Dedicated to a better Brisbane

CITY PLANNING, SUBURBAN RENEWAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 3 NOVEMBER 2026
TO BE PRESENTED TO COUNCIL ON TUESDAY 10 NOVEMBER 2026

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Clause	Title	Page No
A	COMMITTEE PRESENTATION – BRISBANE ECONOMIC UPDATE	1

Dedicated to a better Brisbane

CITY PLANNING, SUBURBAN RENEWAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 3 NOVEMBER 2026
TO BE PRESENTED TO COUNCIL ON TUESDAY 10 NOVEMBER 2026

ATTENDANCE:

Councillor Adam Allan (Civic Cabinet Chair), Councillor Penny Wolff (Deputy Chair), and Councillors Jared Cassidy, Seal Chong Wah, Steven Huang and Sandy Landers.

A COMMITTEE PRESENTATION – BRISBANE ECONOMIC UPDATE

1. The Chief Strategic Partnerships Officer, City Planning and Economic Development Services, attended the meeting to provide an update on Brisbane's economy. He provided the information below.

2. The Committee was shown a chart displaying the gradual upward trend in Brisbane's annual domestic overnight and international visitors from March 2018 to June 2026, including a period of disruption from 2020 to 2022, due to the COVID-19 pandemic (the pandemic).

3. International tourism in Brisbane has largely recovered since the pandemic. Brisbane received 1.3 million visitors in the 2025-26 financial year, which represents a slight decrease of approximately 14,700 visitors compared to the year ended March 2026. Visitors from New Zealand, the United Kingdom, China, the United States of America and Japan continue to make up the majority of Brisbane's international visitor market.

4. In 2025-26, annual international expenditure reached a record of $4.2 billion, indicating that international visitors are staying longer and contributing more to Brisbane's economy. International students and holiday visitors are the main contributors of Brisbane's international visitor economy and accounted for approximately 68% of total expenditure. Tourists from China are the largest contributor to international visitor spending in Brisbane, with education being the dominant reason for this spending.

5. Domestic tourism remains Brisbane's main source of visitor volume, with 9.7 million visitors received during the period from June 2025 to June 2026. Of these visitors, 71.7% were Queensland residents and 15.5% were New South Wales residents, with visitors from Victoria and Western Australia remaining important supporting markets.

6. Annual expenditure from domestic visitors remained stable at $8.8 billion for 2025-26. Holiday visitors continued to be Brisbane's highest-spending domestic visitor group, with dining out indicated as the most common activity, highlighting the city's strong food and hospitality offering.

7. Visiting friends and relatives is the primary reason for travel among major Australian capital cities, with approximately 12.2 million domestic visitor nights recorded in Brisbane from June 2025 to June 2026. The second highest number of visitor nights is attributed to holidays, with Brisbane recording 9.4 million domestic holiday nights, indicating that Brisbane has one of the largest holiday markets among major Australian capital cities.

8. Approximately $27.2 billion was spent at businesses in Brisbane in the year ended September 2026, with daytime spending accounting for 82% and nighttime spending accounting for 18%. Brisbane's economy relies primarily on its residents, with $19.6 billion spent by residents and $7.6 billion spent by visitors during the past year. Supermarket expenditure accounted for majority of spending within Brisbane at $5.4 billion, with $4.2 billion spent on discretionary retail.

9. Brisbane's commercial office market strengthened between January and July 2026, with the vacancy rate falling from 11.8% in January to 10.2% in July, bringing it below the fringe vacancy rate of 11.6%. This improvement can be attributed to the growing demand for existing office space within Brisbane's CBD.

10. As of September 2026, total employment in Brisbane has continued to grow to approximately 811,000. The number of unemployed residents remains steady at 3.7%, compared to the national unemployment rate of 4.6%. These figures indicate that most residents who are actively seeking work are successfully obtaining employment. Despite being slightly lower than the previous year, the participation rate in September 2026 was 71.5%, which is considered elevated relative to historical levels. This high participation rate indicates that a substantial portion of Brisbane's working-age residents are either employed or actively seeking employment.

11. Brisbane's annual inflation rate increased to 4.4% in September 2026 from 4.1% in August 2026. The rise in Brisbane's inflation can be attributed to increased living costs across all major Australian capital cities. Housing inflation in Brisbane has reduced to 5.4% in September 2026 from 6.2% in August 2026, while transport inflation increased to 8.3% in the same period, primarily due to a continued rise in automotive fuel costs. Food and health costs both remain relatively stable at 3.7%.

12. Following a number of questions from the Committee, the Civic Cabinet Chair thanked the Chief Strategic Partnerships Officer for his informative presentation.

13. **RECOMMENDATION:**

THAT COUNCIL NOTE THE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THE ABOVE REPORT.

End.