

# Jared Cassidy

Councillor for Deagon Ward  
Leader of the Opposition



27 February 2026

The Right Honourable  
Lord Mayor Adrian Schrinner  
Brisbane City Council  
Ann Street  
BRISBANE QLD 4001

Dear Lord Mayor,

*Adrian*

I am writing to you in response to your request for my submission for the 2026/27 Council Budget.

For the last three years, you have continued to deliver a Budget each June, hold a press conference, make a speech and claim a whole range of expenditure will occur, before you gut that Budget. You never return any of the rates rise.

What is going on?

A Council Budget is the statement of a Lord Mayor's priorities for the future of Brisbane. Cutting staff, winding up Council's infrastructure program and stalling and delaying projects is affecting the very liveability of Brisbane.

We know Council's staff levels are still lower than they were years ago, which impacts on services and projects. I also note that many valuable projects which would improve the lives of the people who live here are now contingent on funding from other levels of Government. This is the reality of Council's finances after you spent \$1.6B on a project which you claimed was the responsibility of another level of Government.

This letter, as in previous years, shows my priorities, informed by the community I represent. They should come as no surprise to you once again.

Working throughout the year with Council Officers, I have also identified local projects that have subsequently been listed for future funding. Those projects include drainage, footpaths, road upgrades, bikeways, park projects and community facilities. I have been assured these projects have been submitted through the standard budget process within Council.

A year on from my last submission, suburban projects remain unfunded while rates continue to rise.

*Your hard working local*

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The community feedback I provided over the last couple of years has gone largely ignored, so I have included it again with this year's feedback.

In the face of less capital funding for suburban projects like LATM projects, playground upgrades, pedestrian crossings and no funding for new suburban footpaths, you have increasingly suggested Councillors simply use SEF funding.

However, we know that SEF funding has slipped in real terms, with both the costs of projects coming in higher and new added costs for designs that never used to apply. Council indexes the cost of construction each year, but the funding you provide does not increase in line with that.

As another year goes by, sports clubs on lease sites grow in numbers and continue to struggle with the challenge of usable fields, and usable facilities. These clubs are run by volunteers who are being asked to source funding in the hundreds of thousands, if not millions of dollars these days to keep Council owned facilities up to community standards.

Last year I wrote about the Brighton Roosters which you promised a changeroom upgrade to years ago now. \$300,000 in SEF funding has been approved and sitting there for over two years now with no progress on that project because you did not allocate enough funding in the Budget. I now understand this project has been included in an application to the SEQ Liveability Fund. I find it incredibly difficult to understand how State and Federal funding is the only path for Council to upgrade Council owned facilities.

Funding for drainage maintenance and upgrades continues to be a key priority and more funding for these projects should be included in this year's budget. On many occasions we report blocked drains and have to report them over, and over again. There needs to be more staff resourcing for proactive maintenance of these assets.

I have once again surveyed local residents in my Ward over the past few months on their priorities for this year's budget and have included that feedback in this submission as an appendix alongside the feedback received in 2025. I have also included responses to additional questions I asked the community this year, which will give you a broad indication of how they feel Council is delivering services to them.

This year, just 16% of people I surveyed felt they were getting good value for money from Council. That's a number that's far too low and a radically different approach to how you allocate Council funding can help to restore community confidence.

## Deagon Ward Budget Priorities (in no particular order):

- Increase funding for drainage projects (including maintenance) across the Deagon Ward to alleviate flooding concerns (there is a long list of projects in the schedule of works). The importance of more funding for this basic work has become very evident before, during and after the February 2022 flood event. **The drainage system in the Brighton Catchment has been investigated. Any recommendations should be funded in full as a matter of priority.** Drainage upgrades to the system that runs from Kempster Street in Sandgate to Cabbage Tree Creek should also be prioritised. This would alleviate flooding and also assist with car parking pressures at the Deagon Oval with piped drainage increasing the footprint of that site. There have been increasing instances of localised flooding after rain due to drainage systems either not being maintained or now inadequate.
- Develop early warning systems linked with telemetry gauges in Cabbage Tree Creek in the event of flooding. Electronic signage and CCTV will assist in monitoring and warning flood levels.
- The Brighton Foreshore upgrade is now proceeding with stage one. This stage upgrades the park areas near 12<sup>th</sup> Ave and 19<sup>th</sup> Ave. this is fully funded by Federal Government money. The other extremely important part of the project is path widening which was highly supported by the community. This requires additional funding and I request that you match the Federal Funding this year with an additional \$5m. **I understand you intend for the Wynnum Manly Foreshore project to include both Council and external funding. Why should Brighton be different?**
- Fund the expansion of the Netball Courts at Bill Brown Reserve. When the four courts were opened in 2020 demand for their use almost immediately exceeded their capacity. The design allowed for an additional four courts with parking to be added. This should be done as a matter of urgency. Netball is a growing sport on the Northside and Council should be supporting that with facilities. Most clubs do not have a lease and rely on use of these and private / school courts.
- Create a rolling program to repair the sea wall and groynes in Brighton and Sandgate to assist in reinstating sandy beaches – which may help protect the sea wall and prevent tidal inundation as has been proven effective at the beach built near Nineteenth Avenue. This work should be done in addition to the one-off Brighton Foreshore upgrade.
- Fully fund the Einbunpin Lagoon Management Plan. This remediation work will ensure the long term health of the lagoon for the community. This project is set to cost around \$3m. This is a lagoon of city-wide significance given it's place in the heart of a bustling suburban community and the home to countless festivals and events. I have written to you about this previously.
- More funding for ongoing maintenance of Dowse Lagoon. This is a RAMSAR site of international significance, and the lack of maintenance is appalling.
- Fast track funding for the O'Callaghan Park masterplan to improve facilities at O'Callaghan Park (including upgrading the car parks) in

consultation and partnership with the local clubs which lease the site. The approach of leaving the volunteer run clubs to carry out major upgrades to facilities at O'Callaghan Park is a failed one. Ahead of the Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2032 we need a significant investment in suburban sporting clubs.

- a) This is becoming critical this year with PCYC Queensland looking to invest \$6m at the Zillmere PCYC. Without proper access to the site this will likely cause more traffic issues.
- Connect internal road at O'Callaghan Park and upgrade traffic signals at Church/ Zillmere Road Zillmere intersection for safer access to O'Callaghan Park
- Improve facilities for local parks including:
  - a) Update the skate park at Deagon Sports Park. The popularity of this small skate park has grown with families since the Bracken Ridge facility has opened.
  - b) Upgrade facilities at the O'Callaghan Park skate park.
  - c) Upgrade Haywal Street Park in Taigum with better playground equipment and lighting
  - d) Shade over playgrounds at more local parks
  - e) Upgrade the playground at the Einbunpin Lagoon. This playground is now falling apart and is very high profile.
  - f) Fund the installation of a dog park in Zillmere
  - g) More public toilets including at Stanley Park in Deagon.
  - h) Lighting in Curlew Park. This is a primary cycle route and on the Moreton Bay Cycle Way. There is also a dog park and playground and with no ambient light, can be dangerous in the complete darkness.

These are important upgrades given the lack of shade at so many local parks across Brisbane. The skate facilities at both Deagon and Zillmere are long overdue for upgrades. While the Bracken Ridge facility has proven very popular, these local skate parks are still well attended and many families have requested better facilities for their children. There is a chronic lack of public toilets across the Deagon Ward and SEF allocations cannot come close to funding them in the long term.

- Improving the water quality of Cabbage Tree Creek and implement recommendations of the "Cabbage Tree Creek Recreational Waters Investigation Final Report" – as well as management plans for local lagoons and wetlands. There is persistently high levels of enterococci in Cabbage Tree Creek and the specific causes remain largely unknown. More investigation needs to occur rather than simply referring to a 10 year old report.
  - a) Improve warnings for the public when enterococci levels are high. Better signage and alerts need to be rolled out and follow up testing when levels spike to ascertain when levels are safe again.
  - b) Work with the Department of Environment and Science, CSIRO and Urban Utilities to address ongoing water quality issues. Funding will be required to carry out further trace testing and actions.

- Develop a pedestrian safety plan for the Sandgate shopping village. We need more raised pedestrian crossings, a redesign of the roads around Memorial Park and widening the footpaths in Third, Fourth and Fifth Avenues to make pedestrian boulevards connecting the foreshore to Brighton Road. Raised shared platforms have proven to be very successful at Redcliffe in making the area safe for all users.
  - a) I note the funding for the pedestrian crossing upgrades on Brighton Road has been delayed again?
- Dramatic increase in capital works for footpath repairs and construction. SEF funding cannot keep up with the backlog of work. There is a worrying trend for Council Officers now seeking funding from SEF for projects that remain unfunded from Capital Works. This means there is even **LESS funding for new footpath construction.**
  - a) *I have been informed that projects for SEF are being indexed yearly by Construction Branch.*
- Intersection upgrade to Loftus/ Barclay/ Adams Street Deagon intersection and improve road safety in that neighbourhood
- Signalise intersection of Groth and Zillmere Roads, Zillmere
- Signalise intersection of Bilsen and Pritchard Roads, Geebung
- Signalise intersection at Brighton Terrace / Wakefield Street / Ninth Ave
- Widen the intersection of Roghan Road and Church Road to allow filtered turn movements.
- Resurface Scott Street Deagon as a stand alone project. This project was identified a decade ago as a priority.
- Introduce annual funding for maintenance of the vegetation on the Shorncliffe Escarpment in accordance with the Shorncliffe Escarpment Plan developed in partnership with the community. Following consultation on the Shorncliffe Escarpment Plan, it was clear that not enough funding is allocated to ongoing maintenance of the escarpment's vegetation. If this cannot be done out of parks maintenance then a specific allocation must be made.
- Continue annual funding of local Festivals including Bluewater, Einbunpin, Christmas in Sandgate and provide support for new festivals like the Geebung Street Party and Sandgate Youth Festival.
- Continuation of the community grants program including the localised LMCF program and put in place new guidelines and delegations to ensure it can return to previous levels of funding. If a system similar to the Suburban Enhancement Fund is put in place, higher levels of funding can be allocated to each Ward's LMCF. This is much needed.
- Increase the funding allocated to the Pathways out of Homelessness Grants to help deal with Brisbane's growing homelessness crisis. These grants are invaluable to community organisations. **These should be lifted to \$5million a year. A one off donation of \$1m to Emmanuel City Mission is not sufficient.**
- Fund heating and improved accessibility of the 50m pool at the Sandgate Aquatic Centre
- Boost the staff levels and funding for equipment in the mosquito spraying team.

- Fund upgrades identified in the Deagon Sports precinct plan, starting with parking to allow the clubs to grow and host more events.
- Fund additional staff across Sandgate and Zillmere Libraries (there is currently one team leader across both libraries).
  - a) The restructure of libraries and funding cuts have put enormous stress of staff and resulted in less services for the community. We should be seeing more investment in Libraries, not less.
  - b) Cuts to the First Five forever program should be reversed.

Council staff continue to say to me that their workloads are increasing and there is constant uncertainty around restructures, as permanent, full-time staff exit Council and are not replaced. Some teams lose staff to leave and are not backfilled, others lose staff to resignation, and those people are not replaced. But as you are aware, more people call Brisbane home, and the workload increases.

The stress this places on Council staff is extraordinary and they feel like they have to do the work of two people at once, while being paid just one wage. This is deeply unfair and impacts on the service Council delivers to the people of Brisbane.

I reiterate my call for an organisation-wide review of contracting. We have seen increased use of labour-hire staff and contracting out of basic services that can be performed by Council. We have also seen the failure of long-term contracting that doesn't meet the needs of the people of Brisbane.

Council's waste contract has left a lot to be desired. I warned you 12 months ago that delays to bin collections were increasing. We have since found out that missed bin collections has risen by over 300% in some instances. This is not acceptable. What is also not acceptable is buck passing. I've been advised that you haven't personally met with, nor corresponded with the contractor, Veolia.

The roll out of green bins was touted as a way to avoid the LNP State Government's bin tax, however we have seen continued costs to ratepayers not just for this bin tax, but also for the green bins themselves, through rates increases. It's clear just garden waste collection will not provide enough organic waste diversion from landfill. You said the rollout of your green bins would help avoid \$600m in waste fees, but I believe currently, we are far from that goal.

As you will be aware, organic recycling is much more than composting now, it's also about clean energy through anerobic digestion, creating biogas. The amount of waste generated in Brisbane could go a long way to help transition us away from fossil fuels. There is a biofuel generator in Australia producing 2MW of power using 35,000 tonnes of organic waste a year. Brisbane City Council could power thousands of homes, or Council itself. You recently lost Council's carbon neutral certification. FOGO is not like buying a carbon credit, its direct action to address waste and climate change.

You know better than most, the deterioration of the Story Bridge. You were warned about it 10 years ago. The Business Case must be done with haste so Council can get a funding commitment out of the LNP State Government. So far, your advocacy has resulted in the Premier, Deputy Premier, Transport Minister and Treasurer to all say that it's a Council problem to fix. This is not an acceptable outcome for the people of Brisbane, given the enormous cost expected to fix it.

The last year has seen a significant number of planning scheme changes initiated. Labor Councillors have supported this work, but as you know have advocated for more action from your Administration on supporting the building of affordable housing.

More research is becoming available which casts doubt on your mantra of 'supply, supply, supply' as the silver bullet for addressing housing affordability. In many cities around the world, market driven supply has resulted in increasing housing stress for low-income earners, while benefiting the rich. Here in Australia, we have seen more building activity trend towards high yield, high price product, leaving the only affordable housing supply (not even social housing) being delivered with government support.

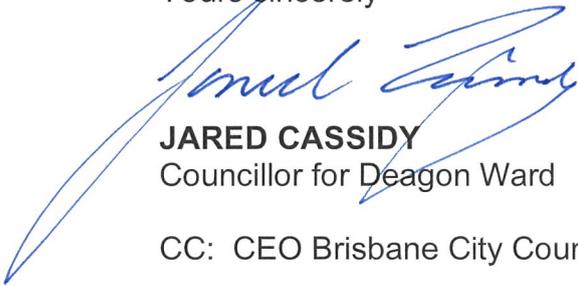
You previously said you wanted to start a trial of inclusionary zoning and then went on to say it wouldn't work before it was even tried.

Brisbane has become the most expensive city in Australia for housing. This is a shocking legacy for your Council and I implore you to work to find innovative solutions to this problem. This will require more work with community housing providers, peak organisations and the community, in addition to the development industry.

You'll note again much of what I've included here is very familiar to last year, because so many of the local projects and big issues facing Brisbane go unanswered. Council budgets should be about people and communities, not just glossy pages of big projects, that inevitably disappear. I know this submission is not something that can be implemented in a single year, but what we are desperate for is proactive planning of community investment, that's communicated with the people of Brisbane.

Thank you for considering my community's requests for funding for the 2026/27 Council Budget.

Yours sincerely



**JARED CASSIDY**  
Councillor for Deagon Ward

CC: CEO Brisbane City Council