mosaicLAB

SUNSHINE COAST CITIZENS' PANEL

BUDGET AND SERVICES PRIORITISATION

What was said report

15 October 2025

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Together with Council, we will learn, deliberate and advise, to make sure community perspectives are heard on key issues.

- Sunshine Coast Citizens' Panel Overall Purpose

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As the Sunshine Coast region continues to grow, so too does the demand for services and infrastructure. Sunshine Coast Council (Council) faces important choices about how best to allocate its resources to meet current community needs while planning responsibly for future generations.

On 12 October 2025, the Citizens' Panel explored how Council might balance competing priorities, ensuring services remain high-quality, affordable, and sustainable, by reflecting practical trade-offs Council must navigate – namely,

1. Spend money now or invest for the future;
2. Adjust services versus increase rates; and
3. Environmental sustainability versus more economic delivery.

Their final response was to the question:

What should Council consider when deciding which services to invest in to best meet our community's needs?

INSIGHTS FROM THE BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Prior to the session, panel members were provided a background document on Council budget and services. After reading through this document and hearing from Council subject matter experts, the following insights emerged from their understanding of the topic:

Not an even starting point across the region
a desire for fairer and more consistent investment across the Coast.

Value for money
greater clarity and oversight of Council spending and transparency and accountability in how rates are used.

Cost-of-living pressures
rates increases add to cost of living and alternative funding ideas to support the budget.

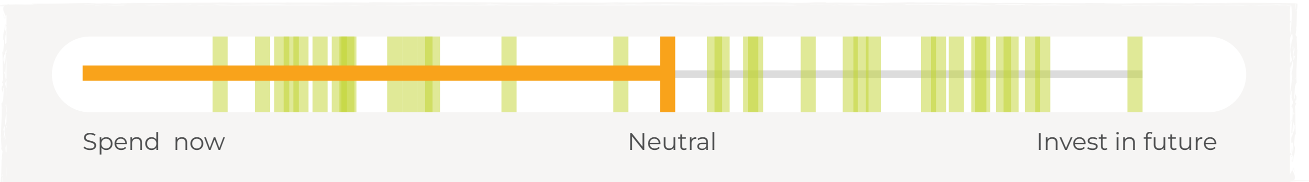
Growth, infrastructure and amenity protection
large budgets required to manage rapid growth and new suburbs while still protecting what makes the Coast special.

SUMMARY OF DILEMMAS

The Panel explored the three dilemmas and used an online tool to position their views along a scale. Each green mark represents an individual response and the orange vertical line is the median from all responses. Participants were also asked to provide a response to the question: *"Why did you make this choice?"*.

Full data appears in the subsequent pages. The below offers a snapshot.

Dilemma 1: Spend money now or invest for the future

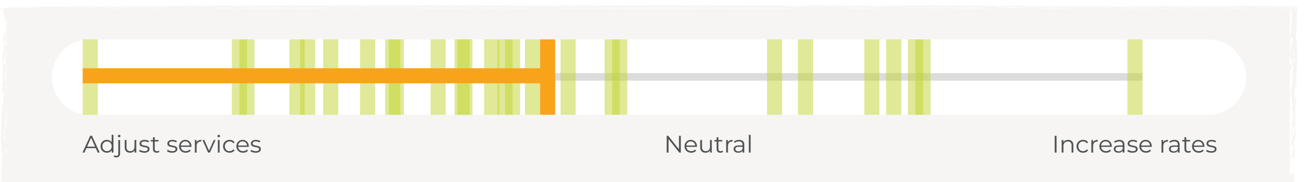


A high-level summary of their 'rationale' was:

- Participants were divided on whether to spend now or invest for the future. Many wanted **a balance** — spending wisely now with a clear plan for long-term benefit.
- There are **growth and future needs**, noting that the Sunshine Coast is expanding rapidly and must prepare for population increases and upcoming events like the Olympics. Investing early in **infrastructure, jobs, and sustainability** was seen as essential to avoid playing catch-up later.
- There was interest in **maintaining and protecting what already exists**, such as **fiscal responsibility, reducing debt**, and **ensuring services meet residents' current needs** before committing to new projects.
- There were a few concerns about **trust and transparency.**
- Overall, participants wanted spending that is **responsible, forward-looking, and fair** to both current and future generations.

"Spend money now with an eye on the future."
– Participant quote

Dilemma 2: Adjust services versus increase rates

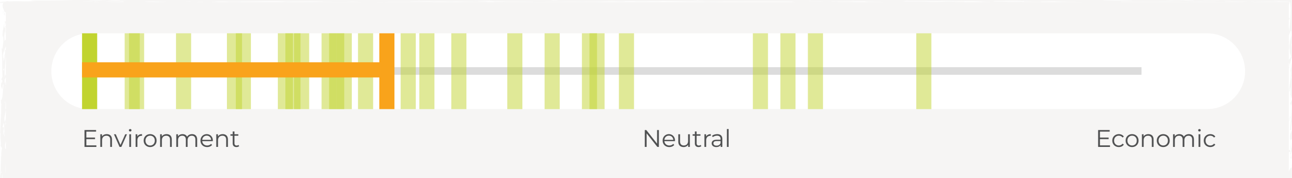


A high-level summary of participants' rationale was:

- A desire for **efficiency first** — reviewing spending and cutting waste before raising rates.
- **Better value for money** and Council to **spend smarter** and **prioritise essential services**. They emphasised **affordability and cost of living**, as residents and families are already under financial pressure.
- **A small, sensible rate increase** was supported by some if it meant **maintaining or improving services** and ensuring sustainability. Others preferred **no rate rise at all,** instead seeking savings through efficiencies, partnerships, or contributions from developers.
- **Fairness** is important as rate rises hit low-income residents hardest. Participants valued **maintaining lifestyle and liveability**, even if that meant paying a bit more.
- Overall, participants wanted **responsible, transparent decisions** — adjust spending first, raise rates only if truly necessary, and keep life on the Coast affordable.

"First let's adjust services, then let's look at other ways we can get revenue"
– Participant quote

Dilemma 3: Environmental sustainability versus more economic delivery



A high-level summary of participants' rationale was:

- A strong preference to prioritise **environmental sustainability** over economic delivery, because the environment is the **Sunshine Coast's identity, beauty, and liveability**. Once lost, it can't be recovered.
- **Environmental care is linked to long-term prosperity** - protecting nature supports tourism, health, and lifestyle.
- There were also some views that **sustainability and economic success** are **connected goals**, not opposites, and that Council should take a **balanced approach**, ensuring protection without halting all development.

"What is the point of the money and economics if there is no environment? If you can't breathe the air?"
– Participant quote

- Overall, participants believed an **environmental priority** leads to a stronger, more resilient economy in the long run.

Responding to the Remit

To conclude the session, panel members were invited to reflect on what they had learned, the dilemmas, and remit to develop advice for Council. Themes that emerged from the comments received include:

Plan for a growing community with smarter infrastructure and transport - targeted investment in critical infrastructure combined with better planning to fast-track approvals.

Protect the environment and what makes the Sunshine Coast unique - keep the Coast beautiful, protect natural areas, and avoid becoming the Gold Coast, as good environmental decisions create long-term economic and community benefits.

Address cost-of-living pressures – because people are struggling with the cost of living, Council needs to ensure essential services (including affordable housing) remain accessible.

Fairness, transparency and community benefit in decision-making - show how spending decisions benefit the most people and to increase visibility of budget expenditure.

Think long-term, collaborate widely, and plan for future resilience – desire for innovation across strategic partnerships, investment decisions and sustainable building to withstand the impacts of future weather events.

Enjoy reading the full report below.

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

The Sunshine Coast region covers 2,291 square kilometres and is home to more than 375,000 people, a number expected to grow to around 425,500 by 2030 and over 509,000 by 2041. This continued growth brings both opportunities and challenges for the region's liveability, infrastructure, and services.

Council delivers 34 services (and more than 100 sub-services) across the community, at an annual cost of approximately $971 million. These services support everything from maintaining parks, libraries, and roads to delivering community programs, managing waste, protecting the natural environment, and planning for sustainable growth.

The Corporate Plan 2025–2030 provides the strategic direction for Council's work over the next five years, with a vision of being *Australia's most sustainable region – connected, liveable, thriving.*

As the region continues to grow, so too does the demand for services and infrastructure. Council faces important choices about how best to allocate its resources to meet current community needs while planning responsibly for future generations.

In Session 2, the Citizens' Panel explored these challenges and provided input into how Council might balance competing priorities, ensuring services remain high-quality, affordable, and sustainable. The remit question posed to the Panel was:

What should Council consider when deciding which services to invest in to best meet our community's needs?

This key question was explored by means of a set of three dilemmas that reflect practical trade-offs Council must navigate:

1. Spend money now or invest for the future
2. Adjust services versus increase rates
3. Environmental sustainability versus more economic delivery

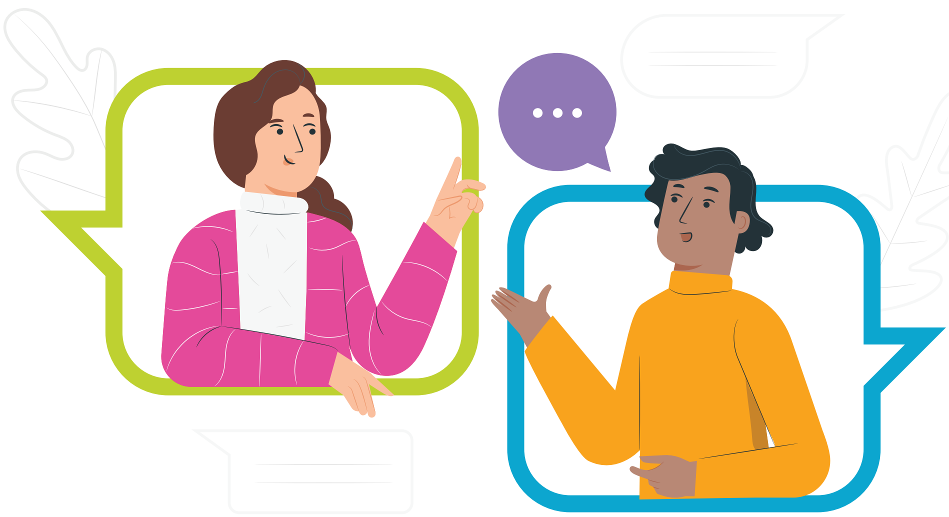
This report summarises the process of the session, capturing participants' insights, questions, reflections, and advice to inform Council's future decision-making on budget and service delivery.

SESSION PURPOSE

The purpose of the session was to give the Citizens' Panel an opportunity to provide input on how Council should prioritise investment in services to best meet the needs of a growing and diverse community. The session aimed to:

- Explore how community members weigh the benefits and trade-offs between short-term gains and long-term sustainability.
- Identify which principles and values should guide Council's budget and service decisions.
- Gather community perspectives on fairness, affordability, and future readiness.

The insights gathered through this process will help inform Council's approach to the 2025–26 Budget and future planning processes, ensuring decisions reflect community priorities and expectations.



ATTENDANCE

A total of 47 panel members attended the session.

A number of Councillors and other Council staff also attended as subject matter experts and observers.

Facilitation was provided by MosaicLab, who guided discussions and ensured all participants had the opportunity to contribute.

SESSION AGENDA

TIME	AGENDA
6:00PM	**Welcome and getting started** Acknowledgement of country, purpose of the session, agenda, introductions, reconnecting, checking working agreements.
6:20PM	**Critical Thinking Skills** The Panel explored skills that would help them think critically about the information they would receive.
6:30PM	**Introduction to Budget and Services** Luke Flanagan presented context information
6:45PM	**Deep dive into the material** The Panel were invited to review and discuss the background information and generate questions for clarity which were answered by council staff in a Q&A.
7:30PM	**Break**
7:50PM	**Responding to the dilemmas** The Panel discussed each of the three dilemmas, indicating their preference for each and giving a rationale for their choices.
8:20PM	**Responding to the remit question** The Panel were invited to consider and discuss the remit and give advice to Council in response.
8:50PM	**Final reminders, next steps and closing remarks**
9:00PM	**Close**

RESULTS

DEEP DIVE INTO THE MATERIAL

To build a shared understanding of the topic, panel members worked in small groups to review and discuss the background information on Council's budget, services, and future challenges. Each group captured what stood out to them and the themes emerging are:

Not an even starting point across the region
a desire for fairer and more consistent investment across the Coast.

Value for money
greater clarity and oversight of Council spending and transparency and accountability in how rates are used.

Cost-of-living pressures
rates increases add to cost of living and alternative funding ideas to support the budget.

Growth, infrastructure and amenity protection
large budgets required to manage rapid growth and new suburbs while still protecting what makes the Coast special.

Participant comments are reproduced verbatim below with the number of likes that each comment received from the group.

COMMENT	LIKES
Olympic games and increasing property prices and homelessness numbers	6
The information is very generalised, how do we get more specific?	5
The topics we are being asked to discuss are very broad	4
Not really any focus on homelessness or public facilities	4
Services have been neglected in some areas, so it's not an even starting point for certain areas, how do we play catch up in that regard?	3
Narrow streets new suburbs can't park, get through if people are on both sides, can't get rubbish trucks through	3

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COMMENT	LIKES
The five council services categories do not match how the budget is broken down in the pie graph. ie waste & recycling in community or environment?	3
Infrastructure	2
Environmental sustainability – how can we ensure protected areas stay protected?	2
Main issues overlap even though in the document that are kept separate	2
Council staff and/or contractors may not being efficiently and deceive management	2
Huge budgets require huge tracking methods	2
Is the money spent being audited so we know we are getting best value for money…especially if rates are going increase	2
Money being appropriately spent and not wasted?	2
Rates increase proposal – further adding to cost of living	1
The need to source funding from tourists/visitors to prop up the budget rather than locals	1
How does council keep track of spending to make sure we are getting value for money and there is no corruption?	1
Large portions of the budget are allocated to Roads and Transport + Community Facilities and Services - geared towards future growth?	1
All the services look that are managing for the growth	1
Surprised at the amount we spend on roads/transport	0
More shade areas parks/beaches	0
Money is cheaper to borrow now than in the future, depends what we are spending it on	0
Apart from putting rates up, what other ways are council using to stay on budget. Have you guys tightened your spending and looking into more ways to save money	0
What is essential? What needs to be protected?	0
If increasing rates, can this be limited to non-residential properties that are only holiday let, so as not to drive up rentals?	0
What are we prepared to sacrifice now to ensure benefits for future?	0
Money is cheaper to borrow now than in the future, depends what it is being spent on	0

QUESTIONS FOR CLARITY

Panel members had the opportunity to ask questions of Council during the session. Facilitators moderated a Q&A with Council Staff, Luke Flanagan, Shane Morgan, Sharon Dunbar and Keith Parsons.

The following section lists all questions verbatim, together with the number of likes each received. Questions that could not be answered on the night, due to time restrictions, appear in the second box below. Themes emerging from the questions were:

Financial position and transparency - how Council tracks spending and ensures value for money.

Affordability and cost-of-living concerns - how rates are calculated and their impact on people already struggling with affordability.

Funding partnerships and other revenue sources - what other funding is available from State or Federal Government, developers or visitor taxes to support the budget.

Planning for growth and the Olympics - planning for the future including the Olympics and therefore likely long-term debt and future operational costs.

Responsibilities and priorities - clarity around which levels of government support various services.

Questions answered:

COMMENT	LIKES
Is the use of contractors the most efficient use of council resources, e.g. tips, mowing, garbage collection?	6
What other funding is available from state or federal government?	5
How are rates calculated, and are they comparative to other regions?	5
How will they expand public transport?	5
How does council audit and track spending?	5
What is the current financial position?	5
What services will we be reducing spending on when prioritising growth?	4
Does the council get money from the state government for Olympics infrastructure?	4
What does investment for the future actually mean? Investing money now, or funds sitting in a bank account?	4

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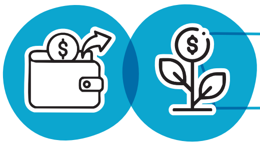
COMMENT	LIKES
Define sustainable.	4
How do our rates compare to other similar regions?	3
How, as such a rich region, do we not have enough funds to support the services we need and pay our debt?	3
Has the planning for the future been incorporated into the Olympics?	2
Who is responsible for housing?	1
What is considered sustainable?	1
What is the breakdown of the previous year's budget?	1
The Sunshine Coast — a beautiful region that is attracting...	0
Public transport: getting from Caloundra to the Maroochydore airport is a very long process. Looking forward to an easier way rather than paying $75 for a taxi, and there being no Ubers/ taxis when you land.	0
In terms of ongoing funding, how will the operational costs of infrastructure for the Olympics be funded after 2032?	0
How does council plan to reduce its debt?	0
Why are we budgeting more that's already part of the council, when we should be focusing on the budget for housing, reducing homelessness, and the cost of living for food?	0
Or other ways to get revenue.	0

Questions that were unanswered on the night due to time restrictions.

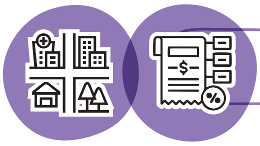
COMMENT	LIKES
Cost sharing with developers and other levels of government?	4
How do we distinguish between capex and opex spends? What is spent on new projects vs what is spent on maintenance?	3
Why not invest council rates to get interest?	2
Are we getting the right value for money on what council is planning?	2
How do Council members get paid? Are their incomes tied to performance and outcomes?	2
If the rates were to be increased, are we able to make a decision by first knowing how much they will be increased by?	1
Aren't environmental issues the responsibility of the State and Federal Government, not council?	1
What about all the extra rates income from all the building income from houses, units, and duplexes?	1
Who pays for all the beach renovations from storm and Pumicestone Passage/ breakthrough?	1
What is Organisational Excellence?	0
What about all the new build rates revenue from the houses, units, and duplexes?	0
What % of council's budget is on staffing/salaries?	0
Why is most money on roads and transport than anything else?	0
Why is council not releasing more land – to help living affordability, homelessness, etc.?	0
Rather than increase rates, is there a way to tax visitors to the area? (Not in a way to overall disrupt tourism.)	0
Why was the discount for early payment of rates scrapped?	0
How much waste is in the reconstruction of assets if we don't invest in doing it right?	0
Can you be more sustainable with your resources by reusing and repurposing material? Sourcing local craftsmen and builders.	0
Why not let people pay rates in advance and pay in full, then council can invest earning interest?	0
More information in specifics about where deficits are being filled and where they're taking from, please.	0
Are we focusing on rates distribution or more funding?	0

RESPONDING TO THE DILEMMAS

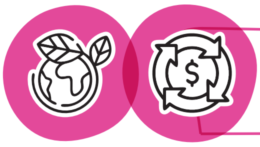
The Panel explored the three dilemmas that shape Council's budget and service decisions:



1. Spend money now or invest for the future



2. Adjust services versus increase rates



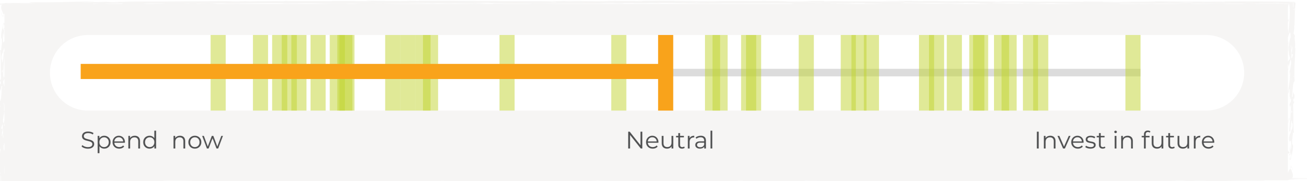
3. Environmental sustainability versus more economic delivery

Working in small groups, participants discussed each dilemma and used an online tool to position their views along a scale and record their reasoning for each choice. This activity encouraged participants to reflect on trade-offs, appreciate different perspectives, and consider what would best serve both current and future residents.

For each dilemma, the scale below shows how participants responded. The orange line represents the average position of all votes, while each green mark indicates a group's response along the scale.

The table below are reproduced responses to the question **"Why did you make this choice?"**

DILEMMA 1 — SPEND MONEY NOW OR INVEST FOR THE FUTURE



Participants were also asked to provide a response to the question: *"Why did you make this choice?"*. The table below offers the full responses, which have been lightly summarized as follows:

- Participants were divided on whether to spend now or invest for the future. Many wanted **a balance** — spending wisely now with a clear plan for long-term benefit.
- There are **growth and future needs**, noting that the Sunshine Coast is expanding rapidly and must prepare for population increases and upcoming events like the Olympics. Investing early in **infrastructure, jobs, and sustainability** was seen as essential to avoid playing catch-up later.
- There was interest in **maintaining and protecting what already exists**, such as **fiscal responsibility, reducing debt**, and **ensuring services meet residents' current needs** before committing to new projects.
- There were a few concerns about **trust and transparency.**
- Overall, participants wanted spending that is **responsible, forward-looking, and fair** to both current and future generations.

Why did you make this choice?

Long-term investments if we delay current spending.

The current infrastructure seems to be meeting the needs of the community. Hold off the spending. The new Caloundra Library has just opened. Caloundra business meets most of my needs. I only need to go to Maroochydore once a month or so.

Spend money now with an eye on the future.

We need to get ahead of growth, not play catch up.

Given that the SC is such a beautiful region and is forecasting exponential population growth, does the council lobby large corporations and the public sector (State and Federal) to set up 'shop' on the Coast to provide extra jobs for the region?

Lack of infrastructure decreases property value.

Look after the residents that are here now.

I feel with the costs exploding yearly, money has to be spent now before it gets away from us.

Spend now but thinking in future (spend in infrastructure that is future and less in programs and services). If we currently are paying, why don't we see results?

I feel ratepayers need to have the services they are paying for. I don't 100% trust council to invest wisely in the future and have no idea what their plans are for the future... and therefore cannot endorse that approach.

More requirement to spend on public amenities in the present, rather than saving with inflation.

Government deficit combined with large influxes of growth may demand greater capital commitments in future as opposed to now.

AVOID COUNCIL DEBT — PAY OFF DEBT AND NO BORROWING.

Reduce loads and demand on services.

To secure our future.

Sunshine Coast is in a period of rapid growth and we need to keep up with infrastructure. Prepare now for the upcoming Olympics.

Because there are immediate issues that need addressing now around transport and accessibility, such as pedestrian transport, parking, roadways, include disability access.

To keep maintenance levels high and prevent extra spending to revamp everything.

The world moves at such a fast pace and we need to keep up, which usually means spending.

Firstly, to preserve the current state of the SC as is — we love it here for a reason! Secondly, I want the Coast to accommodate change for my future and my children's future.

Avoid further debts or need for loans.

Currently in a deficit, protect what we already have. Maintenance is costly.

Prioritising what we already have and maintaining/ catching up on what we're already behind on.

Want to see results now, not way in the future. However, believe what we put in place now must last for the future and be well planned. However, not all agreed as we also want to invest in future-proofing and the future generations.

We need to utilise funds for future generations. There is a lot we can give up that isn't necessary that we are willing to give up if we know that things will be better in the future for us and future generations.

Future thinking will ensure current spending is done responsibly.

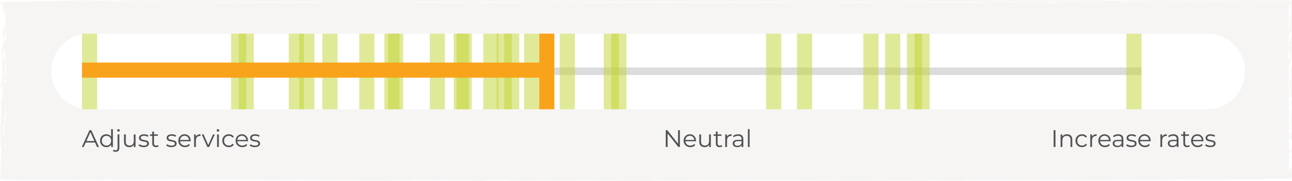
Spending now a bit more, but plan for the future.

Current spending should be justified based on meeting future needs.

Spending now does invest in the future.

Invest for the Olympics and for further events.

DILEMMA 2 — ADJUST SERVICES VERSUS INCREASE RATES



Participants were also asked to provide a response to the question: *"Why did you make this choice?"*. The table below offers full responses, which have been lightly summarized as follows:

- A desire for **efficiency first** — reviewing spending and cutting waste before raising rates.
- **Better value for money** and Council to **spend smarter** and **prioritise essential services**. They emphasised **affordability and cost of living**, as residents and families are already under financial pressure.
- **A small, sensible rate increase** was supported by some if it meant **maintaining or improving services** and ensuring sustainability. Others preferred **no rate rise at all,** instead seeking savings through efficiencies, partnerships, or contributions from developers.
- **Fairness** is important as rate rises hit low-income residents hardest. Participants valued **maintaining lifestyle and liveability**, even if that meant paying a bit more.
- Overall, participants wanted **responsible, transparent decisions** — adjust spending first, raise rates only if truly necessary, and keep life on the Coast affordable.

Why did you make this choice?

If the increased rates go up, adjustments to services for maintaining affordability — lack of key workers and families coming to the Sunshine Coast because of how expensive everything is, increasing crisis.

It has to be a way to adjust services.

We love our way of life and would prefer to pay extra to keep services within reason.

I'm willing to make sacrifices in services for the community to benefit as a whole.

I am not a ratepayer as I live in social housing. I feel the document is trying to get us to choose the future and cut services.

Rein in council's reckless spending.

Look at more cost-effective use of services or use of contributions from developers rather than increasing rates as a last resort.

Don't want to see rate increases as people are struggling and cannot afford an increase. Need to be selective about what is reduced though.

Rates shouldn't be increased. Find areas of overspend, waste, etc. to find more money.

We know that the people at the bottom will always end up paying for any increase, so council should stick to the current budget.

Focus on efficiencies rather than increasing rates.

"Nice to have" programs can be cut back to focus on priorities.

Reduce administration costs and billing.

Would prefer a rate rise rather than seeing services cut.

I don't want to increase rates, but if we can see the services improve, it would be worth it.

We believe that some spending is reckless and maybe not getting value for money spent.

Look inwardly to save money. Spend what you have.

Depends on which services exactly; raise rates, but be able to choose which services that is contributed to. Difficult to choose — form to vote?

Looking at other options on how to deliver services first.

First let's adjust services, then let's look at other ways we can get revenue (private companies, tourism tax, increase rates for investment properties only, etc.). Only then look at very small rate increases.

We believe a sensible rate increase — an affordable one — is the smartest thing to do to ensure sustainability without adding too much financial pressure to households.

Re-evaluate current operational costs and "nice to haves" based on maintaining current rate levels.

Property prices are increasing, so rates should increase and be justified for public services.

Rezoning of residential to multi-storey will increase rate revenue.

Affordability and liveability on the Coast, as well as managing what needs to be done rather than what could be done for the sake of doing it.

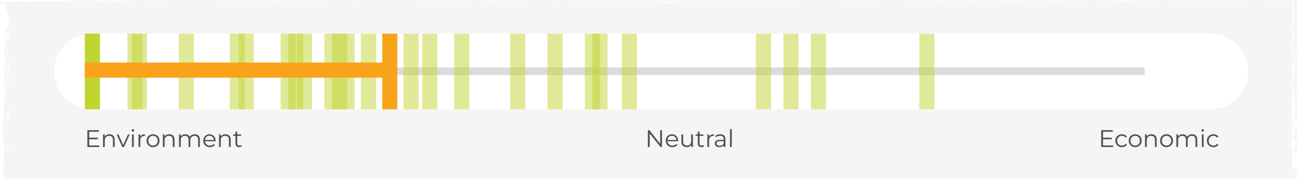
Look to reviewing services first to ensure they are the most efficient and cost-effective, and rate increases as a last option.

Inflation is too high and life needs to be affordable for this generation and the generations to come.

If rates go up, it places more pressure on families and the cost of living. Adjust spending, reduce service in the parks and gardens to compensate.

DILEMMA 3

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY VERSUS MORE ECONOMIC DELIVERY



Participants were also asked to provide a response to the question: *"Why did you make this choice?"*. The table below offers full responses, which have been lightly summarized as follows:

- A strong preference to prioritise **environmental sustainability** over economic delivery, because the environment is the **Sunshine Coast's identity, beauty, and liveability**. Once lost, it can't be recovered.
- **Environmental care is linked to long-term prosperity** - protecting nature supports tourism, health, and lifestyle.
- There were also some views that **sustainability and economic success** are **connected goals**, not opposites, and that Council should take a **balanced approach**, ensuring protection without halting all development.
- Overall, participants believed an **environmental priority** leads to a stronger, more resilient economy in the long run.

Why did you make this choice?

You don't eat the money if there is a lack of services to provide the community and for our planet to survive.

Environment and growth.

Balanced approach. Make no-go protected zones. Risk analysis. Don't destroy what makes the SC great.

Environment makes the SC special.

Environmental sustainability has to be the most important, now and always.

Sustainability means you can't just keep developing land.

We need to look after our natural resources.

People vs environment... people win.

Once you lose the environment, no way to get it back.

More people are coming to the Coast, so the environment will have to suffer. I don't like it, but...

We only get one chance with the environment, but there's always a chance for economic growth.

What is the point of the money and economics if there is no environment? If you can't breathe the air?

Environment is the essence of the Sunshine Coast. Environmental considerations shouldn't mean losing economic benefits.

For Dilemma 3 go with environmental, as we feel it is important and the economical will be forced to find another way.

The environment is the most important part for the Sunshine Coast — prevent climate change and keep the Coast beautiful for our kids.

I believe a 50/50 approach.

I feel that environmental sustainability is integral to economic delivery. We may suffer short term, but I think we can prosper more long term.

You can still have economic outcomes through the environment.

Once we lose our environment, we can't get it back.

Environment is such a big drawcard for the area. Environment costs a lot to reinstate.

Use the environment as a selling point to finance increased economic delivery, e.g. tourist environment tax.

Council only cares about the environment on land that can't be developed.

Need to protect the environment and why people love and come to the Sunshine Coast. And what we build should use the solar/weather and last.

The quality of living on the SC is closely related to nature and the ecosphere. It is as or more important than economic delivery.

The environment is more important than the economy.

Economic delivery promotes revenue.

Queensland is known for its amazing creatures, not its big cities — it should be kept that way.

With the cost of living on the Sunshine Coast increasing, the need for parks is not as important as families need both partners to work, so families have less time to enjoy the outdoors. After 25 years, my daughter is forced to move back to Brisbane.

RESPONDING TO THE REMIT QUESTION

To conclude the session, panel members were invited to reflect on what they had learned and the trade-offs they had considered, and respond to the remit:

> **"What should Council consider when deciding which services to invest in to best meet our community's needs?"**

In new groups, participants shared what influenced their earlier choices and developed one or two key pieces of advice for Council. The table below includes all comments reproduced verbatim. Themes that emerged from the comments include:

Plan for a growing community with smarter infrastructure and transport - targeted investment in critical infrastructure combined with better planning to fast-track approvals.

Protect the environment and what makes the Sunshine Coast unique - keep the Coast beautiful, protect natural areas, and avoid becoming the Gold Coast, as good environmental decisions create long-term economic and community benefits.

Address cost-of-living pressures – because people are struggling with the cost of living, Council needs to ensure essential services (including affordable housing) remain accessible.

Fairness, transparency and community benefit in decision-making - show how spending decisions benefit the most people and to increase visibility of budget expenditure.

Think long-term, collaborate widely, and plan for future resilience – desire for innovation across strategic partnerships, investment decisions and sustainable building to withstand the impacts of future weather events.

ADVICE	WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT FOR COUNCIL TO KNOW?
It should consider how many people (% of the population) will benefit from the spend on the service (i.e. bang for buck) – which services are going to benefit the most people.	
Advocate to State Govt for more roads that feed off the Bruce Hwy to the Coast.	To ensure State Govt is providing sufficient road infrastructure to support the growing population.
Consider all abilities and stages of life when creating spaces, and gain insight from differently abled people when creating spaces. (Don't assume it's wheelchair accessible without consulting a wheelchair user.)	
Consider what the biggest challenges to our community are and how best to mitigate those.	

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ADVICE	WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT FOR COUNCIL TO KNOW?
Cost of living, services for youth crime, changing the function of public school systems for fewer dropouts, baby bonus for single parents/families getting services in parenting to invest in the future, and lack of hotel accommodation for tourism, free education.	
Do we need more investment in “patch” jobs? i.e. fixing infrastructure that will end up being undone by climate change?	Fixing Bribie Island breakthrough, etc., that will be undone in future weather events when we know climate science shows it will disappear.
Environment – beaches, parks, forests. People come to the Coast to experience the nature and our unique style of living. We want to keep that. We need to protect this way of living with nature.	Let’s avoid becoming the Gold Coast. Let’s manage the growth with the environment in mind.
Expanding public transport and developing road infrastructure. Development of highways to accommodate more lanes. Train development between Beerwah and Birtinya.	
Focused, targeted investment in critical infrastructure – roads, parking, public transport, bike paths, etc. Investment in planning and development to fast-track approvals to get supply into the system.	
Green spaces, trees, more nature adds value, community gathering places, and increases wellbeing generally among the population. Thinking outside the box for resources, e.g. quarrying, clean fill from a watercourse for the Olympics, etc.	SC is marketed as an environmental destination, we need to keep it like this.
Housing: temporary options that allow homeless/underprivileged people the chance to have security to become settled/job-secured. For example: boarding homes, hostels, tiny homes.	
Increase visibility/ease of access to budget expenditure.	Because it is the public who has a vested interest in this; there is a very diverse population.
Investment in strategic council partnerships with University/Trade College, Private Equity, Public Sectors.	
Investment in services that make our region great – ‘Environment and Liveability’.	
Keep in mind good environmental decisions can also mean good economic delivery.	It seemed they were treating them as one vs the other.
Keep in mind that a healthier, more environmentally friendly and sustainable (your goal) region will create a healthier community. Consider the longevity of the structures being built, especially when building structures for the Olympics.	
Keep in mind that only one-third are mortgaging and focus more on public housing and amenities. Better use of new developments. Alternative housing solutions, e.g. tiny houses.	

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ADVICE	WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT FOR COUNCIL TO KNOW?
People are struggling with cost of living. These are real people, not just an income source.	Think of those of different income status.
Priorities – safety.	
Prioritising infrastructure – efficient and practical spaces that add value to the community without adding excess cost. All services need roads and maintenance.	Safety and making the council area easily travelable.
Prioritise services that have long-term benefits.	
The waste and recycling requirements of a growing population (by Klaus).	Current tips are not sufficient to accommodate the growing population's waste.
They should consider the population growth for the next 20 years.	We can pack everyone in, but how are we going to get everyone where they're going?
Think of the impact and flow-on effects of cutting/reducing services.	How does the decision to cut a service impact the liveability of the community? Does it end up encouraging anti-social behaviour (cutting waste services leading to illegal dumping)?
Think outside the square – how can we innovate to improve the services and infrastructure projects that are delivered?	Can we encourage the private sector and third parties to innovate on issues impacting us?
With the increase of population, we need to look at better public transport, pedestrian accessibility, and disability access along footpaths/public transport. For example: disability transport, safer corridors for personal e-transport, pedestrians.	

NEXT STEPS

The insights and advice captured through this session will be compiled and provided to Council to inform discussions about future budget and service planning.

This report records the views and sentiment expressed by panel members and is intended to support Council's ongoing consideration of community perspectives in its decision-making.

Council provided an undertaking to report back to the Panel on how the information has been used to inform budget discussions.

MosaicLab is a consultancy that specialises in community and stakeholder engagement, facilitation, negotiation, strategic planning and coaching.

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