



BUDGET 2023/24



MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

This is my first Budget as Mayor and my Councillors and I are proud to present a balanced Budget that continues to deliver essential services and enhance the liveability of our region, without impacting on our future financial sustainability.

As Mayor, I am committed to ensuring that Council's financial decisions reflect the needs and priorities of our Whitsunday community. Which is why our priority for this budget has been to maintain essential services with minimal rate rises for our residents.

We understand the financial pressures faced by many families and businesses within our region and that every dollar matters to our residents. We have taken this into account, and we have worked diligently to develop a budget that strikes a balance between providing and retaining quality services whilst minimizing the burden on our ratepayers.

Inflation to March this year sits at 6.3 per cent which has had a huge impact on the cost of living for our community and a huge impact on the cost of running business as usual for Council.

In many ways, we are no different to our residents and business owners who have been forced to review their budgets for their households and businesses due to inflation and these rising costs, basically we are all now trying to do more with less.

Which is why I am pleased to announce that, even against the backdrop of these rising costs, we have been able to keep the rate rise to a minimum with an average increase in general rates for residential owner occupiers of 2 per cent.

I am also proud to say that Council will continue to provide one of the most generous pensioner rates concessions in Queensland. Ratepayers experiencing financial hardship may seek assistance under Council's Rate Relief due to Hardship Policy.

Asset management remains a key focus for Council. By looking after our assets, we are looking after our community and ensuring that Council can continue to deliver the services for future generations.

While this is a back-to-basics budget, we have not compromised on our commitment to long-term planning and investment in our region's future. We have carefully allocated funds for strategic projects that will drive service delivery, economic growth, foster innovation, and create new opportunities for our residents.

Importantly, our \$151 million operating budget ensures we maintain sound financial management through an operating surplus of just over \$300,000.

Council has reduced costs where we can, so we can spend where we must, to maintain services to our community. Every capital project approved has been prioritised through practical and proactive asset management and project planning, when we better plan and manage whole of life costs, we maximise the life and value of our assets, which saves money and ensures our infrastructure remains sound and delivers sustainable service for the future.

In preparing the 2023/24 back to basics budget, Councillors undertook a series of workshops to review and revise what is a very complex budget process to ensure we were getting best value outcomes.

Former major catalyst projects like the Shute Harbour Marine Terminal, Flagstaff Hill Cultural and Conference Centre and the Proserpine Entertainment Centre are now operating so financial management and asset management is a focus going forward to support our long-term financial sustainability.

Our region's water and sewer plants have recently had major upgrades, while waste and recycling facilities are a focus for this budget so we can effectively and sustainably manage waste to landfill. To ensure the continued delivery of essential services to the community there will be small increases in the charges for water, sewerage, and waste services.

With a 2023/24 Capital Expenditure and Remediation Program of \$52.5 million, Council will continue investment into major infrastructure for water supply, sewerage, sealed and unsealed roads, drainage, parks, gardens, and community facilities.

In keeping with Council's procurement policy that provides preference for locally based businesses, much of this money will be spent within region creating a strong local job and economic stimulus.

Highlights of Council's 2023/24 capital works program include commencing construction on a new \$3.5 million waste cell at Kelsey Creek, \$2.4 million towards upgrading infrastructure at our regional airports including our award-winning Whitsunday Coast Airport, \$11.4 million on stormwater drainage, roads and footpath infrastructure which includes, Stage 2 of the Bicentennial Walkway, gravel road re-sheeting on our unsealed network, upgrading the Edgecumbe Heights walking track and the Choose Collinsville Main Street upgrade, a new pump track and improvements to the Collinsville swimming pool.

Importantly with an ongoing commitment to debt reduction, almost \$6 million has been allocated to reduce our current loans, meaning Council will end the next financial year with a debt of less than \$64 million for an asset base of \$1.2 billion.

We are keen to seek opportunities to partner with our community, industry, small business, and all tiers of government to ensure that the region remains a great place to live, work and play.

As Mayor, I have worked hard to build strong relationships with both our Federal and State Governments. I will continue to build on these relationships with a strong focus on advocacy for our community and region to ensure the Whitsundays is kept in the hearts and minds of our political leaders when it comes to funding.

I would like to thank all the Councillors for the hard work that you have done in delivering a responsible budget for our residents.

I also want to acknowledge the invaluable input we received from our community through consultations and feedback. Your insights have played a crucial role in informing our decisions and ensuring that our budget aligns with the needs and aspirations of our residents.

As we move forward with this budget, I assure you that transparency, accountability, and responsible financial management will remain at the core of our decision-making process. We will continue to listen to your feedback, engage with our community, and adapt our plans to best serve our residents.

I acknowledge the terrific work of our dedicated Council staff, especially the Finance Team. I look forward to working with my fellow Councillors, the CEO and our Executive Leadership Team in delivering the 2023/24 Whitsunday Regional Council back to basics budget for our community.

Together, we build a stronger, more resilient, and vibrant region for generations to come.

Mayor Julie Hall



INVESTING IN OUR COMMUNITY

How do we invest in the our community to deliver current services and maintain assets to ensure services can continue to be delivered in future years? Your rates account for 67 percent of our total operating revenue with the remainder from fees & charges, grants and subsidies.



\$9.3M Waste & Recycling

On average in 2022/23:
Kerbside waste - 9195 tonnes collected
Kerbside Recycling - 1510 tonnes sent to materials recycling facility
Greenwaste - 8782 tonnes processed
Waste - 46,958 tonnes landfilled



\$30M Water & Sewerage

8 water & sewerage treatment plants
86 sewerage pump stations
838Kms water & sewer mains
144Kms of stormwater drainage
Over 25,000 water & sewer connections



\$2M Economic Development & Tourism

Funding support for Tourism Whitsundays, Bowen Tourism & Business and GW3 for regional & economic development.



\$3.5M Aquatic Facilities

3 regional swimming pools
Airlie Beach lagoon
3 water parks
Free entry to all facilities



\$33.7M Roads, Footpaths & Building Maintenance

1210Kms of unsealed roads
580Kms of sealed roads
117Kms of footpaths
43 Bridges
392 commercial, corporate & civic buildings



\$8.2M Planning, Regulatory & Climate

Adaptation and mitigation projects to prepare our region for climate change.
Town planning to ensure sustainable development. Regulating compliance with state & council laws.



\$9.2M Libraries, Customer & Community Services

4 regional libraries with free membership
16,776 library members
69,231 resources including 1 pop-up mobile library
56 community centres & facilities



\$9.2M Parks & Recreation

121 parks and open spaces (530HA)
234 pieces of playground equipment
4097 pieces of park furniture
35 pieces of exercise equipment
7 sport & recreation facilities



\$1.8M Community Events & Grants

Our community grants program provides financial support to enable local sport, arts, non-for-profit groups and events to reach their goals.



\$26.9M Administration & Corporate Services

Ensuring efficient management of internal services across the organisation, its finances and Council's property and fleet.



\$17.4M Ports & Quarry

Whitsunday Coast Airport
Bowen, Collinsville & Mt Coolon Aerodromes
Shute Harbour Marine Terminal
Foxdale Quarry

DID YOU KNOW?

- We have a 30% pensioner concession on rates & charges (capped at \$350). Last year this amounted to \$717k.
- In 2022/23 we gave \$1.33M in sponsorships, grants and donations across the region!



BUDGET AT A GLANCE

Statement of Comprehensive Income

| | \$'000 |
|-------------------------|--------------|
| Operating Revenue | 151,564 |
| Operating Expenses | 151,236 |
| Operating Result | 328 |
| Capital Revenue | 7,224 |
| Capital Expenses | 5,344 |
| Net Result | 2,208 |

Financial Position

| | \$'000 |
|-----------------------------|------------------|
| Current Assets | 98,449 |
| Non-Current Asset | 1,221,744 |
| Total Assets | 1,320,193 |
| Current Liabilities | 35,426 |
| Non-Current Liabilities | 77,037 |
| Total Liabilities | 112,463 |
| Net Community Assets | 1,207,730 |

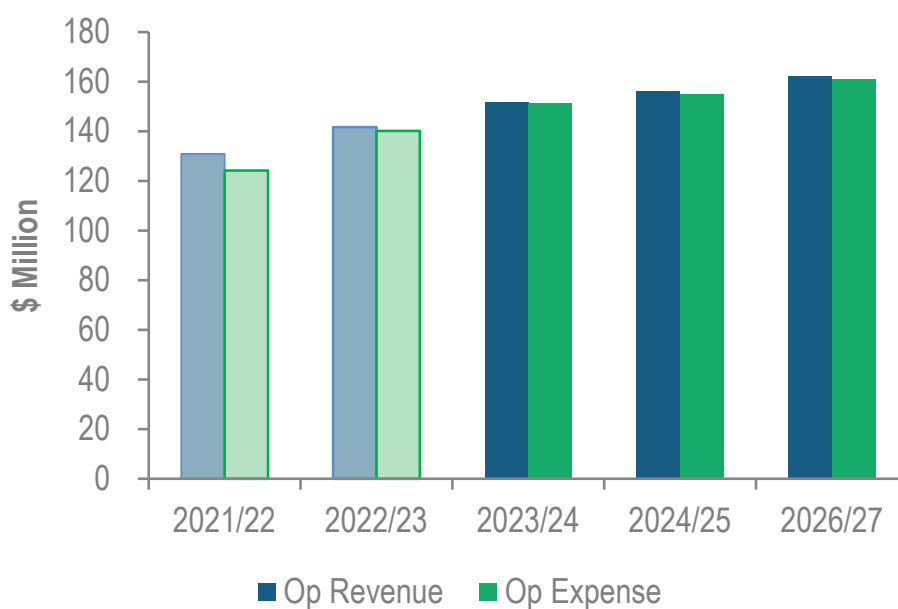
Capital Expenditure

| | \$'000 |
|---|--------|
| Capital Works Program (*excluding waste remediation) | 51,637 |
| Repayment of Borrowings | 5,674 |

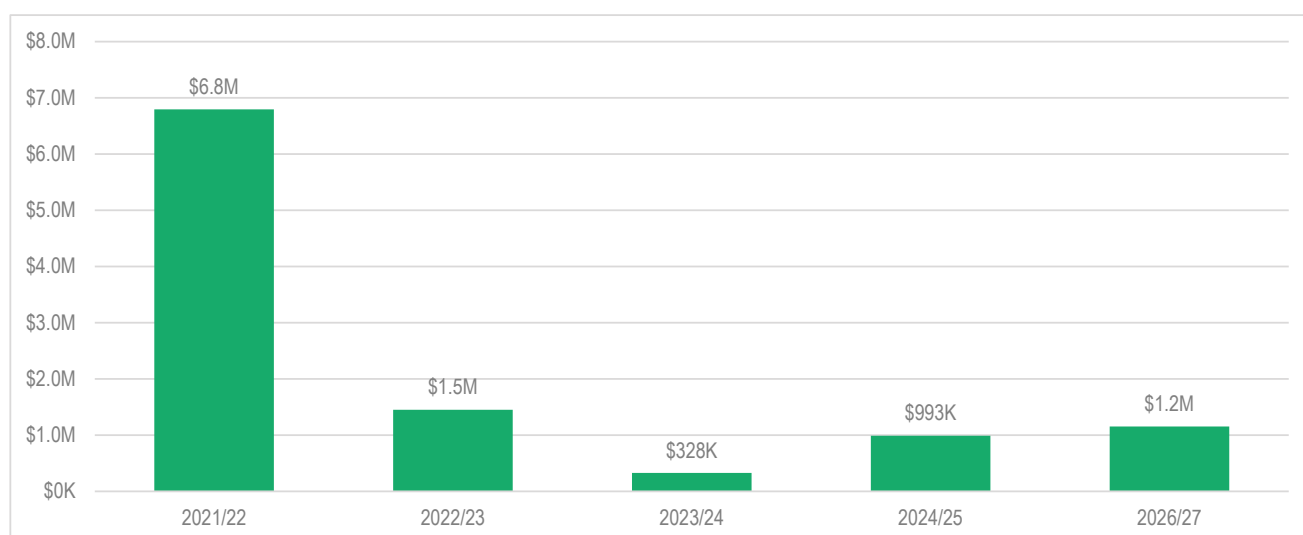
Borrowings

| | \$'000 |
|---|--------|
| Outstanding Borrowings (Start of Year) | 68,907 |
| Borrowings per Assessment \$ | 3,311 |

FINANCIAL SUMMARY - OPERATING BUDGET



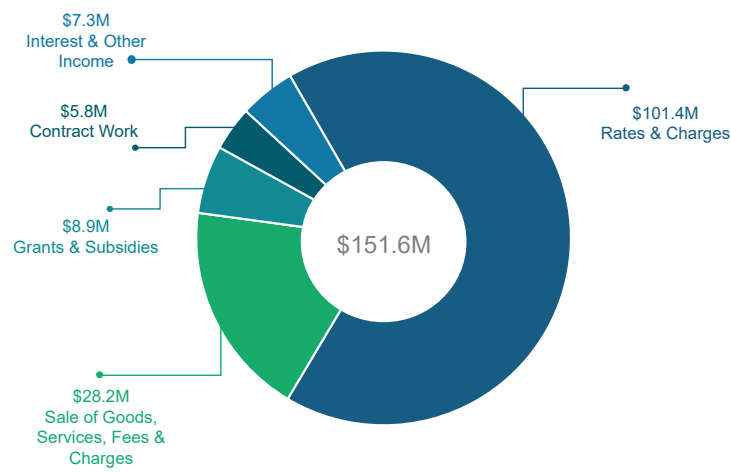
Net Operating Result



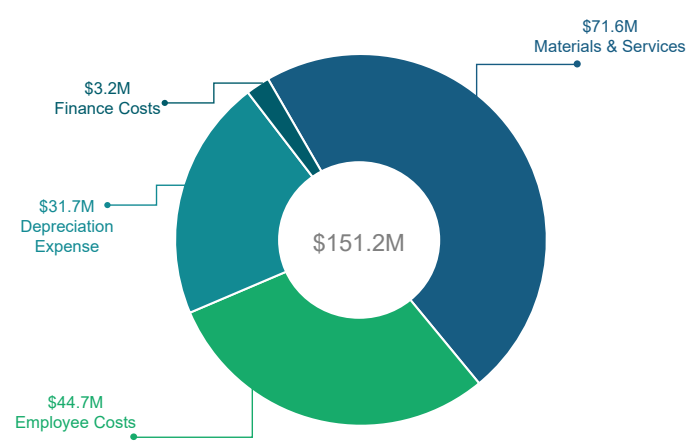


OPERATING BUDGET BY CATEGORY

2023/24 Budgeted Revenue Sources
Breakdown by Category

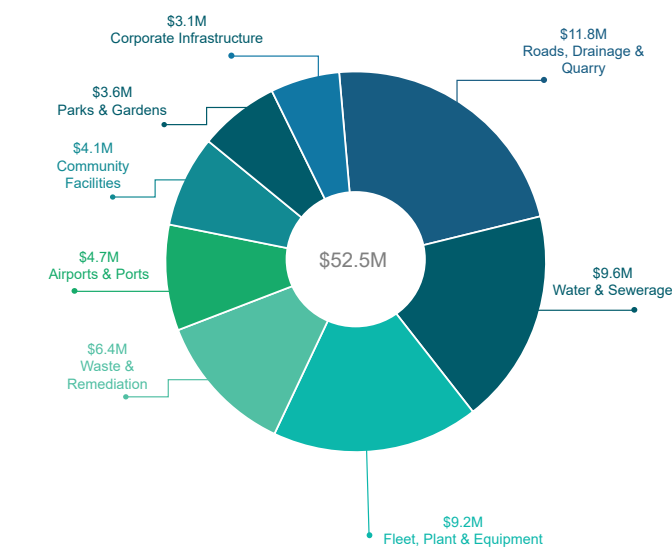


2023/24 Budgeted Expenditure
Breakdown by Category

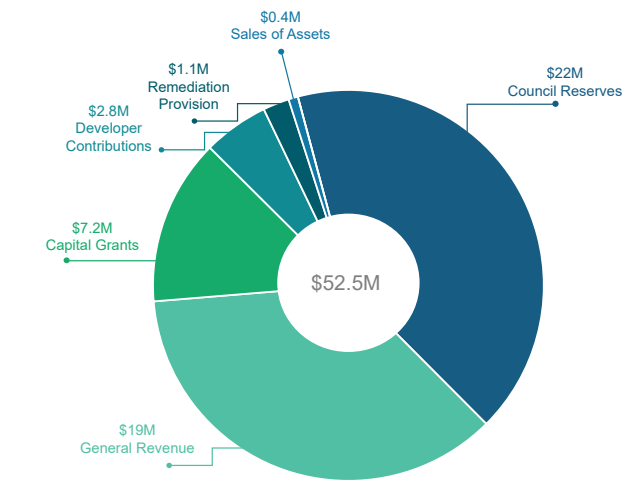


2023/24 CAPITAL BUDGET & REMEDIATION WORKS

Breakdown by Asset Class

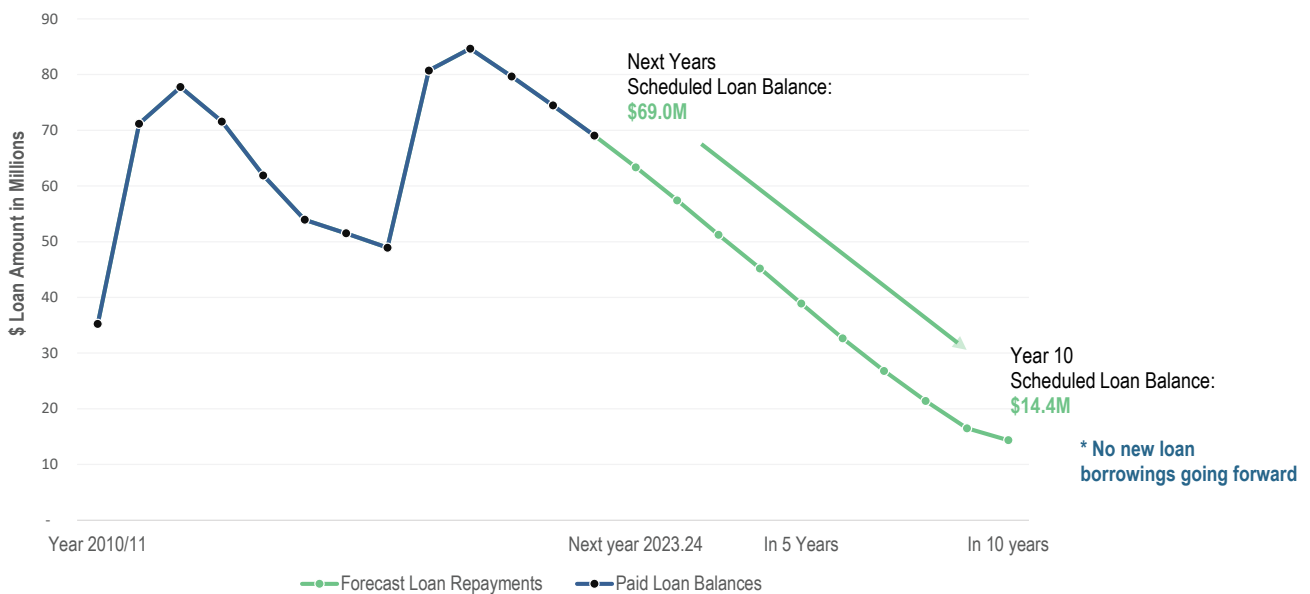


Breakdown by Funding Source



HISTORICAL & FORECAST LOANS

10 Year Forecast Balances



Long Term Sustainability Ratios

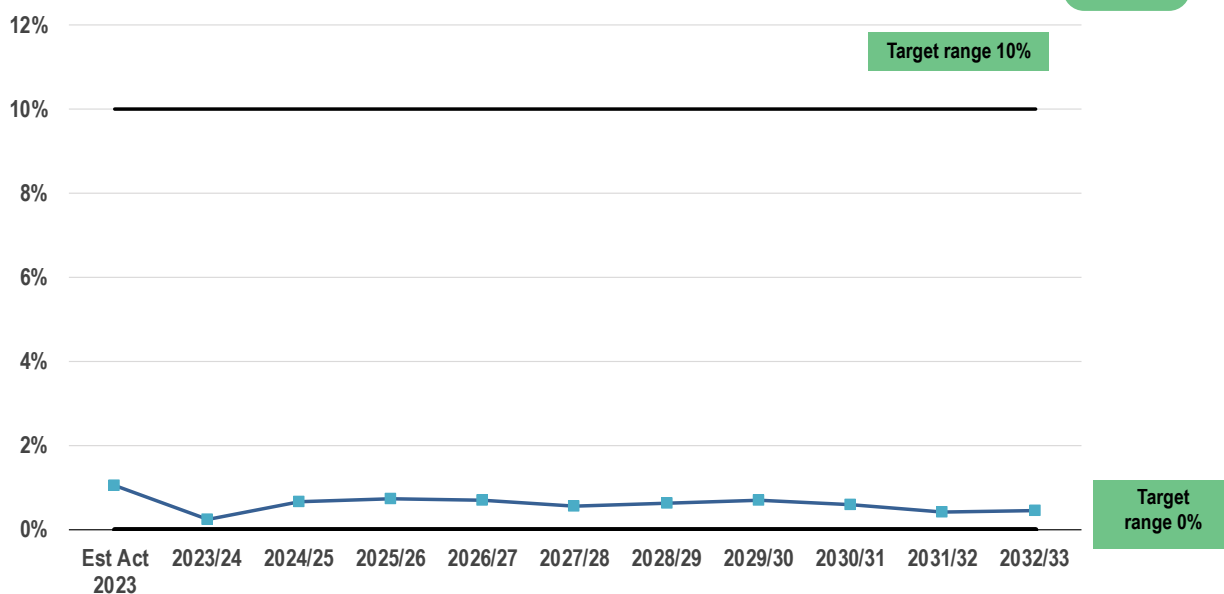
| | Est Act 2023 | 2023/24 | 2024/25 | 2025/26 | 2026/27 | 2027/28 | 2028/29 | 2029/30 | 2030/31 | 2031/32 | 2032/33 |
|--|--------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Operating Surplus Ratio (Greater than 0%) | 1.03% | 0.22% | 0.64% | 0.71% | 0.68% | 0.54% | 0.61% | 0.70% | 0.58% | 0.40% | 0.44% |
| Asset Sustainability Ratio (Greater than 80%) | 111% | 92% | 83% | 90% | 79% | 79% | 83% | 81% | 84% | 68% | 80% |
| Net Financial Liabilities Ratio (Less than 60%) | 0.2% | 9.2% | 12.6% | 11.6% | 5.0% | 0.3% | -3.7% | -8.8% | -14.0% | -19.0% | -22.4% |
| Interest Coverage Ratio (Less than 5%) | -1% | -1% | -1% | -2% | -2% | -2% | -2% | -2% | -2% | -2% | -2% |

All ratios are within set parameters for the Budget.

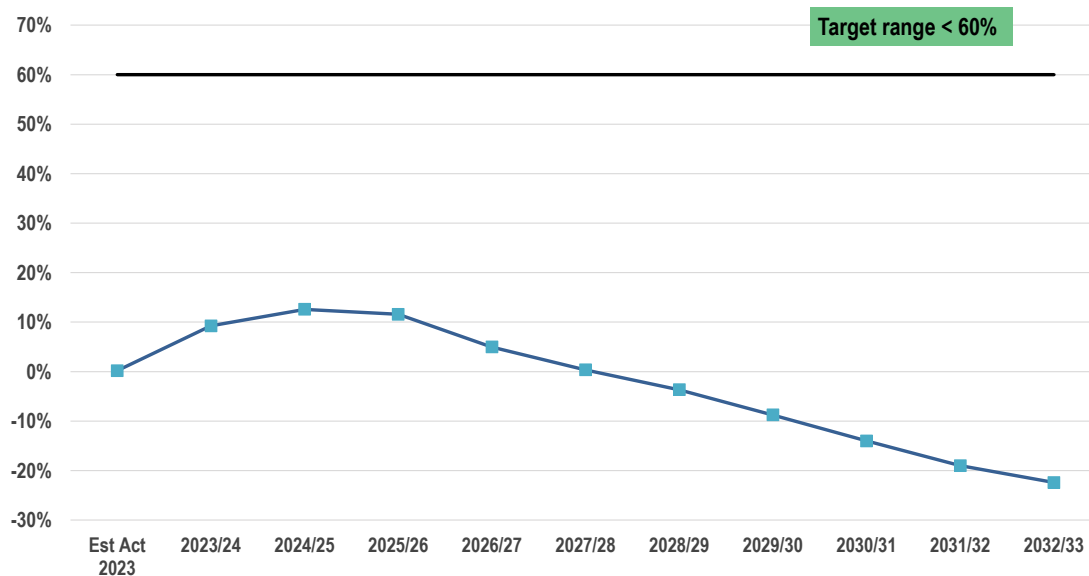
FINANCIAL GRAPHS

All financial ratios are within target ranges set by the State Government.

Operating Surplus



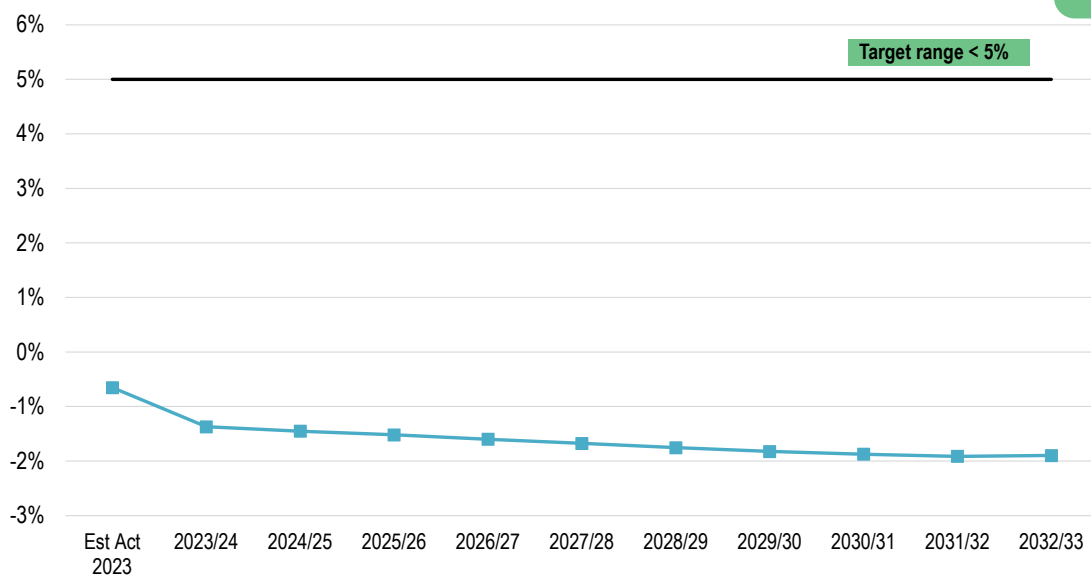
Net Financial Liabilities





FINANCIAL GRAPHS

Interest Coverage



Asset Sustainability

