



Upper
Glasgow
Council

ANNUAL REPORT

UPPER GLASGOW
COUNCIL

2024-2025



A message from Mayor Susie O'Neill and General Manager / CEO Jonah Lomu

We are pleased to present Upper Glasgow Council's Annual Report for 2024/25, marking the final chapter in our reporting against the Council Plan 2021–2025. This report highlights the progress we have made over the past year and celebrates the achievements delivered throughout the life of the Plan.

Acknowledging Our Shared Success

As we reflect on this final year, we are proud of what has been achieved in partnership across our organisation, community organisations, local businesses, volunteers, contractors, and the wider community. The accomplishments highlighted in these pages are a true testament to the dedication, collaboration, and resilience of our Council and staff.

Delivering Projects with Impact

Over the past year, we have invested \$50 million in capital works projects, services, and community initiatives that are making a real difference to how people live, work, and play in our local government area. Upper Glasgow is experiencing a period of significant transformation, and we are focused on delivering key Council projects that create lasting benefits for residents and visitors.

From upgrades to community facilities, parks, and open spaces, to improvements in transport and road infrastructure, these projects are enhancing quality of life across Upper Glasgow. Some highlights include:

- Creation of new green open parkland by revitalising an unused carpark, providing additional areas for the community to connect.
- Enhanced sports and recreational experiences through upgrades to local ovals and sports fields, as well as improvements to lighting and amenities.
- Improved access to services with the construction of new and temporary parking facilities.
- Ongoing upgrades to local play spaces, supporting families and children throughout the community.
- Road safety improvements through resurfacing and reconstruction of local roads and laneways.
- Increased urban greenery and shade by planting thousands of trees as part of Council's street and tree planting programs.
- Engagement of more than half a million people through Council-led arts and cultural programs.

Putting Customers First

We are committed to delivering a better experience for our community by making it quicker and easier to interact with Council. Improvements to our booking systems, telephone system, and website are making it easier for people to engage with us. Over the past year, we responded to thousands of reports submitted through digital platforms, reinforcing our ongoing commitment to being responsive and community-focused.

Shaping the Future Together

The contribution from the community throughout 2024/25 was invaluable, and we encourage everyone to take part in future projects to share their ideas and help shape a stronger, more vibrant, and sustainable future for Upper Glasgow. We would like to thank our Councillors for their leadership, our staff for their dedication, and our community members for their trust and involvement. Together, we are delivering on our commitments and building a stronger future for Upper Glasgow.











Mayor
Susie O'Neill



General Manager / CEO
Jonah Lomu

At Upper Glasgow Council, we believe that a strong community starts with meaningful connections. Our mission is to create spaces that bring people together, foster collaboration, and create opportunities that allow every resident to thrive. Through transparent governance, inclusive programs, and sustainable development, we are committed to shaping a future where everyone feels valued and engaged. Together, we are building more than infrastructure—we are building trust, resilience, and a sense of belonging for generations to come.

Fast facts

<p>Population estimates 74,342</p> 	<p>Median age</p> <p>39</p>	<p>Birth notifications received 240</p> 
<p>Attendance at Festivals and Events 57,210</p> 	<p>Number of Library loans 120,102</p> 	<p>Visits to Leisure Centre and Pool 524,120</p> 
<p>Trees planted by Council 10,850</p> 	<p>Planning application decisions made 320</p> 	<p>Green waste and recyclables collected 8t</p> 



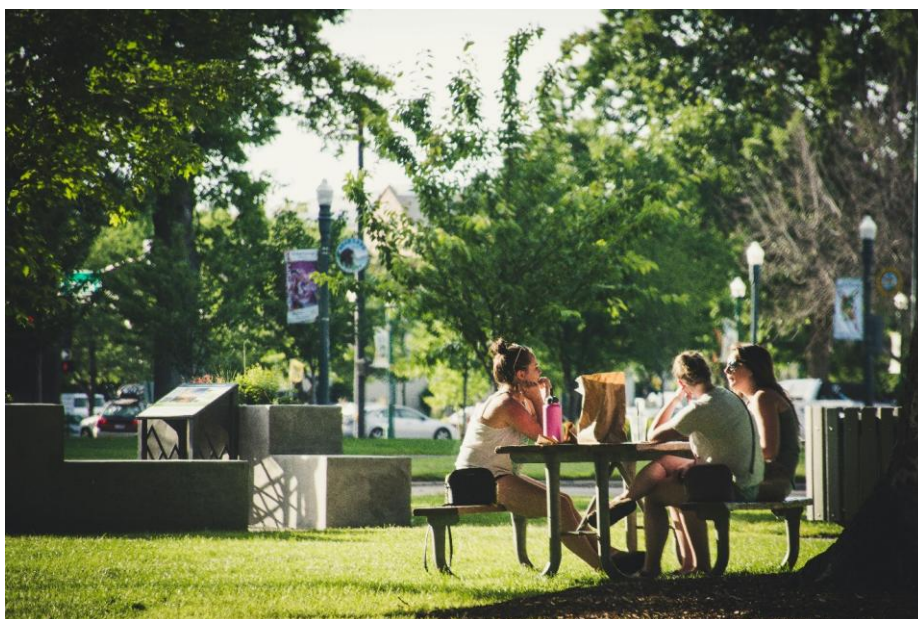
Our year in review: Capital works highlights

New Green Parkland at Perkins Street Brings Community Together

A once-disused car park at Perkins Street, McKeon South has been transformed into vibrant green open parkland, breathing new life into the area and providing much-needed space for the community to connect. This innovative conversion reflects a growing trend in cities to reclaim underutilised urban spaces and turn them into welcoming environments for people of all ages.

The new parkland offers a fresh landscape where residents can gather, relax, and enjoy outdoor activities. Importantly, it has become a popular spot for local children, who use the space respectfully after school. Instead of heading straight home or lingering in less suitable areas, kids now have a safe, green environment to play, socialise, and unwind at the end of the school day. This positive use of the parkland not only supports healthy lifestyles but also fosters a sense of community and belonging among young people.

By converting the car park into open parkland, the project has created a valuable asset for McKeon South—one that encourages connection, recreation, and respect for shared public spaces. As more cities look to repurpose car parks and other urban infrastructure, Perkins Street stands as a shining example of how thoughtful urban renewal can benefit the whole community.



Upper Glasgow Council Delivers on Vision for Welcoming, Connected Community Spaces

Upper Glasgow Council has taken significant strides in enhancing the region's sports and recreational landscape, with a series of major upgrades to local ovals and sporting facilities. These improvements—spanning Fairweather Park Oval, Thorpe South Oval, and the ongoing redevelopment of Thorpe City Oval—are not only elevating the experience for players and spectators but are also strengthening the social fabric of the wider community.

Upgrades That Make a Difference

At Fairweather Park Oval, the installation of new playing surfaces and state-of-the-art lighting has transformed the venue into a vibrant hub for both daytime and evening sports. These enhancements have broadened opportunities for local clubs and schools, while also making the oval a more attractive destination for community events and gatherings.

Meanwhile, the renewal of the Thorpe South Oval sports field has breathed new life into a cherished local asset. The revitalized field now offers improved playability and safety, ensuring that athletes of all ages and abilities can enjoy the benefits of quality recreational infrastructure.

Progress continues at Thorpe City Oval, where redevelopment efforts are set to deliver modern amenities and expanded facilities. Once complete, the oval will serve as a premier venue for regional competitions and community celebrations, further cementing its role as a focal point for local pride and participation.



A Vision for Welcoming Spaces

These projects are deeply connected to Upper Glasgow Council’s overarching vision: to create welcoming spaces that bring people together. As outlined in the Council’s latest Annual Report, the focus is on delivering capital works and community initiatives that foster connection, inclusion, and wellbeing. By investing in parks, open spaces, and sporting facilities, the Council is ensuring that residents and visitors alike have access to places where they can gather, play, and celebrate shared achievements.

Mayor Susie O’Neill and General Manager Johan Lomu emphasised that these upgrades are part of a broader commitment to “enhancing quality of life across Upper Glasgow.” The Council’s approach is rooted in partnership—with local organizations, businesses, and volunteers all playing a role in shaping spaces that reflect the community’s needs and aspirations.

Bringing the Community Together

The transformation of Fairweather Park Oval, Thorpe South Oval, and Thorpe City Oval exemplifies how targeted investment in public infrastructure can deliver lasting benefits. These venues are now more than just sports grounds—they are welcoming, inclusive spaces where friendships are forged, milestones are celebrated, and the community comes together.

As Upper Glasgow continues to grow and evolve, the Council’s vision for connected, vibrant public spaces remains at the heart of its mission—ensuring that everyone has a place to belong, participate, and thrive.



Upper Glasgow Council Invests Over \$8 Million in Local Road Renewal and Upgrades

Upper Glasgow Council has delivered a significant boost to local infrastructure, investing more than \$8 million in the renewal and upgrade of local roads as part of its 2024/25 Capital Works Program. This major investment reflects the Council's commitment to providing safer, smoother, and more resilient roads for all residents and visitors.

The 2024/25 program included the reconstruction of several key roads across the region. Works involved the replacement of road surfaces, kerb and channel, drainage improvements, and the reinstatement of nature strips and driveways between the road and footpath. These comprehensive upgrades ensure that local roads are not only safer and more durable but also enhance the overall amenity of the surrounding neighbourhoods.

Importantly, these projects were partly funded through the Federal Government's Roads to Recovery Program, which supports local governments in maintaining and improving vital road infrastructure. This partnership has enabled the Council to deliver high-quality outcomes while maximising value for the community.

The renewed and upgraded roads are already making a difference—improving safety for motorists, cyclists, and pedestrians, reducing maintenance needs, and supporting the efficient movement of people and goods throughout Upper Glasgow. The Council's ongoing investment in local infrastructure is a cornerstone of its vision to create connected, accessible, and thriving communities for years to come.



Growing a Greener Upper Glasgow: How 10,850 New Trees Are Transforming the City's Carbon Footprint

Upper Glasgow Council has made a significant commitment to sustainability and community wellbeing by planting 10,850 trees as part of its street and tree planting programs. This ambitious initiative is more than just an investment in urban aesthetics—it's a strategic move to combat climate change, improve air quality, and create a healthier, more liveable city for residents and visitors alike.

Why Urban Tree Planting Matters

Trees are nature's most effective carbon sinks. Through photosynthesis, each tree absorbs carbon dioxide (CO₂) from the atmosphere and stores it as biomass, helping to offset emissions from vehicles, buildings, and industry. In urban environments, trees also provide shade, reduce the urban heat island effect, and improve stormwater management.



The Impact: 10,850 Trees and Counting

By planting 10,850 trees, Upper Glasgow Council has dramatically increased the area's urban canopy. This expansion delivers several key benefits:

- **Carbon Sequestration:** On average, a mature tree can absorb about 22 kg (48 lbs) of CO₂ per year. With 10,850 trees, the annual carbon sequestration could reach approximately 238,700 kg (about 239 metric tons) of CO₂ each year. Over the lifetime of these trees, the cumulative impact will be even greater.
- **Improved Air Quality:** Trees filter pollutants such as nitrogen oxides, ammonia, sulphur dioxide, and particulate matter, leading to cleaner air and healthier lungs for the community.
- **Cooling and Shade:** Increased shade from trees helps lower local temperatures, reducing energy demand for cooling and making outdoor spaces more comfortable.
- **Enhanced Biodiversity:** Tree planting supports local wildlife, providing habitat and food sources for birds, insects, and other species.
- **Community Wellbeing:** Green spaces encourage outdoor activity, social connection, and mental health, making Upper Glasgow more vibrant.

A Model for Sustainable Urban Development

By prioritising urban greenery, Upper Glasgow Council is not only beautifying the city but also taking meaningful action to reduce its carbon footprint and build climate resilience.

As these trees grow, their benefits will multiply—creating lasting shade, cleaner air, and a legacy of sustainability for generations to come.



Community highlights

Celebrating Community: Upper Glasgow Council's Arts & Cultural Engagement

Upper Glasgow Council has proudly engaged over fifty thousand people through a vibrant array of arts and cultural programs, reflecting its commitment to building inclusive and meaningful connections within the community. This achievement is a testament to the Council's vision of creating spaces and opportunities where residents and visitors can come together, celebrate creativity, and share in the richness of local culture.

The Upper Glasgow Fare: A Festival of Togetherness

The Upper Glasgow Fare stands as a cornerstone event, drawing hundreds to enjoy local food, music, art, and performances. This annual celebration transforms the city into a lively hub of activity, where families, friends, and newcomers mingle and experience the best of Upper

Glasgow's creative spirit. The Fare's inclusive programming ensures that everyone—from children to seniors—finds something to enjoy, reinforcing the Council's goal of fostering a welcoming and connected community.

Book Fare: Inspiring Minds and Building Connections

The Book Fare has become a beloved tradition, attracting readers, authors, and publishers from across the region. With interactive workshops, author talks, and storytelling sessions, the event encourages literacy and lifelong learning. It also provides a platform for local writers to showcase their work, strengthening the cultural fabric of Upper Glasgow and nurturing a community of passionate readers.



Upper Glasgow Community Theatre Group: “Wicked” Performance

The Upper Glasgow Community Theatre group’s recent production of “Wicked” was a resounding success, captivating audiences and showcasing the immense talent within the community. This performance not only entertained but also brought together people of all ages and backgrounds—whether as cast, crew, or audience members. The theatre group’s inclusive approach, welcoming both seasoned performers and newcomers, exemplifies the Council’s commitment to meaningful participation and creative expression.

McKeon Exhibition: Showcasing Local Architectural Treasures

The McKeon exhibition highlighted Upper Glasgow’s architectural heritage, inviting residents to explore and appreciate the city’s unique buildings and design history. Through guided tours, interactive displays, and expert talks, the exhibition fostered pride in local achievements and encouraged dialogue about the future of urban development. This initiative aligns with the Council’s vision of celebrating local identity and inspiring community stewardship.

The Christmas Pageant: A Joyful Tradition

The annual Christmas pageant is a cherished event that brings the entire community together in celebration. Featuring festive floats, musical performances, and a parade through the heart of Upper Glasgow, the pageant creates lasting memories for families and friends. Its inclusive spirit—welcoming participants from diverse backgrounds—embodies the Council’s dedication to unity and shared joy.

Aligned to Council Vision

Each of these programs and events reflects Upper Glasgow Council’s vision of creating inclusive, meaningful connections. By investing in arts and culture, the Council not only enriches the lives of residents but also strengthens the social fabric of the city, ensuring that everyone has opportunities to participate, celebrate, and belong.

Together, these initiatives demonstrate how Council-led arts and cultural programs are shaping a vibrant, resilient, and connected Upper Glasgow—now and for generations to come.

Challenges and opportunities

Upper Glasgow Council faces significant challenges as it seeks to support vibrant, inclusive communities in suburbs such as Clareburt and Thorpe. Rising cost of living pressures are impacting residents, making it increasingly difficult for families and individuals to secure affordable housing. At the same time, the escalating cost of building materials is putting additional strain on developers' ability to deliver new housing stock at accessible price points. These economic realities threaten to widen the gap between housing supply and demand, particularly for those most in need.

Despite these obstacles, Upper Glasgow Council is well-positioned to leverage key opportunities through its strong working relationships with local developers. Trackstars Construction, in particular, has made a public commitment to collaborate with the Council on projects that prioritise both green community space and affordable housing options. This partnership model enables the Council to pursue innovative solutions that balance environmental sustainability with social equity, ensuring that new developments contribute positively to the community's wellbeing.

By working closely with developers who share its vision, Upper Glasgow Council can help shape the future of the Upper Glasgow region. The commitment from Trackstars Construction to include affordable housing and green spaces in every project sets a benchmark for responsible development. These opportunities not only address immediate housing needs but also foster long-term resilience, community connection, and environmental stewardship—core values that underpin the Council's mission for a thriving Upper Glasgow.



Financial Summary

Balance Sheet		2024	2023
		\$'000	\$'000
Assets			
Current assets			
Cash and cash equivalents		109,378	104,925
Cash held for Reserves		500,000	500,000
Trade and other receivables		15,191	15,816
Other financial assets		8,445	6,248
Total Current assets		633,014	626,989
Non-current assets			
Investments in associates, plant and equipment		44,524	39,767
Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment		1,631,886	1,545,465
Intangible assets		26,472	26,651
Total non-current assets		1,702,882	1,611,883
Total assets		2,335,896	2,238,872
Liabilities			
Current liabilities			
Trade and other payables		20,000	33,127
Trust funds and deposits			
Provisions		50,063	10,780
Total current liabilities		70,063	43,907
Non-current liabilities			
Provisions		48,107	8,674
Borrowings		25,700	27,896
Total non-current liabilities		73,807	36,570
Total liabilities		143,870	80,477
Net assets		2,192,026	2,158,395
Equity			
Accumulated surplus		1,692,026	1,658,395
Reserves		500,000	500,000
Total Equity		2,192,026	2,158,395

Statement of Cash Flows

	2024	2023
	Inflows/(Outflows)	
	\$'000	\$'000
Cash flows from operating activities		
Rates and charges	67,127	63,587
Statutory fees and fines	24,523	22,332
Grants	6,003	3,160
Interest received	47,999	47,892
Net GST refund	15,460	12,561
Employee costs	- 43,456	- 40,252
Materials and services	- 50,681	- 48,056
Trust funds and deposits repaid	- 8,437	- 6,827
Net cash provided by operating activities	58,538	54,397
Cash flows from investing activities		
Payments for property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	- 49,543	- 44,320
Payments for investments	- 1,564	- 9,095
Proceeds from sale of investments	1,517	1,370
Net cash used in investing activities	- 49,591	- 52,046
Cash flows from financing activities		
Proceeds Borrowings	2,433	3,643
Interest paid - lease liability	-332	-321
Repayment of lease liabilities	- 3,924	- 3,711
Net cash used in financing activities	- 1,823	388
Net decrease in cash and cash equivalents	7,124	1,963
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year	22,768	22,409
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the financial year	29,893	24,372



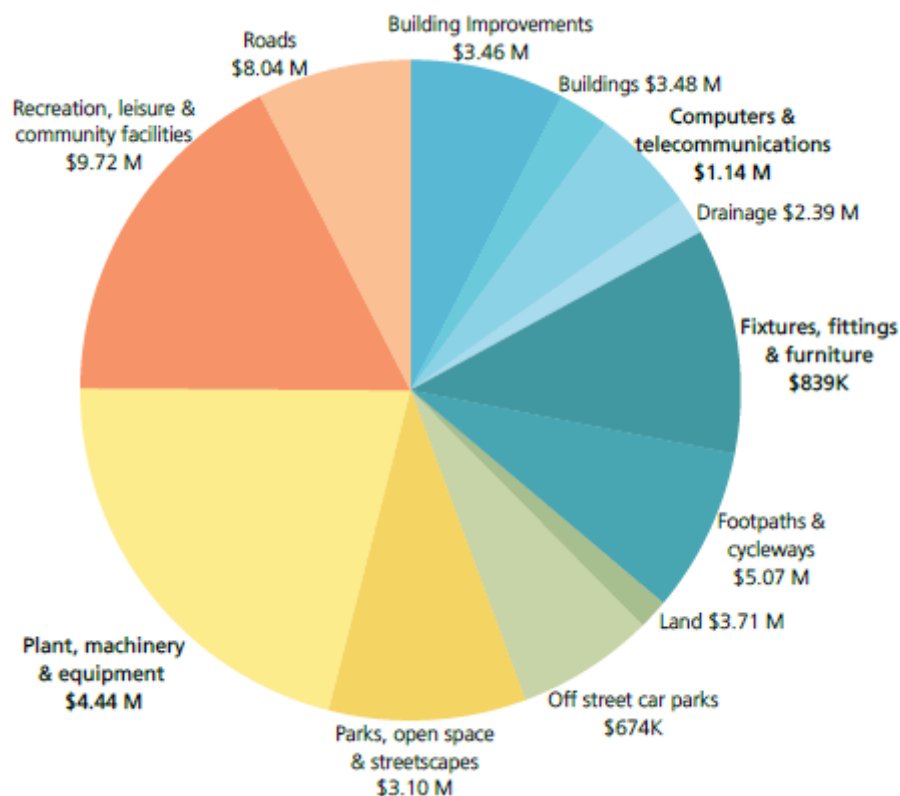
Ranking	Income Statement	AVG	AVG
		23/24	22/23
		\$ '000	
	Net operating result for the year		
	Income from continuing operations		
R	Rates and annual charges	67,542	63,721
R	User charges and fees	23,651	21,819
R	Other revenues	5,188	4,689
R	Grants and contributions provided for operating purposes	17,431	21,835
R	Grants and contributions provided for capital purposes	35,997	32,647
R	Interest and investment income	6,832	4,145
R	Other income	4,331	3,858
R	Fair value increment on investment property	-46	107
R	Reversal of revaluation decrements / impairment of infrastructure, property, plant and equipment previously expensed	12	210
R	Net share of interests in joint ventures and associates using the equity method	2	3
R	Total: Income from continuing operations	160,940	153,034
	Expenses from continuing operations	0	0
R	Employee benefits and on-costs	43,793	40,557
R	Materials and services	45,807	44,158
R	Borrowing costs	1,484	1,333
R	Depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non-financial assets	26,931	25,206
R	Other expenses	5,667	4,720
R	Fair value decrement on investment property	38	2,556
R	Net losses from the disposal of assets	2,989	1
R	Net share of interests in joint ventures and associates using the equity method	2	0
R	Total: Expenses from continuing operations	126,711	118,530
R	Discontinued operations	-50	-5
R	<i>Total: Net operating result for the year</i>	<i>34,178</i>	<i>34,499</i>
R	<i>Net operating result attributable to non-controlling interests</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>
R	<i>Net result for the year</i>	<i>34,178</i>	<i>34,499</i>
R	<i>Net operating result for the year before grants and contributions provided for capital purposes</i>	<i>-1,819</i>	<i>1,852</i>

Capital works program financial outlook

The \$50 million capital works expenditure in 2024/25 was spent across a range of asset categories:

- roads, paths and car parks – \$13.78 million
- land, buildings and building improvements – \$10.65 million
- recreation, leisure and community facilities – \$9.72 million
- plant and equipment – \$6.42 million
- parks, open space and streetscapes – \$3.10 million
- drainage – \$2.39 million

Recreation, leisure and community facilities, roads, and footpaths and cycleways expenditure were the 3 largest asset categories in 2024/25, making up 50% of the year's capital expenditure.



Long term financial plan

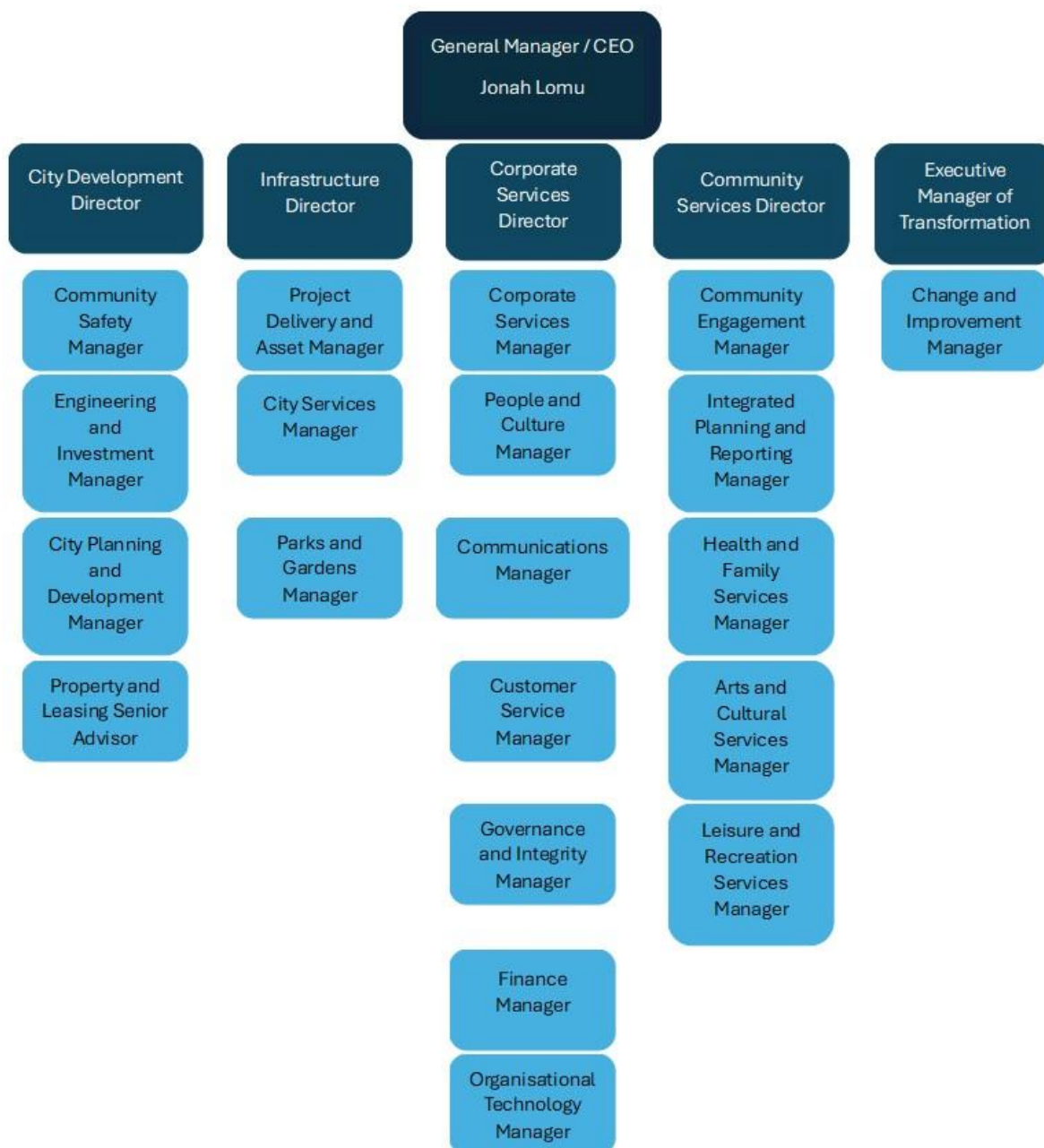
Upper Glasgow Council's long-term planning strategy is aimed at creating a sustainable fiscal environment to enable the Council to continue providing the community with high-quality services and infrastructure into the medium and long term. The financial plan is reviewed annually and published every four years to ensure ongoing transparency and accountability. This financial plan continues Council's responsible financial program and is designed to:

- Balance the community's needs while ensuring long-term financial sustainability
- Increase Council's commitment to sustainable asset renewal and maintenance of community assets
- Maintain a strong cash position for financial sustainability
- Achieve efficiencies through targeted savings and an ongoing commitment to contain costs
- Set rate and fee increases at levels that are manageable and sustainable
- Provide a framework to deliver balanced budgets, including sustainable annual underlying surpluses over the long term

Council prepared the 2025/26 Budget based on an average general rate increase of 3% in 2025/26, reflecting a fiscally responsible approach. The budget emphasises Council's continued focus on responsible governance and long-term financial sustainability, as well as investment in infrastructure, supporting the environment and economy, and providing services that foster wellbeing, connection, and opportunity for all.

Financial sustainability remains a key objective for Upper Glasgow Council. The 2025/26 Budget includes financial projections for the next four years, and Council has prepared a 10-year Financial Plan and Asset Plan to guide future decision-making. With the recent adoption of Council's new Integrated Council Plan 2025–2029, Council is currently reviewing and updating its 2025–2035 Financial Plan and Asset Plan, with adoption of the new 10-year plans scheduled for October 2025. These long-term plans provide high-level projections and outline the assumptions and strategies that underpin them, with the primary goal of maintaining financial sustainability in the medium to long term while achieving the strategic objectives outlined in the Council Plan. Council expects to deliver a surplus in the 2025/26 financial year, with the budget reflecting a continued emphasis on investing in essential services and infrastructure while planning for population change.

Upper Glasgow Council Organisation Structure



Upper Glasgow Council 2050

At Upper Glasgow Council, we believe that a strong community begins with meaningful connections. Our mission is to create spaces that bring people together, foster collaboration, and open opportunities for every resident to thrive. We are committed to shaping a future where everyone feels valued and engaged, not just through the infrastructure we build, but through the trust, resilience, and sense of belonging we nurture for generations to come.

This vision is anchored in our core values. Unity is at the heart of everything we do—we strive to foster a spirit of togetherness and collaboration among councillors, staff, and the wider community. By working towards shared goals and respecting diverse perspectives, we build consensus that benefits all residents. Good Governance guides our actions, as we uphold transparency, accountability, ethical decision-making, and compliance with legislation. These principles ensure that our operations are fair, responsible, and always in the public interest, strengthening the credibility and effectiveness of Council.

Community is our foundation. We prioritise inclusivity, engagement, and responsiveness to the needs of our residents. By listening deeply, supporting local initiatives, and fostering a sense of belonging, we ensure that every voice is heard and every neighbourhood feels connected. Our approach is to co-design services and events with the community, removing barriers so that all people can participate and thrive. We are dedicated to making decisions openly, communicating clearly, and publishing data, budgets, and performance results to continuously earn the trust of our community.

Looking ahead, our vision is realised through welcoming and connected places—parks, streets, facilities, and civic spaces that invite participation and pride. We are committed to sustainable development and climate resilience, planning growth that strengthens green spaces, reduces emissions, and builds resilience to future challenges. Through these efforts, we aim to create a vibrant, inclusive, and sustainable Upper Glasgow, where everyone has the opportunity to belong, participate, and flourish.

Strategic Pillars

- **Welcoming & Connected Places** — Design and invest in parks, streets, facilities, and civic spaces that invite participation, connection, and pride.
- **Inclusive Participation & Programs** — Codesign services and events with our community, removing barriers so all people can take part and thrive.
- **Transparent Governance & Trust** — Make decisions openly, communicate clearly, and publish data, budgets, and performance so trust is continuously earned.
- **Sustainable Development & Climate Resilience** — Plan growth that strengthens green space, reduces emissions, and builds resilience to future shocks.



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