

Councillor Couros - QoN - Operational Efficiency

Tuesday, 28 July 2026
Council

Council Member
Councillor Mary Couros

Public

Contact Officer:
Anthony Spartalis, Chief Operating Officer

QUESTION ON NOTICE

Councillor Mary Couros will ask the following Question on Notice:

'Can Administration advise:

- Whether a structured operational efficiency review has been undertaken within the past three years?
- What operational efficiencies or ongoing savings have been identified, recommended, or implemented during this term of council?
- If not, is a review currently underway, to identify opportunities to reduce Council's ongoing operating expenditure without reducing services?
- If so, what is the scope and methodology of the review?
- What further opportunities for operational efficiencies have been identified but are yet to be implemented?
- Whether the Administration has established a target for reducing ongoing operating expenditure over the next three financial years and, if so, what that target is?
- When the findings of the review will be reported to the Council?'

REPLY

1. A "structured operational efficiency review" has not been undertaken in the past three years.
2. However there is a continuous review of operational efficiency through business as usual activities such as the annual business plan and budget process, quarterly budget review, and through procurement and project management. For example in the past 12 months or so, efficiency reviews to identify potential savings have been conducted around fines enforcement and recovery, fleet management, and cleansing services (Cleansing Pilot Update: efficiencies reported to Council 25 November 2025, and being rolled out across the City in two phases during 2025/26 and 2026/27).
3. In addition, major projects such as the workforce management framework have led to system changes and substantial efficiencies (reported to Council at each project milestone). The roll out of the Salesforce CRM over the coming year is expected to realise further substantial efficiencies which will be monitored and reported to Council.
4. As has been noted on several previous occasions (most recently in the Budget workshop held 7 February 2026) Council has been informed of \$8.943 million of savings identified and implemented through operational efficiencies and ongoing savings in the current term of Council (\$0.408m in 2023/24, \$7.717m in 2024/25, and \$0.808m in 2025/26) and \$38.493m total savings identified and implemented in the past six years.

Council – Agenda – Tuesday, 28 July 2026

5. On 9 June 2026 Council resolved in part *“that Council commission an Independent Productivity, Expenditure and Efficiency Review of Council’s operations to identify any efficiencies, cost savings, reprioritisation opportunities and revenue opportunities that can be achieved without reducing critical services.”*
6. The scope of the proposed Review is currently being finalised by Council Administration, in advance of a competitive tender process to identify a suitably qualified independent consultant, with whom an appropriate methodology will be developed.
7. As indicated above, quarterly budget review processes, and ongoing procurement and project management are the mechanisms by which efficiencies and savings are routinely identified and implemented. These are reported to Council via established reporting mechanisms. In addition, as noted above program and service level reviews and initiatives yield savings as part of continuous improvement activity.
8. No specified target for reducing ongoing operating expenditure has been set for the next three financial years. The Review discussed above may set parameters to frame potential savings targets.
9. It is expected the Review discussed above will be finalised in time to inform the development of the 2027/28 Business Plan and Budget and be reported to Council immediately thereafter.

Staff time in receiving and preparing this reply	To prepare this reply in response to the question on notice took approximately 6.5 hours.
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