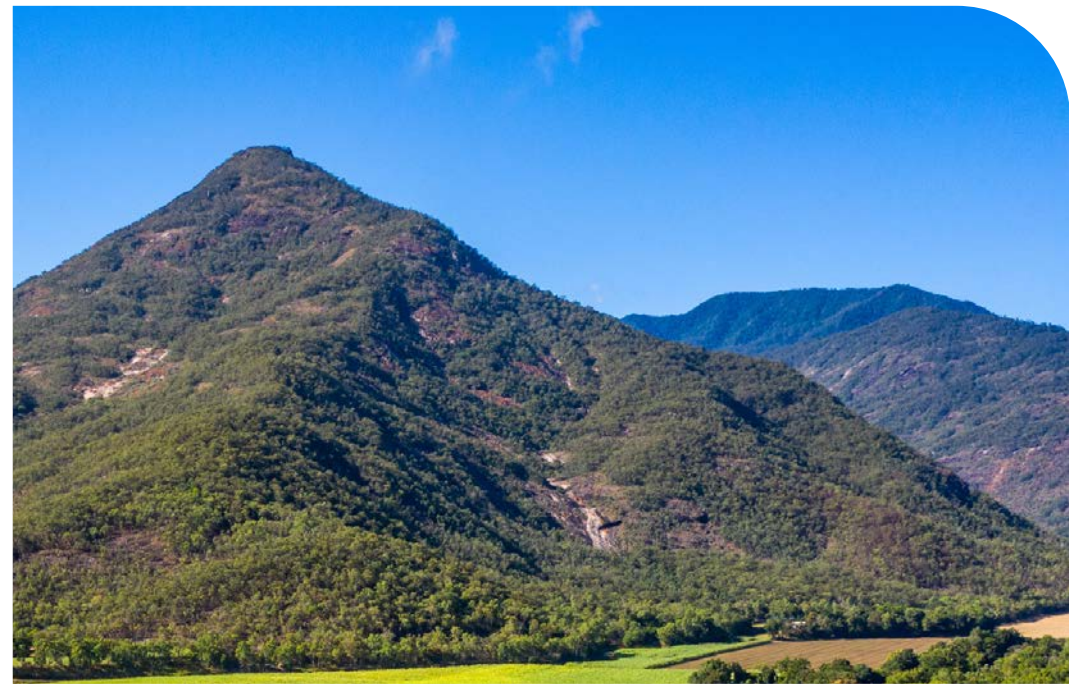
Cairns Resource Recovery is primarily responsible for the management of municipal solid waste services (collection, recovery, and disposal) to the community, including the following:

- Provision of kerbside waste and recycling collections;
- Provision of the Transfer Station network;
- Operation of the Materials Recovery Facility;
- Contract management including regional Advanced Resource Recovery Facility, kerbside and Public place collections;
- Management and monitoring of closed landfill sites; and
- Management of waste and recycling education campaign.

8. Service indicators

Performance indicators listed below were implemented when the Customer Service Standards were reviewed in June 2025.

	Performance indicator	Performance measure	Target
Effective collection of residential waste	1 New bin delivery	Response time for new bin delivery	100% within 48 hours
	2 Missed services - kerbside waste	Number of missed services per month	≤ 1 per 5,000 services
	3 Response time to missed services - kerbside waste	Response time for collection of missed kerbside waste services	95% within 24 hours
	4 Missed services - kerbside recycling	Number of missed services per month	≤ 1 per 5,000 services
	5 Response time to missed services - kerbside recycling	Response time for collection of missed kerbside waste services	95% within 24 hours
	6 Response time to repair/ replacement requests - kerbside waste and recycling	Response time to repair/ replace requests for kerbside waste and recycling	95% within 48 hours



Cairns Resource Recovery and the community

1. Community service obligations

- Free green waste disposal initiative conducted quarterly.
- Charity exemptions for waste disposal.
- Collection and disposal relating to community clean up events (such as Council's 'Clean up Cairns' program).
- Free hazardous waste disposal to prevent incorrect disposals.
- Provision of free recycling services for schools within the Cairns region.
- In-kind waste and recycling collections; and donations of Buy Back Shop items to charity.

CRC Resource Recovery also engages in the following activities for the benefit of the community:

- Conducts waste education specific information campaigns and provides resources on proper household recycling and waste disposal practices.
- Provides free waste education sessions for schools, early learning centres, and community groups through presentations, workshops and excursions to Council's Resource Recovery Facilities in Portsmith.
- Collaborating with national, state, and local initiatives to deliver annual waste reduction, reuse, and recycling events aligned with national campaigns like National Recycling Week and Council's Trash to Treasure event.

2. Cost of, and funding for, the community service obligations

The Community Service Obligations of Cairns Resource Recovery are 100% funded by Council.

Activities		Cost of CSO \$'000
Waste services	Free green waste conducted four times a year	781
Total	Charity exemptions for waste disposal	194
	Collection and disposal relating to community clean up events	3
	Free hazardous waste disposal to prevent incorrect disposals	174
	Recycling services fee free of charge to schools	41
	In kind waste and recycling collections	7
	Donations of buy back shop items to charity	2
	Total	1,202

Note: Figures included in the above table represent the 2025/26 budget which was adopted by Council on 25th June 2025

Cairns Resource Recovery financials

1. Notional Capital Structure, and Treatment of Surpluses

Cairns Resource Recovery is a wholly owned commercial business unit of Council. Cairns Resource Recovery's notional capital structure is via 100% equity funding from Council.

Any surplus earned by a business unit of Council is returned as a dividend to Council. This return is in recognition that business units have been established to further the good governance of the region. Funds earned by Council through dividends are utilised to provide enhanced services and infrastructure to the Cairns region.

2. Capital works - expenditure by program

Note that the details included in the table below reflect the budget which was adopted by Council on 25th June 2025.

Capex program	2025/26 Budget \$'000
Resource Recovery	2,942
Total	2,942

3. Funding of capital works

For the 2025/26 financial year the capital works program will be funded through a combination of Council contributions and Council borrowings.

4. Financial targets

For the 2025/26 financial year the capital works program will be funded through a combination of Council contributions and Council borrowings.

Performance measure - budget to actual	Target	Frequency	Q1 \$'000	Q2 \$'000	Q3 \$'000	Q4 \$'000	2025/26 Budget \$'000
Operating revenue	Budget	Quarterly	12,106	12,373	12,275	12,685	49,439
Operating expenses	Budget	Quarterly	10,201	10,036	10,607	10,609	41,453
Net operating result	Budget	Quarterly	1,905	2,337	1,669	2,076	7,986
Capex	Budget	Annually					2,942

Cairns Resource Recovery reports to Council

Cairns Resource Recovery's reports to Council will contain both financial and non-financial information and such information will be reported to Council either at ordinary meetings or at relevant Council committees.

