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beaches
council

ATTACHMENT BOOKLET ^{v3}

NORTHERN BEACHES COUNCIL MEETING

TUESDAY 17 MARCH 2026

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Council Policy NB-P-09

Northern Beaches Council Discretionary Fund Policy

The Northern Beaches Council Discretionary Fund provides the opportunity for the Mayor and Councillors to respond to requests for financial assistance from individuals and community groups, community organisations and small local businesses involved in community projects.

The Northern Beaches Council Discretionary Fund Policy recognises that some activities and events arise which do not fall within the guidelines for other Northern Beaches Council funding programs but are still deserving of support by Council.

The Policy identifies the key responsibilities of authorisation and accountability for the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Councillors and Council staff and ensures transparency in the expenditure and reporting of funds allocated.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

1. Applicants must be individuals, community groups, community organisations or small local businesses involved in community projects who either reside on the Northern Beaches or their initiatives and services will benefit the local Northern Beaches community.
2. Applications will be considered which focus on the physical, intellectual, creative, safety, and/or social welfare of residents on the Northern Beaches.
- 4.3. Applications should primarily be for activities which take place on the Northern Beaches and benefit the Northern Beaches Community.
- 2.4. Community groups and community organisations who make an application do not have to be incorporated.
3. Applicants will only be eligible to receive funding once within a financial year and funds must be utilised within the financial year in which they are allocated.
- 4.5. Applicants cannot apply for funding if they have applied for funding or received funding under any other Northern Beaches Council funding program during the same financial year for the same or similar activity.
5. Individuals can apply for funding to assist with opportunities for education and information exchange, attend as a representative at regional, national and/or international events and activities that will further develop their education or sporting endeavours at a representative level.
 - (a) If an applicant is a member of a team and subsequent requests are received from other team members that incur combined assistance over the \$1,000 maximum payment under the policy, an amount of \$1,000 will be made to the team and not the individual applicants.
 - (b) Funding for interstate and national representation is limited to \$250 per applicant and \$500 per applicant for international representation.
 - (c) If an applicant who is selected to attend representative events as part of a team who for financial hardship reasons wishes to apply as an individual and not as part of the team's application, evidence will need to be provided demonstrating financial hardship for an application to be considered separately.
6. The Applicant must complete the Northern Beaches Discretionary Fund Application Form demonstrating their eligibility for funding under the Northern Beaches Council Discretionary Fund.

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7. The Applicant must identify the amount of funding required where possible and clearly outline the purpose for which the funding is required.

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6.8. Applicants cannot apply for funding if it is for the purpose of funding projects / programs aimed to support or promote political parties and/or candidates.

FUNDING

The amount allocated to the Fund is designated each year in the Annual Budget.

The maximum amount able to be allocated to an individual or community organisation is \$1000. (Only one payment can be made to an individual, community group, community organisation or local business within the same financial year and applicants cannot apply for funding if they have applied or received funding under any other Northern Beaches Council funding program within the same financial year for the same or similar activity).

PROCESS

1. Applications for funding under the Northern Beaches Council Discretionary Fund must be received in writing by the Council and submitted either directly to the Mayor or through a Councillor.
2. The Mayor and Councillors may put forward their own initiatives for funding under the Northern Beaches Council Discretionary Fund to an individual or group who they believe meets the eligibility criteria and, also meets with the requirements under Part 4 – Pecuniary Interests of the Northern Beaches Council Code of Conduct.
3. Applications for funding under the Northern Beaches Council Discretionary Fund will be processed by the Office of the Mayor which will be responsible for certifying that the expenditure is in accordance with the Northern Beaches Council Discretionary Fund Policy and that the funds are available within the current Budget.
4. Applications will then be submitted for consideration and approval by –
 - i. the Mayor, and
 - ii. Deputy Mayor or Councillor, and
 - iii. Chief Executive Officer or Chief Operating Officer
5. Applicants will be advised in writing of the outcome of their application.
6. Recipient and project details will be reported to the Elected Council quarterly. *(Individuals' details will not be identified in the report. The report will state 'resident' and provide the 'suburb' in which they reside to confirm they are a local resident).*
7. Where they can be separately identified, costs associated with the Mayor, and or Councillor's participation in charity events will be deducted from their individual general expenses entitlement under the *Councillor Expense & Facilities Policy* instead of the Northern Beaches Council Discretionary Fund Budget. Any costs incurred by a Councillor is publicly tabled at a Council meeting every twelve months and published on Council's website.

Scope and application

This policy applies to the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors, employees, agents and officers of the Northern Beaches Council and members of the community.

References and related documents

Local Government Act 1993 Sect 226, Sect 356 and Sect 377

Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 Sect 207 (Responsibility for Accounting Records)

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Councillor Expenses and Facilities Policy

Council Policy Framework

Community Strategic Plan

This Council policy relates to the Community Strategic Plan Outcome of: (select all that are relevant from the drop down)

- Good governance and participation - Goal 19 Our Council is transparent and trusted to make decisions that reflect the values of the community

Responsible Officer

Chief Executive Officer

Review Date

September ~~2026~~2030

Revision History

Revision	Date	Change	TRIM Ref
1	25/7/2017	Policy adopted by Council with no changes following exhibition	2017/136008
2	19/12/2017	Changes made by Council Resolution 187/17 including change of title, that councillors can apply for funding, that a third signatory be required for allocation of funds and that all funding allocated be reported to Council quarterly.	2017/136008
3	21/3/2022	Revised draft for review	2022/170140
4	27/09/2022	Outcome of Public Exhibition of the Draft Northern Beaches Council Discretionary Fund Policy	2022/588040
5	22.08.2023	Administrative amendments to Point 5of the Eligibility Criteria	2022/589186
6	19/01/2024	Policy reference number allocated as per the Council Policy Framework adopted at the November 2023 Council meeting	2022/589186
NB-P-09			
<u>7</u>	<u>18/11/2025</u>	<u>Amendments proposed to Council to go on public exhibition</u>	<u>2022/589186</u>
<u>8</u>	<u>17/03/2026</u>	<u>Outcome of exhibition reported to Council</u>	<u>2022/589186</u>

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Community and Stakeholder Engagement Report

Northern Beaches Discretionary Fund Policy (draft) – 2025 Review

Consultation period: 5 December 2025 to 1 February 2026

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1. Summary

This report outlines the outcomes of community and stakeholder engagement as part of a proposal to amend the Northern Beaches Council Discretionary Fund Policy (the Policy) to emphasise funding opportunities that support Northern Beaches residents and take place on the Northern Beaches. The proposal also looks to discontinue funding for individuals and teams pursuing private sport or social endeavours outside of the Northern Beaches.

The feedback collected during consultation indicated a high level of support for the proposed amendments to the Policy to ensure it will support and benefit Northern Beaches residents and organisations on the Northern Beaches.

Feedback also suggested Council should consider means testing applicants, more emphasis on young people and recycling programs and that no funding should be allocated for any religious affiliation.

Respondents who were not supportive of the proposal felt that funding should not be provided under the Discretionary Fund for any activities and should be directed to infrastructure and maintenance within the LGA.

1.1. Key outcomes

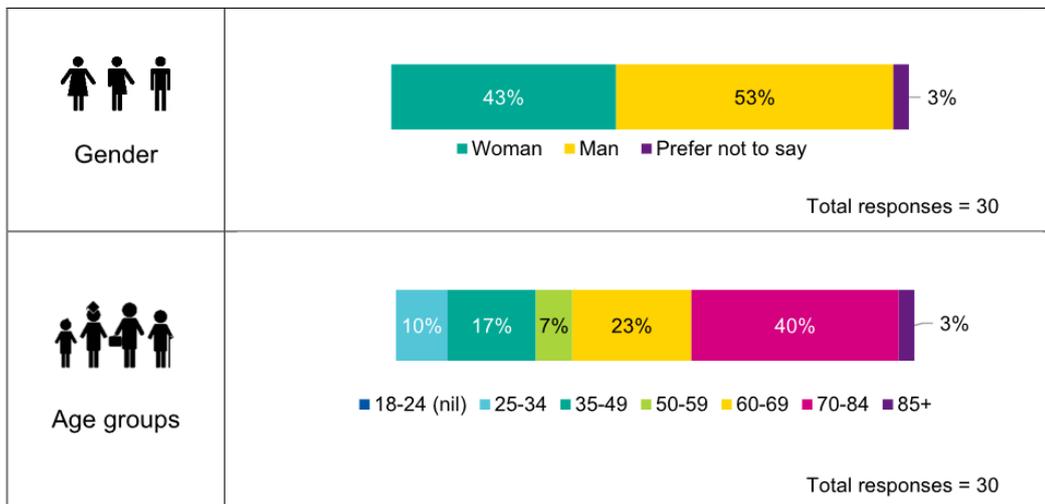
 Total unique responses	32 ¹	
 How responses were received	Submission form Written responses (email/letter)	Completions: 32 Number received: 1
 Feedback themes	Eligibility requirements Means testing	Allocation of financial support for events held on the Northern Beaches

¹ We note that while this was a survey-style feedback form, it was not a statistically representative survey, and participants opted-in to provide feedback. One respondent emailed their submission in addition to completing the online form, this has been counted as one unique submission.

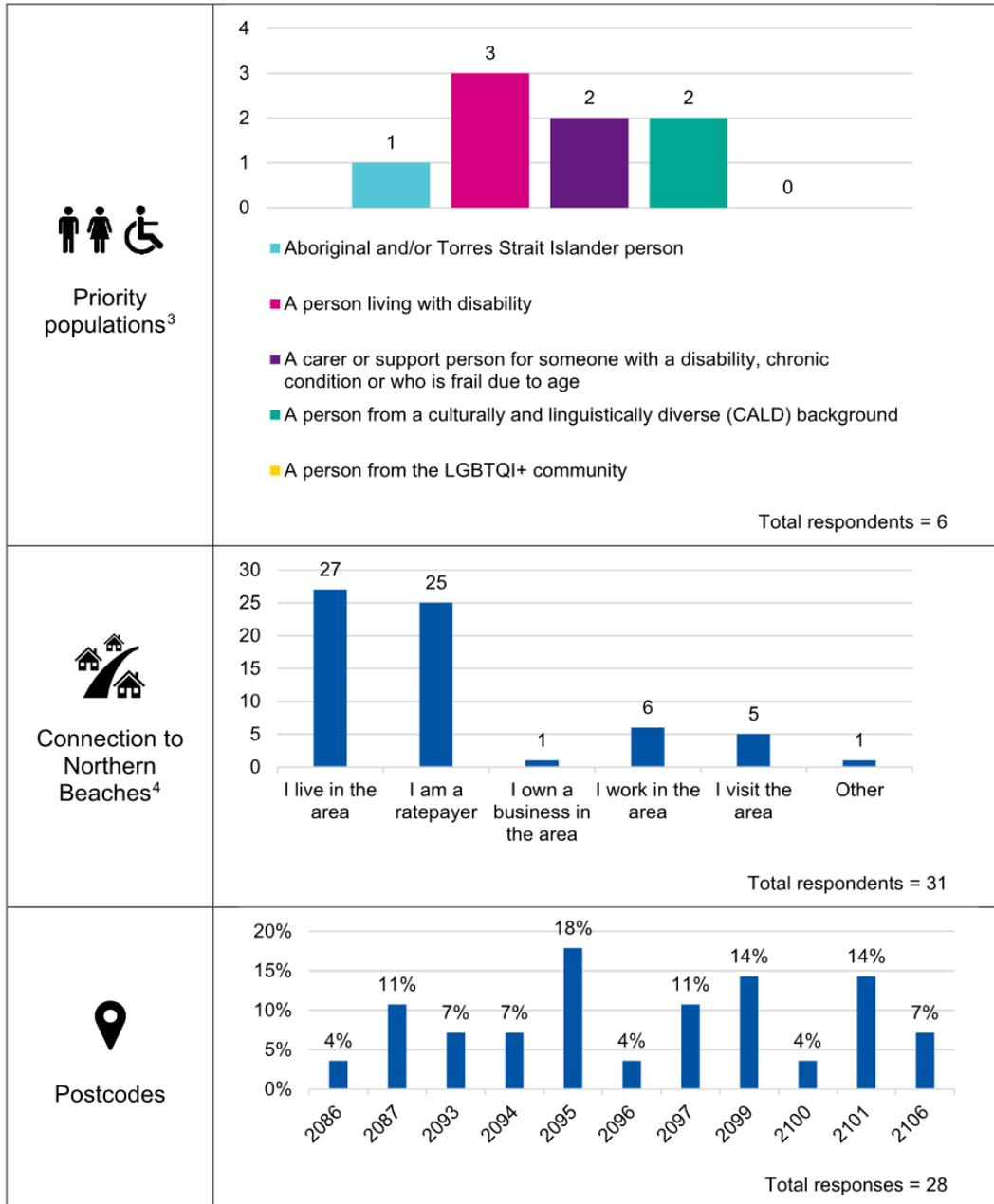
1.2. How we engaged

 Have Your Say: visitation stats	Visitors: 530	Visits: 637
 Electronic direct mail (EDM)	Community Engagement (fortnightly) newsletter: 2 editions Council (weekly) e-News: 2 editions Stakeholder email:	Approx. 20,000 subscribers Approx. 57,000 subscribers 59 recipients

1.3. Who responded²



² Demographic data was gathered by request only. The data represented only includes those respondents who provided this detail.



³ Respondents could select more than one option.
⁴ Respondents could select more than one option.

2. Background

The Northern Beaches Council Discretionary Fund Policy enables the Mayor and Councillors to provide financial assistance to individuals, community groups, organisations and small local businesses for projects that fall outside other Council funding programs but are considered by Council to be worthy of support.

At present, around 50 per cent of funding is directed to community events, while the remainder supports individuals or teams undertaking private sporting activities outside the Northern Beaches.

The draft Policy proposes amendments to the eligibility criteria to prioritise funding for activities that benefit Northern Beaches residents and are delivered within the Northern Beaches, and to cease funding for individuals and teams participating in private sporting or social endeavours at events outside the Northern Beaches.

3. Engagement objectives

Community and stakeholder engagement aimed to:

- build community and stakeholder awareness of participation activities for making submissions on the draft Policy
- provide accessible information so community and stakeholders can participate in a meaningful way
- identify community and stakeholder concerns, local knowledge and values relating to how the Discretionary Fund is managed and the changes proposed
- recognise, manage and communicate the needs and interests of community and stakeholders, including decision makers regarding the draft Policy and its application
- communicate to community and stakeholders how their input was incorporated into the planning and decision-making process with regards to adopting a revised Policy
- provide vulnerable and marginalised groups access to the engagement process.

4. Engagement approach

Community and stakeholder engagement for the review of the Northern Beaches Discretionary Fund Policy (draft) was conducted between 5 December 2025 and 1 February 2026. Engagement activities were designed to provide opportunities for the whole community and relevant stakeholders to contribute, and the methodology used is outlined below.

The engagement was planned, implemented and reported in accordance with Council's [Community Engagement Strategy](#) (2025).

A dedicated project page⁵ was established on Council's engagement platform, providing accessible, easy-to-read information about the draft Policy. The consultation was primarily promoted through Council's email newsletter (EDM) channels, with additional reach generated through organic visitation to the project page.

⁵ <https://yoursay.northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au/northern-beaches-discretionary-fund-policy-2025-review>

Feedback was captured through an online submission form embedded onto the project page.

An open-field comments box provided community members a space to share their feedback on the proposed amendments to the draft Policy they wished to contribute. Staff have conducted a qualitative review of all submissions received, identifying sentiment as part of that process.

The submission form also recorded demographic information (including postcode, age and gender) to support analysis of LGA representation. A total of 32 submissions were received. No weighting was applied to the data.

Email and written comments were also invited.

5. Findings

A review of submissions indicated strong overall support for the proposed amendments. Respondents broadly agreed that the revised Policy would more effectively direct funding towards initiatives that benefit Northern Beaches residents and are delivered within the local government area.

There were some views that the discretionary funding should be redirected to core Council responsibilities, including infrastructure maintenance, youth programs, public art, recycling initiatives and assistance for low-income ratepayers.

There were suggestions around means testing and excluding political and religious organisations from receiving funding under the Discretionary Fund.

There was a small number of submissions that raised concerns that removing this support may disadvantage young and emerging athletes, given the significant costs associated with participation and that funding supported a healthy and active lifestyle.

Table 1: Issues, change requests and other considerations

Theme	Issues, change requests and other considerations raised	Council's response
Means testing	Some respondents suggested we introduce means testing for applications.	We appreciate the request to introduce means testing however for the amounts being sought (up to \$1,000) it would not be practical to seek comprehensive personal data, particularly for community events. Other supporting and verification documentation is required as part of an application, and this could be reviewed as part of the application process.
Eligible and ineligible affiliations	Some submissions received suggested excluding funding for religious affiliations/activities.	Existing governance and probity requirements will continue to apply to the administration of the Discretionary Fund.

Theme	Issues, change requests and other considerations raised	Council's response
Mis-use of Policy	Concern was raised about potential political misuse of the Policy.	Existing governance and probity requirements will continue to apply to the administration of the Discretionary Fund.
No support for the Discretionary Fund in general	There were some views that the discretionary funding should be redirected to core Council responsibilities, including infrastructure maintenance, youth programs, public art, recycling initiatives and assistance for low-income ratepayers.	While these comments are acknowledged, the discretionary fund totals \$30,000 per annum and to redirect this funding, there would be very little impact to these programs which are already supported through other funding allocations within the Budget.
Removing funding for individuals and teams competing outside the Northern Beaches	Concerns were raised that removing this support may disadvantage young and emerging athletes, given the significant costs associated with participation. Some comments stated that our community should be proud of its strong culture of supporting a healthy and active lifestyle and should support and share the success of our elite athletes.	We acknowledge these concerns and recognise the financial pressures faced by families supporting young athletes. However, the intent of the proposed amendments is to maximise the benefit of the Discretionary Fund across the whole community.
Comments not directly related to the Fund	Comments included increased support for youth initiatives, recycling program and public art.	We note these suggestions – they are all currently funded under other program funding offered by Council.

During the consultation/exhibition, Council received a number of questions either through direct contact or within feedback received.

Table 2: Questions raised and Council's answers

Question raised in feedback	Council's answer
Can a link to the application form be included in the Policy?	The application form is available on the website through a general search on the homepage. We will also consider adding it to the list of related documents at the end of the Policy.

Document administration	
Version	1.0
Date	17 February 2026
Approval	Content provided and approved by the Office of the Mayor Responsible officer: Nicki Adams – Executive Officer
Status	Final
Notes	Community and stakeholder views contained in this report do not necessarily reflect the views of the Northern Beaches Council or indicate a commitment to a particular course of action.

Investment Policy



Council Policy-

Investment Policy NB-P-08

1 Purpose of Policy

To ensure Council maintains an investment policy that complies with the Act, the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 (LGGR) and the Ministerial Investment Order and ensures it or its representatives exercise care, diligence and skill that a prudent person would exercise in investing council funds.

2 Policy Statement

The objectives of this policy are to provide a framework for the investing of Council's funds at the most favourable return available to it at the time whilst having due consideration of risk and security for that investment type and ensuring that Council's liquidity requirements are being met.

Investments must only be made in compliance with the most current Ministerial Investment Order that has been issued by the NSW Minister for Local Government and in accordance with this Policy.

When exercising the power of investment, Council should consider, but not be limited by:

- The risk of capital or income loss or depreciation.
- The likely income return, and the timing of income return.
- The length of the term of the proposed investment.
- The liquidity and marketability of the proposed investment.
- The likelihood of inflation affecting the value of the proposed investment; and
- The costs (including commissions, fees, charges and duties payable) of making the proposed investment.
- The exposure of that investment to financial risks associated with climate change.

Preservation of capital is the principal objective of the investment portfolio. Investments are to be placed in a manner that seeks to ensure security and safeguarding the investment portfolio.

Investments are expected to achieve a market average rate of return in line with the Council's risk tolerance.

3 Principles

3.1 Investment Strategy

An Investment Strategy will run in conjunction with the Investment Policy. The Investment Strategy will be reviewed with an independent investment advisor once a year. The Strategy will outline:

- Council's cash flow expectations.
- Optimal target allocation of investment types, credit rating exposure and term to maturity exposure and
- Appropriateness of overall investment types for Council's portfolio.

3.2 Investment Advisor

Council's investment advisor must be approved by Council and licensed by the Australian

Investment Policy

Securities and Investments Commission. The advisor must be an independent person who has no actual or potential conflict of interest in relation to investment products being recommended and is free to choose the most appropriate product within the terms and conditions of the investment policy.

The independent advisor is required to provide written confirmation that they do not have any actual or potential conflicts of interest in relation to the investments they are recommending or reviewing, including that they are not receiving any commissions or other benefits in relation to the investments being recommended or reviewed.

3.3 Approved Investments

Investments are limited to those allowed by the most current Ministerial Investment Order that has been issued by the NSW Minister for Local Government. Approved investments include:

- Commonwealth/State/Territory Government security e.g., bonds
- Interest bearing deposits with, or any debentures or bonds, issued by an authorised deposit taking institution (ADI) (as defined in the Banking Act 1959 (Cwth)), but excluding subordinated debt obligations; Bills of exchange, (<200 days duration), issued and/or accepted by an authorised deposit taking institution (ADI).
- Debentures issued by NSW Local Government.
- Deposits with NSW Treasury &/or Investments in T Corp's Hour-Glass Facility; and
- Investments grandfathered under the previous Ministerial Investment Order.

3.4 Prohibited Investments

This investment policy prohibits but is not limited to any investment carried out for speculative purposes, including:

- Derivative based instruments.
- Principal only investments or securities that provide potentially nil or negative cash flow and
- Standalone securities issued that have underlying futures, options, forwards contracts and swaps of any kind.

This policy also prohibits the use of leveraging (borrowing to invest) of an investment.

3.5 Prudent Person Standard

Council has a fiduciary responsibility when investing. The investment will be managed with the care, diligence and skill that a prudent person would exercise. As trustees of public monies, officers are to manage Council's investment portfolio to safeguard the portfolio in accordance with the spirit of this Investment Policy, and not for speculative purposes.

3.6 Conflicts of Interest

Officers shall refrain from personal activities that would conflict with the proper execution and management of Council's investment portfolio. This policy requires officers to disclose any conflict of interest to the Chief Executive Officer.

Independent advisors are also required to declare that they have no actual or perceived conflicts of interest.

3.7 Environmental and Social Considerations

Where financial institutions are offering equivalent investment returns with the same credit ratings and the investment conforms with the Investment Policy then preference will be given to institutions demonstrating environmental and social responsibility.

3.8 Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee

The policy must be reviewed annually by the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee.

Investment Policy

Such review to be carried out ~~prior to~~after an annual review of the policy that is required under Clause 5.1.

3.9 Linking Investments to Underlying Liabilities

Investments should seek to maximise return whilst having regard to the timing and nature of future liabilities and Council's cash flow profile. Liquidity requirements have due regard to the timing and nature of both future liabilities and Council's cash flow requirements.

4 Guidelines

4.1 Risk Management Guidelines

Investments are expected to achieve a market average rate of return in line with Council's risk tolerance.

- **Preservation of Capital** - the requirement for preventing losses in an investment portfolio's total value.
- **Diversification** - the requirement to place investments in a broad range of products so as not to be over exposed to a particular sector of the investment market.
- **Market Risk** - the risk that the fair value or future cash flows of an investment will fluctuate due to changes in market prices.
- **Liquidity Risk** - the risk an investor is unable to redeem the investment at a fair price within a timely period.
- **Maturity Risk** - the risk relating to the length of term to maturity of the investment. The larger the term, the greater the length of exposure and risk to market volatilities; and
- **Leveraging Risk** - the magnification of an investor's risk and return that occurs when the investor takes on financial leverage through an investment product.

4.2 Credit and Maturity Guidelines

Investments are to comply with three key criteria relating to:

- **Overall Portfolio Credit Framework** - limit overall market credit exposure of the portfolio
- **Institutional Credit Framework** - limit exposure to individual institutions based on their credit ratings; and
- **Term to Maturity Framework** - limits based upon maturity of securities.

4.2.1 Overall Portfolio Credit Framework

To control the credit quality of the entire portfolio, the following credit framework limits the percentage of the portfolio exposed within the market to any particular credit rating category.

S&P Long Term Rating*	S&P Short Term Rating*	Maximum %
AAA (incl. government guaranteed deposits)	A-1+	100%
AA+		
AA		
AA-		
A+	A-1	100%
A		
A-		
BBB+	A-2	80%
BBB		
BBB-	A-3	30%
Unrated**	Unrated**	5%

Investment Policy

* or Moody's / Fitch equivalents

** Unrated Category is restricted to eligible managed funds such as the NSW Treasury Corporation Hour-Glass Facilities and ADIs covered by the government guarantee scheme.

4.2.2 Institutional Credit Framework

Exposure to an individual institution will be restricted by their credit rating so that single entity exposure is limited, as detailed in the table below:

S&P Long Term Rating*	S&P Short Term Rating*	Maximum %
AAA (incl. government guaranteed deposits)	A-1+	50%
AA+		
AA		
AA-		
A+	A-1	40%
A		
A-		
BBB+	A-2	30%
BBB		
BBB-	A-3	10%
Unrated** TCorp Funds	Unrated**	5%
Unrated*** ADIs	Unrated***	\$250,000

* or Moody's / Fitch equivalents

** Unrated TCorp Funds Category is restricted to eligible managed funds such as the NSW Treasury Corporation Hour-Glass Facilities.

*** Unrated ADIs Category is restricted to those ADIs that are under the Australian government guarantee scheme and limited to maximum \$250,000 per unrated ADI.

If any of Council's investments are downgraded such that they no longer fall within the investment policy, they will be divested as soon as practicable.

The short-term credit rating limit will apply in the case of discrepancies between short and long-term ratings.

4.2.3 Transitional Arrangements

Investments made before the date of 12 January 2011 have been deemed to have been made in compliance with this policy so long as the investments have not been subject to any restructuring or switching. These investments can continue to be held to maturity without breaching this policy or the Ministerial Investment Orders that are currently in place.

4.2.4 Term to Maturity Framework

The investment portfolio is to be invested within the following maturity constraints:

Overall Portfolio Term to Maturity Limits		
Portfolio % <1 year	Min 40%	Max 100%
Portfolio % >1 year ≤3 year	Min 0%	Max 60%
Portfolio % >3 year ≤5 year	Min 0%	Max 30%

5 Reporting Requirements

5.1 Reporting and Reviewing of Investments

Investment Policy

Documentary evidence must be held for each investment and details thereof maintained in an Investment Register. The documentary evidence must provide Council legal title to the investment.

Certificates must be obtained from the financial institutions confirming the amounts of investments held on the Council's behalf as at 30 June each year and reconciled to the Investment Register.

All investments are to be appropriately recorded in Council's financial records and reconciled at least on a monthly basis.

A monthly report will be provided to Council. The report will detail the investment portfolio in terms of performance, percentage exposure of total portfolio, maturity date and changes in market value.

By resolution Council will adopt an Investment Policy that is consistent with the Ministerial Investment Order and any guidelines issued by the Chief Executive (Local Government), Department of Premier and Cabinet from time to time.

This Investment Policy will be reviewed at least once a year or as required in the event of legislative changes. ~~The Investment Policy may also be changed as a result of other amendments that are to the advantage of Council and in the spirit of this policy. Any amendment to the Investment Policy must be by way of Council resolution.~~

5.2 Measurement

The investment return for the portfolio is to be regularly reviewed by an independent financial advisor by assessing the market value of the portfolio. The market value is to be assessed at least once a month to coincide with monthly reporting. Any changes to the market value that have not been accounted for will be brought to account on a mark-to-market basis.

5.3 Performance Benchmarks

The performance of the investment portfolio shall be measured against the industry standard Bloomberg AusBond Bank Bill Index and/or the Official Cash Rate. The performance of investments with terms greater than 2 years will also be measured against the Bloomberg AusBond Composite 2-5 year index.

6 Delegation of Authority

Authority for implementation of the Investment Policy is delegated by Council to the Chief Executive Officer in accordance with the Local Government Act 1993.

The Chief Executive Officer may in turn delegate the day-to-day management of Council's investments to the Responsible Accounting Officer or senior staff, subject to regular reviews.

Officers' delegated authority to manage Council's investments shall be recorded and required to acknowledge they have received a copy of this policy and understand their obligations in this role.

The Chief Executive Officer or any other staff member, with delegated authority by Council to invest funds on behalf of Council must do so in accordance with the adopted investment policy.

7 Amendments

The Chief Executive Officer or their delegated representative be authorised to approve variations to investment options that may not be consistent with this policy, if the investment is to Council's advantage and/or due to revised legislation.

All such variations are to be reported to Council within ~~1431~~ days.

Investment Policy

8 Scope and application

This policy applies to all employees, agents, officers and councillors of Northern Beaches Council.

9 References and related documents

All investments are to comply with the following:

- Local Government Act 1993
- Local Government (General) Regulation 2021
- Ministerial Investment Order 2011
- Local Government Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting
- Australian Accounting Standards and
- Office of Local Government Circulars
- Council Policy Framework

10 Definitions

“Act” Local Government Act 1993

“LGGR” Local Government (General) Regulation 2021

11 Responsible Officer

Chief Financial Officer

12 Review Date

~~July 2026~~ March 2030

13 Revision History

Revision	Date	Change	TRIM Ref
1	27 Sept 2016	Policy adopted by Council	2016/322788
1.1	17 April 2018	Minor amendment – formatting changes to updated policy template.	2016/322788
1.2	10 December 2019	The Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee noted the review of the Investment Policy and no changes to the Policy were recommended by the Committee necessitating a report to Council.	2016/322788
1.3	8 December 2020	The Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee noted the review of the Investment Policy and did not recommend any changes to the Policy.	2016/322788
1.4	26 July 2022	Revised Policy adopted by Council	2022/454848
1.5	6 December 2022	The Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee noted the review of the Investment Policy and did not recommend any changes to the Policy.	2022/454848
1.6	12 December 2023	The Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee noted the review of the Investment Policy and did not recommend any changes to the Policy.	2022/454848
1.7	19 January 2024	Allocated a Policy reference number as per Policy Framework adopted at the November 2023 Council meeting	2022/454848
1.8	3 December 2024	The Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee noted the review of the Investment Policy and did not recommend any changes to the Policy.	2022/454848
1.9	9 December 2025	The Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee noted the review of the Investment Policy and did not recommend any changes to the Policy.	2022/454848

Investment Policy

SCHEDULE 1: Extracts of Legislative Requirements

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1993 - SECT 412 & 625

Section 412 Accounting Records

- 1) A council must keep such accounting records as are necessary to correctly record and explain its financial transactions and its financial position.
- 2) In particular, a council must keep its accounting records in a manner and form that facilitate:
 - (a) the preparation of financial reports that present fairly its financial position and the results of its operations, and
 - (b) the convenient and proper auditing of those reports.

Section 625 How May Councils Invest?

- 1) A council may invest money that is not, for the time being, required by the council for any other purpose.
- 2) Money may be invested only in a form of investment notified by order of the Minister published in the Gazette.
- 3) An order of the Minister notifying a form of investment for the purposes of this section must not be made without the approval of the Treasurer.
- 4) The acquisition, in accordance with section 358, of a controlling interest in a corporation is not an investment for the purposes of this section.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (GENERAL) REGULATION 2021 - REG 206 & 212

206 Accounting records and accounting practices to accord with the Code

- 1) A council's accounting records must be kept in a form that accords with the Code.
- 2) A council's accounting practices must accord with the Code.

212 Reports on council investments

- 1) The responsible accounting officer of a council:
 - (a) must provide the council with a written report (setting out details of all money that the council has invested under section 625 of the Act) to be presented:
 - (i) if only one ordinary meeting of the council is held in a month, at that meeting, or
 - (ii) if more than one such meeting is held in a month, at whichever of those meetings the council by resolution determines, and
 - (b) must include in the report a certificate as to whether or not the investment has been made in accordance with the Act, the regulations and the council's investment policies.
- 2) The report must be made up to the last day of the month immediately preceding the meeting.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT CODE OF ACCOUNTING PRACTICE AND FINANCIAL REPORTING – APPENDIX A

Council must maintain an investment policy that complies with the Local Government Act 1993, the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 and the Ministerial Investment Order and ensure it or its representatives exercise care, diligence and skill that a prudent person would exercise in investing council funds.

Councils must maintain a separate record of money it has invested under section 625 of the LGA. The record must specify:

- (a) the source and the amount of money invested; and
- (b) particulars of the security or form of investment in which the money is invested; and
- (c) if appropriate, the rate of interest to be paid, and the amount of money that the council has earned, in respect of the money invested.

Investment Policy



Circular No. 11-01
Date 17 February 2011
Doc ID. A232163

Contact Finance Policy Section
02 4428 4100
dlg@dlg.nsw.gov.au

REVISED MINISTERIAL INVESTMENT ORDER

A revised Investment Order pursuant to section 625 of the *Local Government Act 1993* has been issued. The Minister for Local Government signed the revised Order on 12 January 2011 and it was published in the NSW Government Gazette on 11 February 2011. It replaces the Order dated 31 July 2008. The revised Order is attached to this circular.

Changes to the Investment Order include:

- the removal of the ability to invest in the mortgage of land (part (c) of the Investment Order dated 31 July 2008)
- the removal of the ability to make a deposit with the Local Government Financial Services Pty Ltd (part (f) of the order dated 31 July 2008)
- the addition of "Key Considerations" in the revised Investment Order, which includes a comment that a council's General Manager, or any other staff, with delegated authority by a council to invest in funds on behalf of the council must do so in accordance with the council's adopted investment policy.

Councils are reminded that on 25 May 2010 the Division of Local Government issued Investment Policy Guidelines (Circular to Councils 10-11 refers). It is expected that all councils will by now have adopted an Investment Policy in accordance with the Guidelines.

Ross Woodward
Chief Executive, Local Government
A Division of the Department of Premier and Cabinet

Department of Local Government
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E dlgs@dlg.nsw.gov.au W www.dlg.nsw.gov.au ABN 99 567 863 195

Investment Policy

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1993 – INVESTMENT ORDER
(Relating to investments by councils)

I, the Hon. Barbara Perry MP, Minister for Local Government, in pursuance of section 625(2) of the *Local Government Act 1993* and with the approval of the Treasurer, do, by this my Order, notify for the purposes of section 625 of that Act that a council or county council may only invest money (on the basis that all investments must be denominated in Australian Dollars) in the following forms of investment:

- (a) any public funds or securities issued by or guaranteed by, the Commonwealth, any State of the Commonwealth or a Territory;
- (b) any debentures or securities issued by a council (within the meaning of the *Local Government Act 1993* (NSW));
- (c) interest bearing deposits with, or any debentures or bonds issued by, an authorised deposit-taking institution (as defined in the *Banking Act 1959* (Cwth)), but excluding subordinated debt obligations;
- (d) any bill of exchange which has a maturity date of not more than 200 days; and if purchased for value confers on the holder in due course a right of recourse against a bank which has been designated as an authorised deposit-taking institution by the Australian Prudential Regulation Authority;
- (e) a deposit with the New South Wales Treasury Corporation or investments in an Hour-Glass investment facility of the New South Wales Treasury Corporation;

All investment instruments (excluding short term discount instruments) referred to above include both principal and investment income.

Transitional Arrangements

- (i) Subject to paragraph (ii) nothing in this Order affects any investment made before the date of this Order which was made in compliance with the previous Ministerial Orders, and such investments are taken to be in compliance with this Order.
- (ii) Paragraph (i) only applies to those investments made before the date of this Order and does not apply to any restructuring or switching of investments or any re-investment of proceeds received on disposal or maturity of such investments, which for the avoidance of doubt must comply with this Order.

Key Considerations

An investment is not in a form of investment notified by this order unless it also complies with an investment policy of council adopted by a resolution of council.

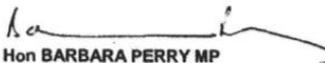
All councils should by resolution adopt an investment policy that is consistent with this Order and any guidelines issued by the Chief Executive (Local Government), Department of Premier and Cabinet, from time to time.

The General Manager, or any other staff member, with delegated authority by a council to invest funds on behalf of a council must do so in accordance with the council's adopted investment policy.

Councils have a fiduciary responsibility when investing. Councils should exercise the care, diligence and skill that a prudent person would exercise in managing the affairs of other persons.

When exercising the power of investment councils should consider, but not be limited by, the risk of capital or income loss or depreciation, the likely income return and the timing of income return, the length of the term of the proposed investment, the liquidity and marketability of the proposed investment, the likelihood of inflation affecting the value of the proposed investment and the costs (including commissions, fees, charges and duties payable) of making the proposed investment.

Dated this 12th day of January 2011


Hon BARBARA PERRY MP
Minister for Local Government



**Northern Beaches
Events Strategy**
2026 - 2035





We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of these lands and show respect to Elders, past, present and emerging.

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Overview

The Northern Beaches Events Strategy 2026 - 2035 provides a 10 year outlook for the delivery of events, ensuring they meet the needs and benefits of our community by engaging and connecting our people and places, promoting environmental awareness and driving a vibrant visitor economy.

The refreshed Strategy builds on the success and outcomes of the previous 2018 - 2023 Strategy.

The Strategy is designed to provide a clear pathway for Council to continue its focus on delivering, supporting and attracting events that will sustain and promote the Northern Beaches as an iconic and extraordinary place. It will also ensure opportunities are maximised that will benefit our community socially, environmentally and economically.

Scope

The events referred to in this document are delivered and supported by Council including those in the Event Grants and Sponsorship Program. It is acknowledged that a wide range of other events are delivered throughout the region that contribute significantly to the achievement of the overall goals of this Strategy. The Strategy does not include events where Council venues are used for private events, regular gatherings or sporting events such as Nippers.



Northern Beaches Events Strategy 2026 - 2035



Northern Beaches Events Strategy 2026 - 2035



Strategic line of site

Community Strategic Plan

The Community Strategic Plan (CSP) defines our community's vision and sets a direction for everything Council must do over the next 20 years with our future planning, budgets and actions. The responsibility for making the long term community vision a reality rests with everyone and we look forward to working in close collaboration with the community, key partners and stakeholders in making Northern Beaches an even better place to live, work and play. Aligned to state and regional plans, the CSP also sets out the range of government and other agencies with which we partner.

Consideration was given to the alignment of this Strategy with direction provided in other Northern Beaches Council strategies and plans, such as:



Northern Beaches Community Strategic Plan 2040



Better Together Social Sustainability Strategy 2040



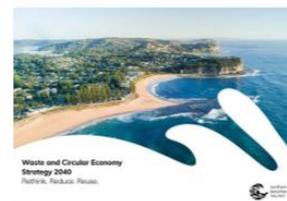
Destination Northern Beaches Creating a sustainable visitor economy



Northern Beaches Economic Development Strategy Business on the Beaches



Connected Through Creativity 2029 Northern Beaches Arts and Creativity Strategy



Waste and Circular Economy Strategy 2040 Rethink. Reduce. Reuse.

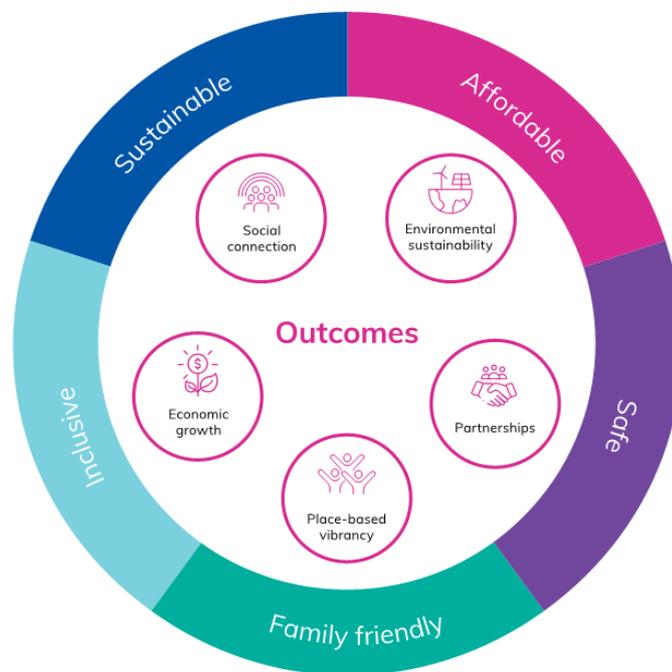
Strategy on a page

The Northern Beaches has a long tradition of hosting and delivering diverse, fun and exciting events. Council recognises and values the diversity and benefits they each bring to our community.

Strategy on a page

Aspiration

Events on the Northern Beaches will celebrate our unique vibe by connecting our people, places, businesses and culture. They will be dynamic, creative, innovative and inclusive; reflecting our personality and promoting the Northern Beaches as an extraordinary place to live, invest in and play.



Benefits of events

- Strengthen social connection and inclusion
- Enhance community safety and wellbeing
- Promote environmental sustainability
- Drive economic and tourism benefits
- Activate public spaces with culture and creativity
- Build community capacity and support third party organisers

The principles

- Connect people through diversity and shared experiences
- Balance the social, environmental and economic outcomes across events
- Activate our unique places, making them vibrant, safe, inclusive and accessible
- Build capacity in event organisers to deliver new events

8



Northern Beaches Events Strategy 2026 - 2035

Events on the Northern Beaches

9

Events come in many shapes and sizes, each with a different purpose and benefit to our community.

Our incredible natural environment and unique town centres are deeply valued by our community. While major events that bring significant visitors to places like Manly are valued for their benefits to the economy, there is a strong desire in the community for more events to be spread throughout other locations across the Northern Beaches.

Council's role

As the manager of public spaces, Council plays a central role in coordinating and delivering an overarching annual events calendar across the Northern Beaches.

Council run events

Council funds and delivers an annual events program including major, signature, community and civic events. In addition, Council delivers hundreds of events and activations through its numerous services including Library Services, Community Development, Arts & Culture, Children's Services, Waste Management, Road Safety, Natural Environment, Aquatic Services, Place and Economic Development and Glen Street Theatre.

Support for third party run events

Council recognises the important role events play in the social and cultural fabric of our community. These events activate our open spaces, towns and villages and create opportunities for our community and visitors to connect.

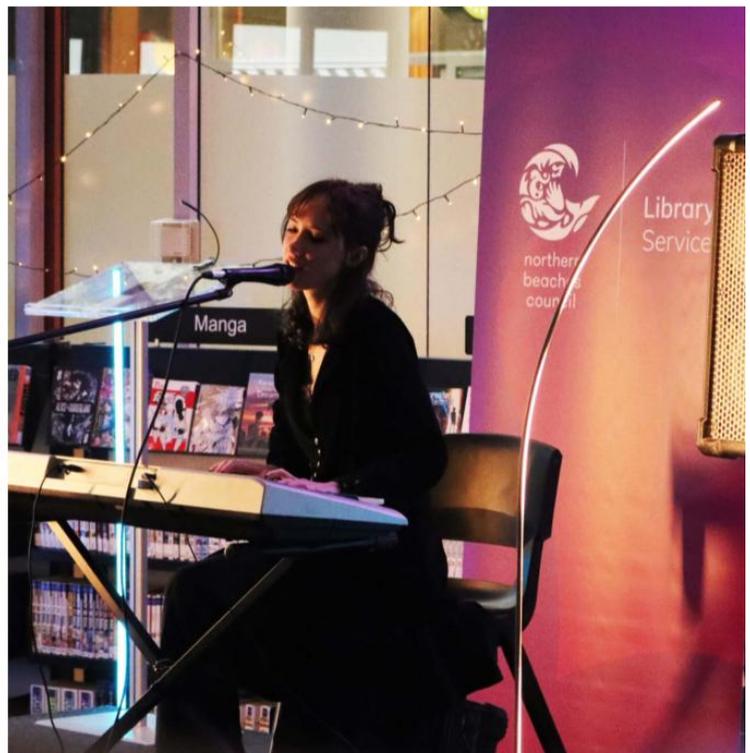
Council may provide financial assistance and resources to third party organisers to deliver a range of experiences that benefit our community (pending annual approval).

Strategic partnerships

Council recognises and values the important role events play in enriching our community, supporting local businesses, and enhancing the visitor experience.

Through strategic partnerships with event organisers, government agencies, businesses and local and global brands, Council seeks to attract and promote major events that provide opportunities for greater diversity, wider audience engagement, shared resources, increased brand credibility and the creation of impactful and memorable events.

The Strategy prioritises partnerships that align with the outcomes as set out in the Community Strategic Plan, demonstrate value for money, uphold good governance, and promote inclusion and equity that will benefit our community.



Event framework

The Strategy recognises the diversity of events on the Northern Beaches and this framework outlines the different categories that help identify opportunities to benefit the region.

<p>Tier 1 – Major events These events have a strong resonance with a town centre or village and attract visitors to the destination from outside the region.</p> <p>Characteristics include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • attract significant numbers of visitors and upwards of 10,000 attendees • contribute to immediate and/or long-term measurable economic and community outcomes • attract significant social media and other media coverage 	<p>Tier 2 – Signature events These are significant events in terms of the scale and the number of attendees however they attract more locals and visitors from across the Northern Beaches.</p> <p>Characteristics include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • generate support from local businesses and organisations, potential to be major event in the future • attract visitors and upwards of 3,000 attendees • contribute to measurable economic and/or community outcomes • attract social media and other media coverage
<p>Tier 3 – Community events These events are targeted at the local community to provide place-based activities across the region. They focus on entertainment, fun and the value of being local.</p> <p>Characteristics include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • engage and activate local town centres, villages and/or public places • generate support from local businesses, organisations and/or community groups • contribute to social and/or community outcomes • attract local media coverage 	<p>Tier 4 – Civic events These events are held for a special purpose.</p> <p>Council manages and delivers a range of civic events and supports the delivery of ceremonies including Anzac Day and other national service days.</p> <p>Council also hosts citizenship ceremonies in accordance with Federal Government regulations and guidelines.</p>



Northern Beaches Events Strategy 2026 - 2035

Aspiration and principles

Aspiration

Events on the Northern Beaches will celebrate our unique vibe by connecting our people, places, businesses and culture. They will be dynamic, creative, innovative and inclusive; reflecting our personality and promoting the Northern Beaches as an extraordinary place to live, invest in and play.

Principles

To maximise the benefits to our community, events will seek to adhere to the following principles. They will:

- connect people through diversity and shared experiences
- balance the social, environmental and economic outcomes across events
- activate our unique places, making them vibrant, safe, inclusive and accessible
- build capacity in event organisers to deliver new events

Outcomes

Delivering events will drive these positive benefits to our community.



Social
connection



Environmental
sustainability



Economic
growth



Place-based
vibrancy



Partnerships

The value and benefits of events

13

Events play a multifaceted role in our community. They are key catalysts for creating a safe, diverse, inclusive and connected community as set out in the Better Together - Social Sustainability Strategy 2040. They also support and promote a vibrant local economy which is reflected in the Northern Beaches Economic Development Strategy – Business on the Beaches.

Overall, their value is seen in their capacity to build community wellbeing, social cohesion, and resilience by:

- **strengthening social connection, inclusion and belonging** by bringing people together and celebrating diversity that fosters social networks
- **enhancing community safety and wellbeing** by providing vibrant and positive social activities in public spaces that promote active lifestyles and wellbeing
- **promoting environmental sustainability** by role modelling waste minimisation, single-use plastic reduction, responsible transport options and demonstrating leading practices in event delivery
- **delivering economic and tourism benefits for local businesses** by attracting events to the Northern Beaches that drive visitation, boost the local economy and create employment and volunteer opportunities
- **activating public spaces with culture and creativity** by enlivening town centres, villages, parks, and other public spaces, making them vibrant through creative and cultural opportunities
- **building community capacity** by supporting third party organisers through education and connection to deliver their own events





Outcomes, actions and measures of success

Implementation of this Strategy will be monitored internally on an ongoing basis, with progress reported to the community at the time of Strategy review or where material changes occur. Where applicable, more detailed actions will be aligned to individual Council run events.

Outcome 1

Social connection: enhance inclusion and a sense of wellbeing

Key actions	Measures of success
1.1 Support ongoing delivery of an annual events program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual event satisfaction score greater than 80%
1.2 Prioritise affordable, safe, family-friendly events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate and review Council run events
1.3 Increase accessibility at events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase level of engagement and conversion from digital and social media Increase attendee knowledge of event accessibility features

Outcome 2

Environmental sustainability: demonstrate and promote leading practices in event delivery

Key actions	Measures of success
2.1 Promote and implement waste minimisation and sustainability initiatives at events that align with Council policies and guidelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compliance with Council's waste minimisation and sustainability initiatives
2.2 Strengthen transport options to support safe and efficient travel to and from events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate transport options to event attendees Evaluate variety of transport options used by event attendees

Outcome 3

Economic growth: support local businesses and attract visitors

Key actions	Measures of success
3.1 Develop a consistent approach to promote third party event organisers to bring their events to the Northern Beaches that deliver social, environmental and economic benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual business satisfaction score greater than 90% Increase spend (local and visitor) in event locations
3.2 Measure the impact of events on town centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver annual grant program/s, including evaluation and review
3.3 Provide opportunities for business involvement in events and activations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of local businesses involved as vendors or sponsors

Outcome 4

Place-based vibrancy: activate town centres and public spaces

Key actions	Measures of success
<p>4.1 Support opportunities to promote place-based events and activations across the Northern Beaches</p> <p>4.2 Contribute to place planning processes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geographic spread of event locations diversified • Demonstrate alignment of event-related priorities within approved place plans

Outcome 5

Partnerships: collaborate with third party organisers to deliver events

Key actions	Measures of success
<p>5.1 Provide streamlined approvals and promotional support for third party run events</p> <p>5.2 Deliver an annual Event Grants and Sponsorship Program</p> <p>5.3 Support third party event delivery through capacity building, guidelines and toolkits, including accessibility</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report third party events promoted through Council channels • Number of events supported through Council grant programs • Raise awareness and use of resources available to third party organisers, including the Accessible Event Guidelines



Northern Beaches Events Strategy 2026 - 2035



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Community and Stakeholder Engagement Report

Northern Beaches Events Strategy 2026-2035

Consultation period: 19 November 2025 to 1 February 2026

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1. Summary

This report outlines the outcomes of community and stakeholder engagement as part of a review of the Draft Northern Beaches Events Strategy 2026 – 2035 (Strategy).

Council endorsed the Strategy for public exhibition at its meeting on 18 November 2025 (item 9.1) for a minimum of 28 days, to seek community feedback and report the outcome to Council.

Feedback was collected through a survey form on the Your Say webpage, written submissions, post event surveys and in-person engagement at events. Various communication channels were used to encourage participation such as electronic newsletters, direct emails, face-to-face meetings and other digital avenues.

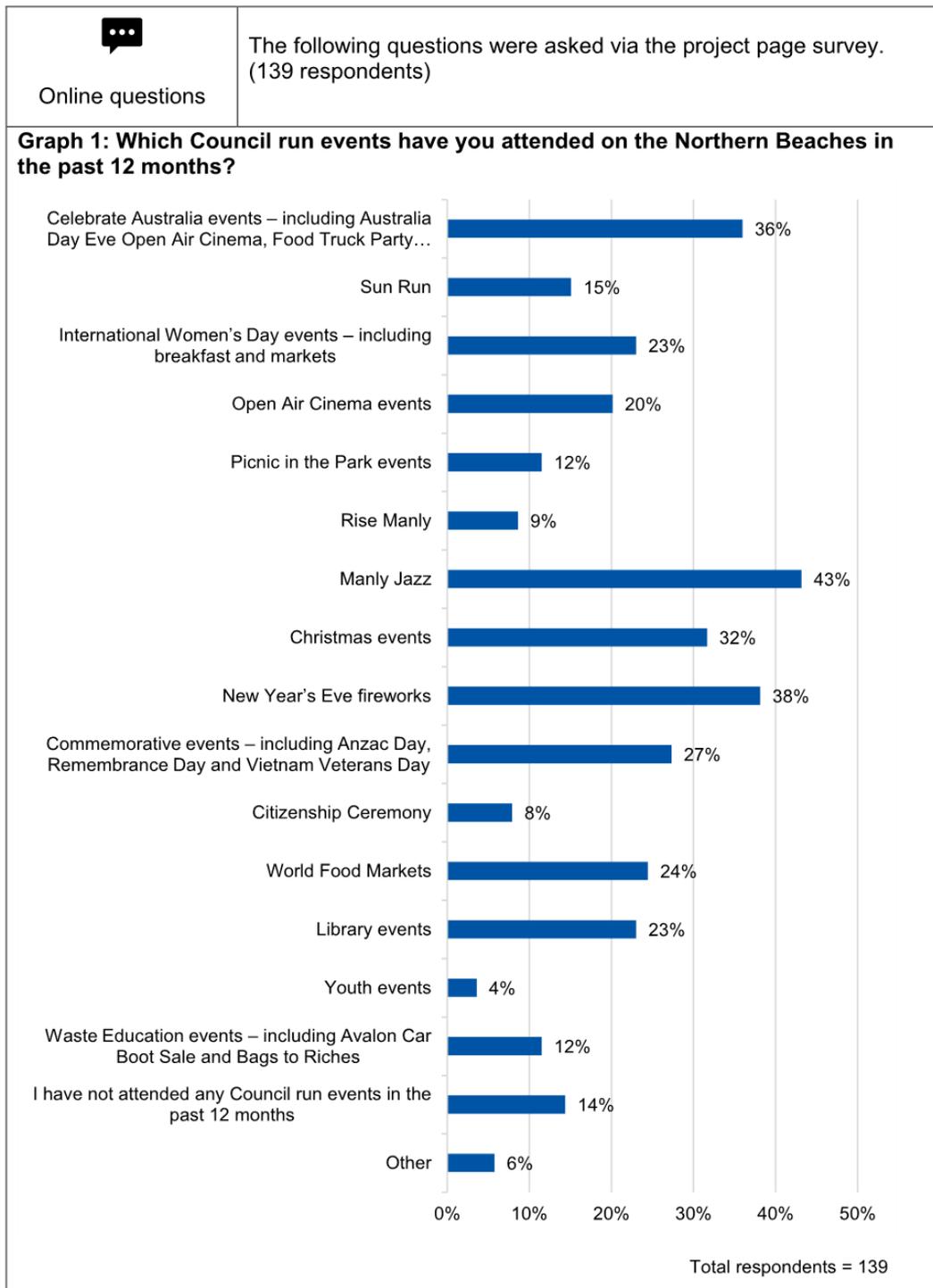
There were 899 unique responses that showed an overall positive sentiment for the Strategy. Feedback on areas for improvement and transparency were highlighted through the themes that are listed below and include event values, access and inclusion, governance and sustainability.

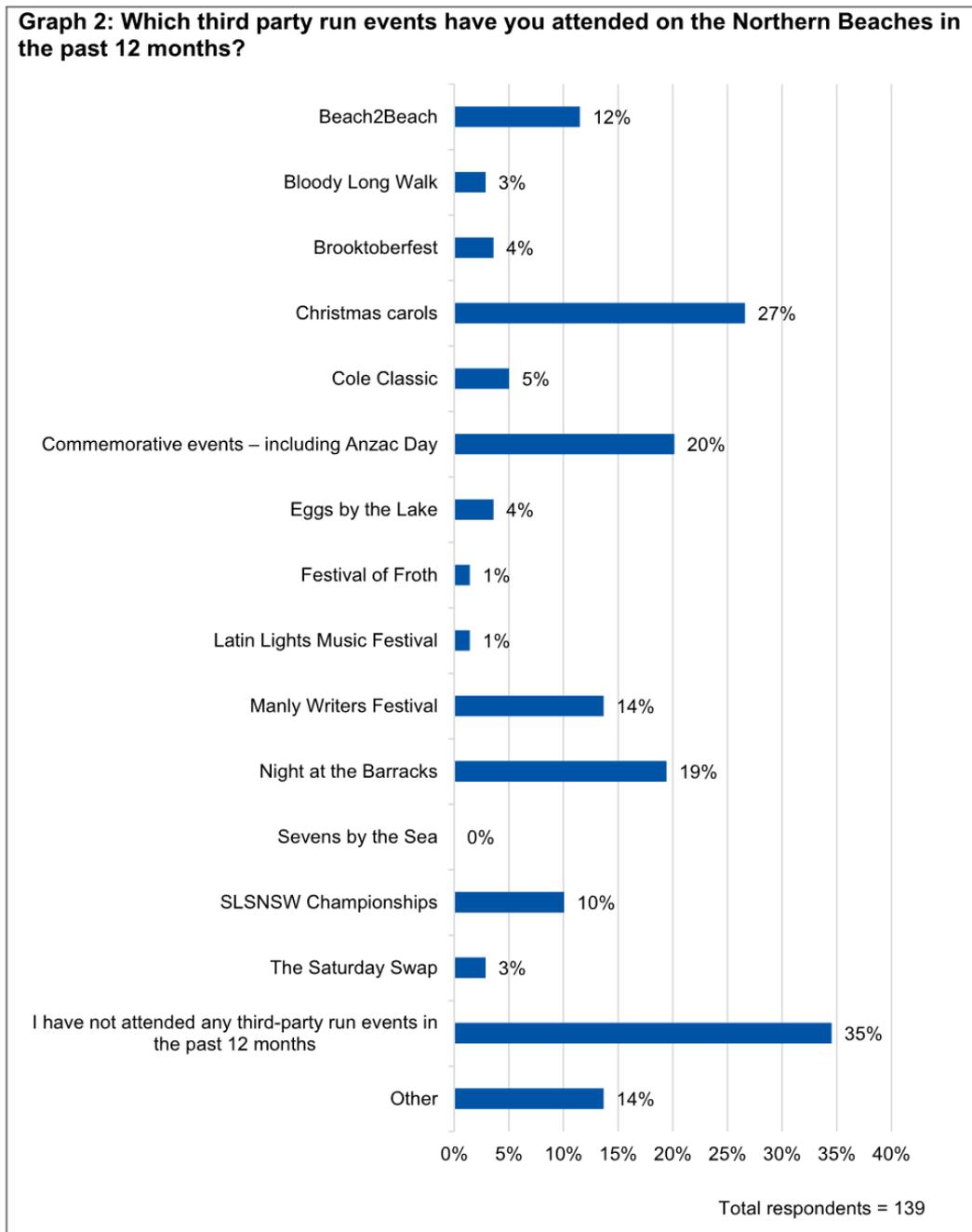
A summary of the outcomes and engagement approach is listed below.

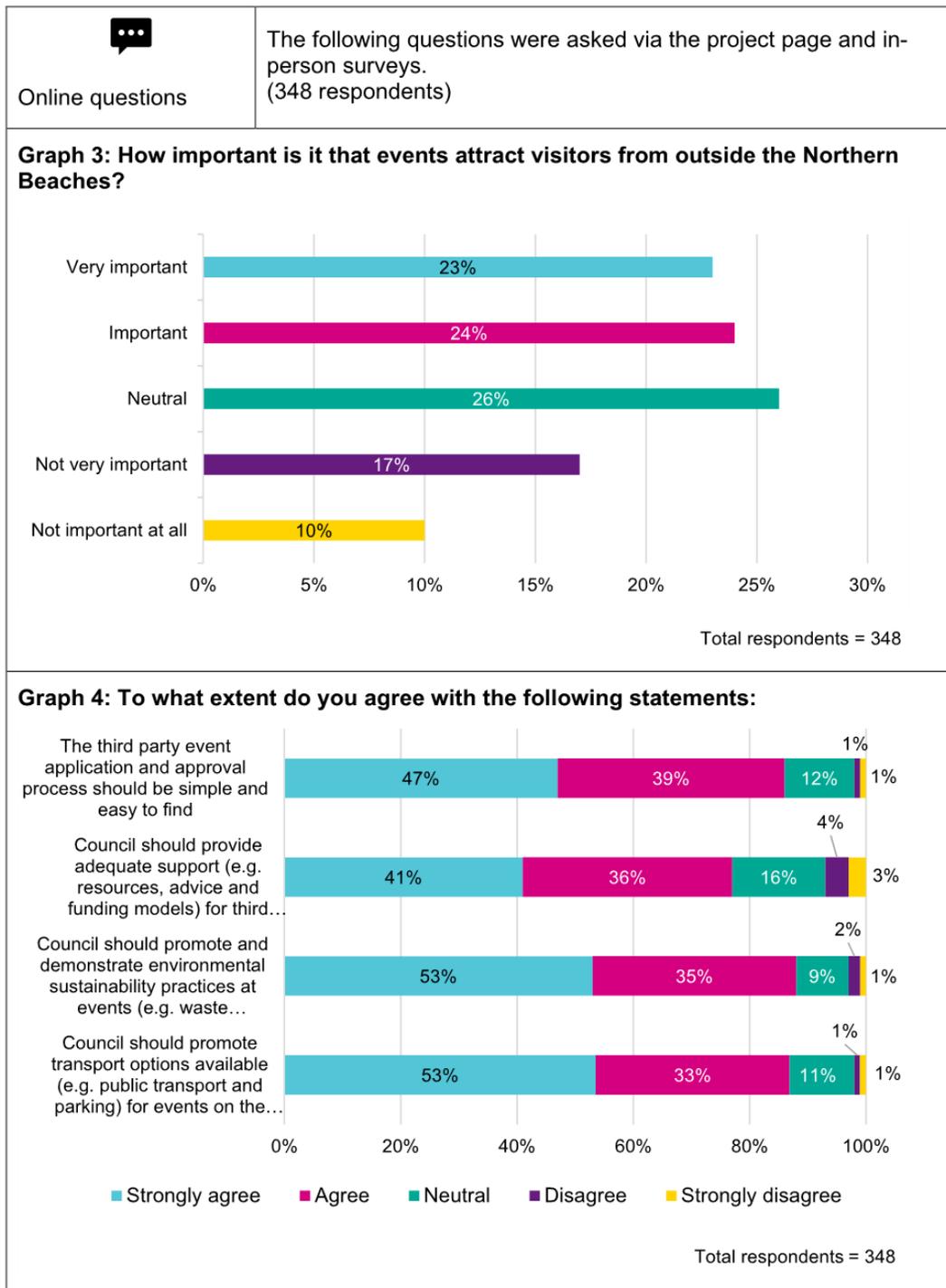
1.1. Key outcomes

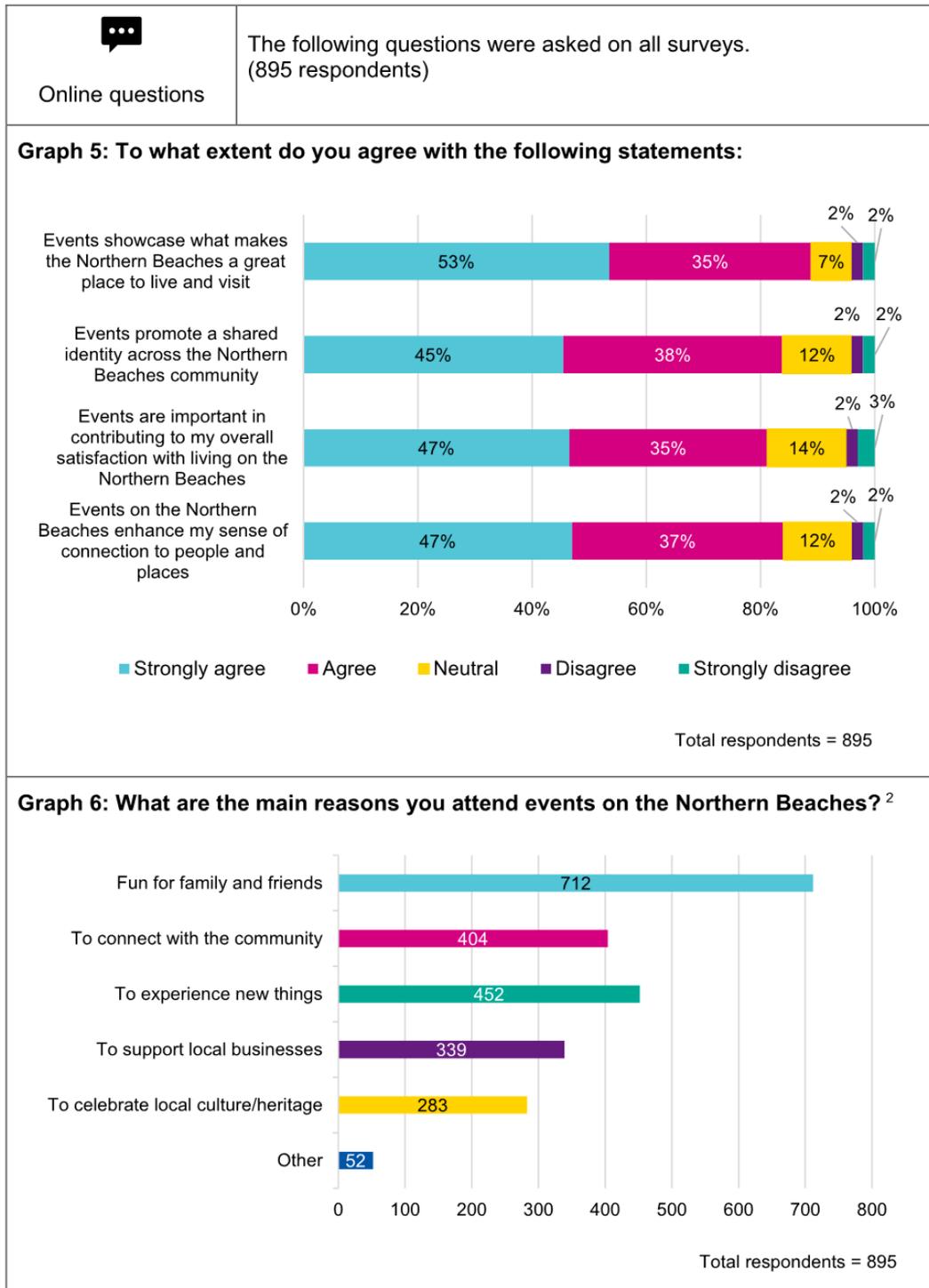
 Total unique responses	899 ¹	
 How responses were received	Project page survey In-person surveys Post-event surveys Written responses (email/letter)	Completions: 139 Completions: 209 Completions: 547 Number received: 4
 Feedback themes	Community, economic and social value Access, inclusion and reach Governance Sustainability and the environment Quality and innovation Risk and safety	

¹ We note that while this was a survey-style feedback form, it was not a statistically representative survey, and participants opted-in to provide feedback. Some respondents may have completed more than one survey.

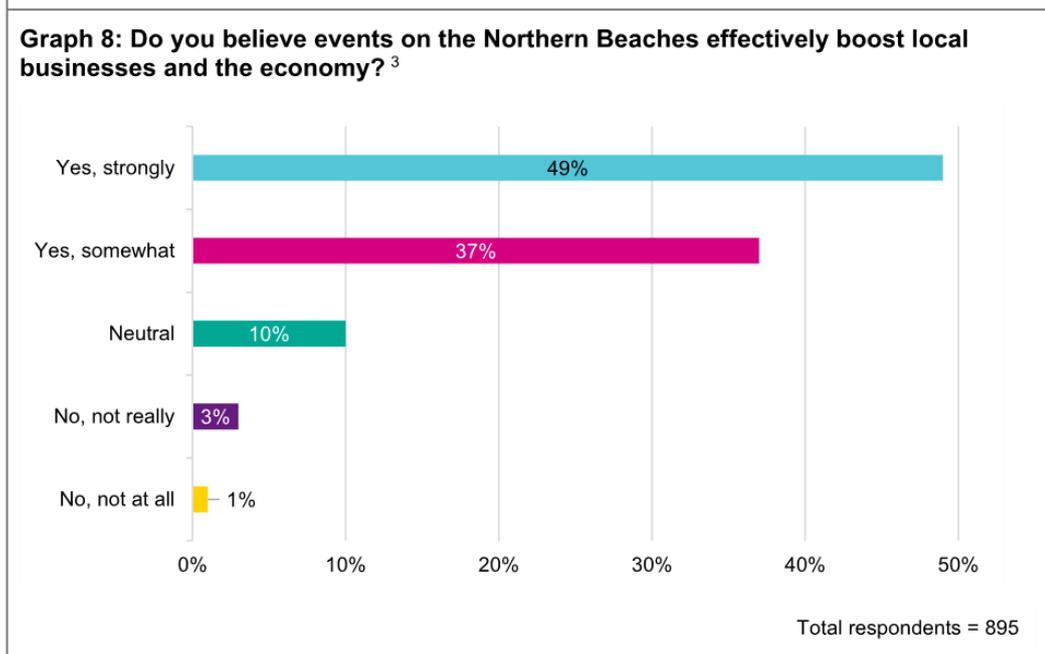
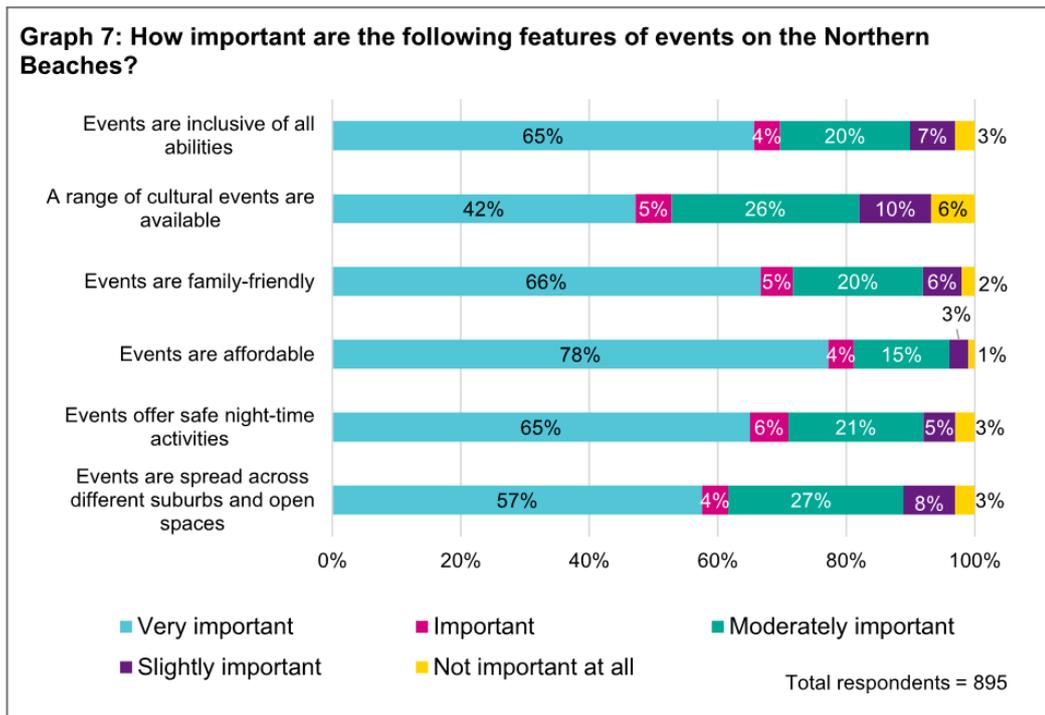








² Respondents could select more than one option.

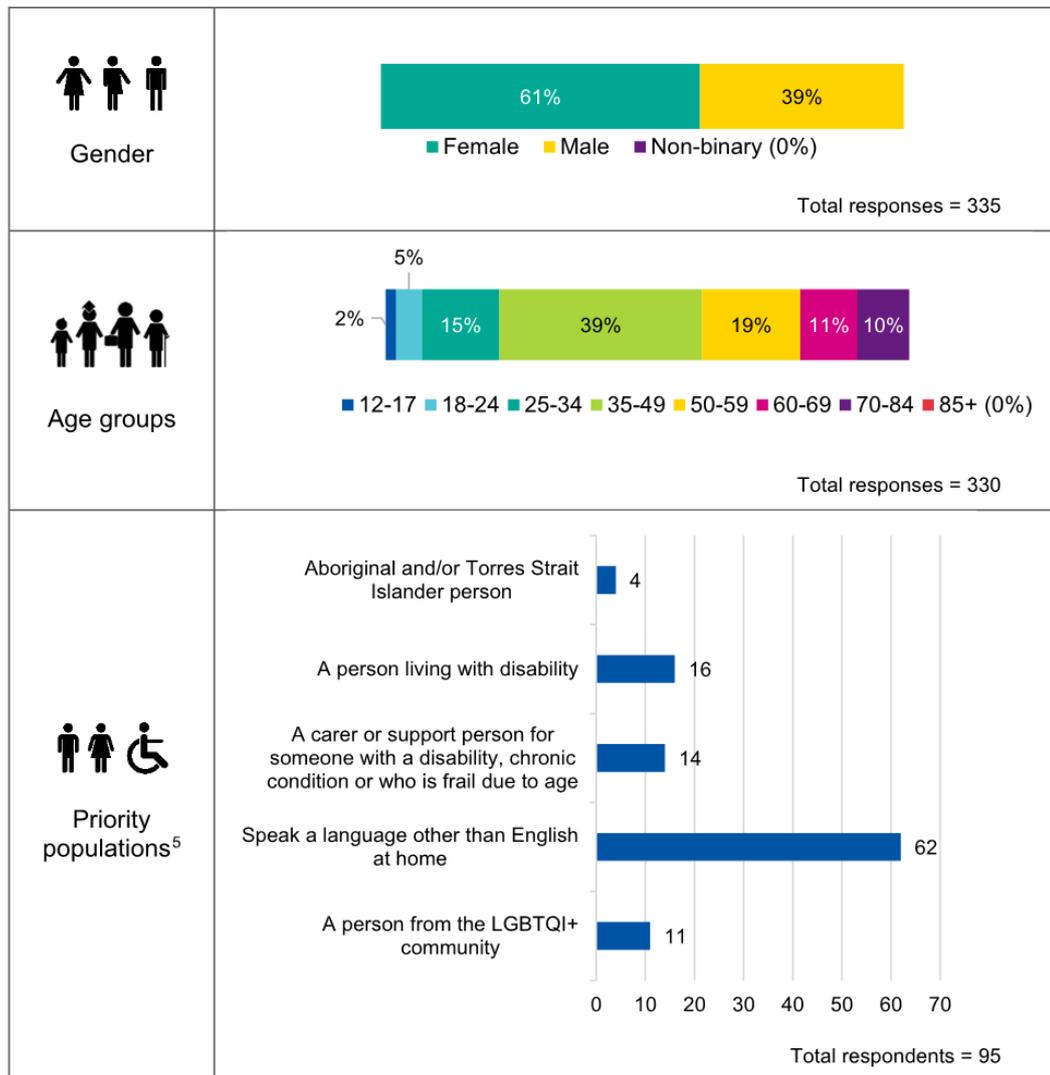


³ Respondents could select more than one option.

1.2. How we engaged

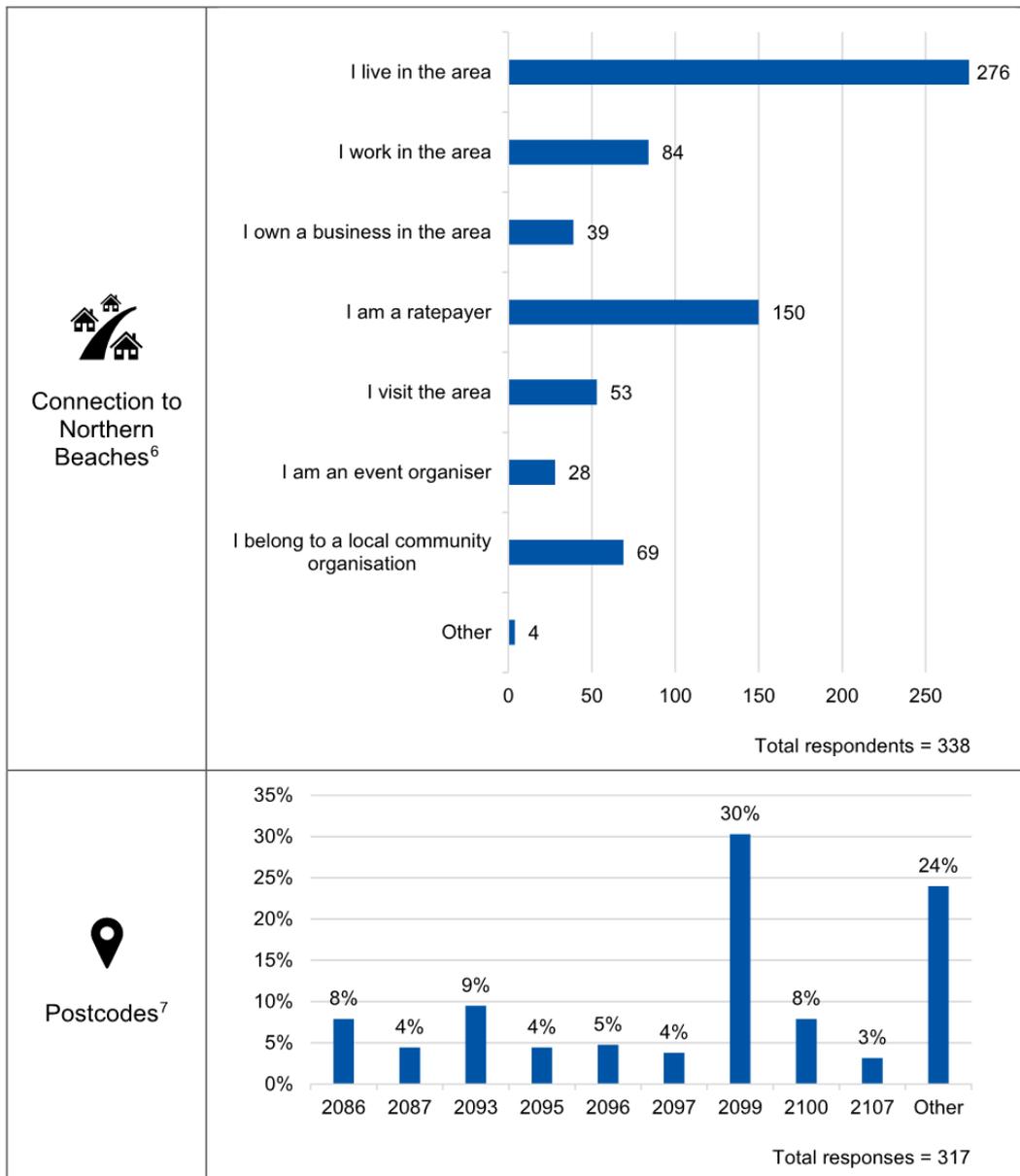
 Have Your Say: visitation stats	Visitors: 1,300	Visits: 1,828
 Electronic direct mail (EDM)	Community Engagement (fortnightly) newsletter: 3 editions Council (weekly) e-News: 3 editions Beaches Biz (monthly) newsletter: 1 edition Manly Mainstreet (monthly) newsletter: 1 edition Creative News (monthly) newsletter: 1 edition What's On (quarterly) newsletter: 1 edition Sun Run Entrants: 1 edition Stakeholder emails:	Distribution: 20,455 subscribers Distribution: 56,764 subscribers Distribution: 7,510 subscribers Distribution: 510 subscribers Distribution: 3,445 subscribers Distribution: 41,217 subscribers Distribution: 5,462 subscribers Distribution: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Event mailing lists: 772 • Other networks: 1
 Face-to-face sessions	In-person engagement at events: 4	Conversations: 385

1.3. Who responded⁴



⁴ Demographic data was gathered by request through the engagement platform surveys only (i.e. project page on the engagement platform and in-person surveys at events). The data represented only includes those respondents who provided this detail.

⁵ Respondents could select more than one option.



⁶ Respondents could select more than one option.

⁷ *Other* refers to postcodes with fewer than 10 responses. The data represented only includes those respondents who provided this detail via the project page and in-person surveys.

2. Background

The Northern Beaches Events Strategy 2018 - 2023 was adopted in 2018. The Strategy provides strategic direction for events delivered and supported by Council and third-party event organisers on the Northern Beaches, ensuring they lead to greater social, cultural, environmental and economic benefit for everyone.

In April 2023 the Northern Beaches Events Strategy 2018 - 2023 was extended by 2 years due to the impacts of COVID-19 on event delivery and was included for review as part of the Delivery Program for FY25/26.

The Draft Northern Beaches Events Strategy 2026 - 2035 (Strategy) sets out a 10-year outlook for events in our region, helping us create vibrant, inclusive, and memorable experiences for the local community and visitors.

The Strategy establishes the reasons why Council delivers and partners with events across the Northern Beaches. It provides a strategic framework that identifies opportunities to benefit the region, including major, signature, community and civic events.

It is deemed that the public exhibition process for feedback, combined with engagement from internal stakeholders, event organisers and local businesses would support Council in its consideration of the adoption of the final Strategy.

Engagement on the Strategy took place between 19 November 2025 and 1 February 2026. Further insights were gathered via 3 post event surveys that sat outside of the consultation period. These include Manly Jazz, Picnic in the Park and Sun Run.

3. Engagement objectives

Community and stakeholder engagement aimed to:

1. build community and stakeholder awareness of participation activities to be able to make submissions on the Strategy
2. provide accessible information so community and stakeholders can participate in a meaningful way
3. ensure that event organisers and local businesses are actively engaged in the public exhibition process and have a voice on the Strategy that will affect them
4. identify community and stakeholder interests, local knowledge and values relating to events on the Northern Beaches
5. communicate to community and stakeholders how their input was incorporated into the planning and decision-making process
6. provide vulnerable and marginalised groups access to the engagement process.

4. Engagement approach

Community and stakeholder engagement for the Strategy was conducted between 19 November 2025 and 1 February 2026. Further insights were gathered via 3 post event surveys that sat outside of the consultation period. These include Manly Jazz, Picnic in the Park and Sun Run. Engagement activities were designed to provide multiple opportunities for

the whole community and relevant stakeholders to contribute, and the methodology used is outlined below.

The engagement was planned, implemented and reported in accordance with Council's [Community Engagement Strategy](#) (2025).

A dedicated project page⁸ was established on Council's engagement platform, providing accessible, easy-to-read information about the Strategy. The consultation was primarily promoted through Council's email newsletter (eDM) and other digital avenues, with additional reach generated through organic visitation to the project page.

Feedback was captured through 3 sources:

1. An online comment form embedded onto the project page
2. In-person engagement was conducted at 4 events (2 third-party events and 2 Council events) during engagement period. These events were:
 - 3 Point Challenge, Curl Curl
 - Carols in the Park, Frenchs Forest
 - Christmas by the Beach, Dee Why
 - NYE fireworks, Dee Why.
3. Post-event surveys sent to participants of 6 Council-run events:
 - Australia Day Eve Open Air Cinema
 - Christmas by the Beach
 - Christmas Choral Concert
 - Manly Jazz
 - Picnic in the Park
 - Sun Run.

All surveys asked respondents to indicate their level of agreement with a number of statements, including whether:

- events on the Northern Beaches enhance my sense of connection to people and places
- events are important in contributing to my overall satisfaction with living on the Northern Beaches
- events promote a shared identity across the Northern Beaches community
- events showcase what makes the Northern Beaches a great place to live and visit.

They were also asked how important they felt certain aspects were, such as inclusivity, affordability, cultural range, family-friendliness, safety and spread across the LGA.

An open-field comments box on the project page survey provided community members a space to add any comments or suggestions on the Strategy.

The project page survey and in-person (pop-up) survey also recorded demographic information (including postcode, age and gender) to support analysis of LGA representation. A total of 348 responses were received. No weighting was applied to the data.

Aside for the survey, direct email and written comments were also invited.

⁸ <https://yoursay.northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au/events-strategy-2026-2035>

5. Findings

Quantitative findings

A review of quantitative survey responses provided the following insights regarding events on the Northern Beaches:

Graph 3: Attracting visitors from outside the Northern Beaches⁹

Responses show there is moderate support for attracting visitors from outside the LGA. However, with 26% of responses being Neutral, data suggests that for many this is not a primary factor in shaping their view of events. The community appears divided, though slightly leaning toward seeing external visitation as beneficial.

Graph 4: Event support¹⁰

Community feedback shows strong, broad support for Council simplifying third-party event approvals, providing practical support, and actively promoting sustainability and transport options at events.

Graph 5: Value of events

Community feedback indicates strong agreement that events play an important role in enhancing connection to people and places, contributing to overall satisfaction with living on the Northern Beaches, and showcasing what makes the area a great place to live and visit.

Graph 6: Reasons for attending events

Attendance at events is primarily driven by spending time with family and friends, followed by experiencing new things and connecting with the community. Supporting local businesses and celebrating local culture are also important motivations.

Graph 7: Event features

Over 88% of respondents rate affordability, safe night-time activities, family friendliness, inclusivity and geographic spread of events as very important or moderately important. This level of response highlights the significance the community attributes to these features and aligns with the principles and strategic goals within the Strategy. While a range of cultural events are also valued, these attract slightly more moderate importance ratings.

Graph 8: Economic benefits

Most respondents believe events positively boost local businesses and the economy, with a strong majority answering somewhat or strongly “yes”.

⁹ This question was only asked on the project page and in-person surveys.

¹⁰ This question was only asked on the project page and in-person surveys.

Qualitative findings

Survey comments

One hundred and twenty one comments were received including 23 comments expressing direct support for the Strategy as written. Many comments related to specific events rather than the Strategy itself.

Please refer to the table below for a summary of themes.

Table 1: Issues, change requests and other considerations from comments received via Your Say surveys

Theme	Issues, change requests and other considerations raised	Council's response
Community, economic and social value	<p>Events are seen as important drivers of social connection and economic activity.</p> <p>Events are strongly associated with belonging, volunteering, fundraising and strengthening community ties.</p> <p>There is clear sentiment that return on investment should include social impact – connection, participation and wellbeing – not just financial outcomes</p> <p>Local businesses value events to drive awareness, visitation and economic benefit.</p> <p>A small number of businesses asked for greater transparency around Council events and opportunities for business involvement.</p>	<p>The Strategy has a strong focus on social connection and economic benefits in Outcome 1 (<i>Social connection: enhance inclusion and a sense of wellbeing</i>) and Outcome 3 (<i>Economic growth: support local businesses and attract visitors</i>) respectively.</p> <p>Key action 3.3 has been strengthened: <i>Provide opportunities for business involvement in events and activations</i></p> <p>Measures under this outcome have also been improved to include event impact on the local economy, business involvement as vendors or sponsors and overall business satisfaction.</p> <p>Transparency for local business involvement is addressed directly through EOI processes.</p>
Access, inclusion and reach	<p>Request for more equitable geographic spread of events across the LGA, particularly in the Pittwater and Frenchs Forest Wards.</p> <p>Council facilities such as libraries and the Coastal Environment Centre were suggested to be used for smaller events and activities.</p> <p>Some respondents asked for broader event scope – including</p>	<p>Key actions have been refined to include: 1.2: <i>prioritise affordable, safe, family friendly events</i> 1.3: <i>increase accessibility of events</i> 4.1: <i>support opportunities to promote place-based events and activations across the Northern Beaches</i></p> <p>Measures of success have been amended in relation to these refined key actions including geographic spread, event evaluations and grants programs.</p>

Theme	Issues, change requests and other considerations raised	Council's response
	LGBTQIA+, multicultural celebrations, family and non-family events, and further focus on accessibility.	
Governance	<p>Some respondents would like clarification around Council's role in delivering versus supporting events, including the balance between Council-run and third-party events. Some questioned whether Council should fund and/or deliver events and cited the need for transparency of an annual events calendar.</p> <p>There were some suggested improvements and simplifications to the approval processes for third parties.</p> <p>Commentary was received on specific events including cancelled markets and Taste of Manly.</p>	<p>The Strategy specifically outlines the role of Council, Council run events and how we support third party events (p9).</p> <p>In relation to streamlining approvals, Outcome 5 is focused on collaborating with third party organisers to deliver events and includes a key action to provide streamlined approvals.</p> <p>The annual events calendar is approved through Council's budget process in line with the Community Strategic Plan.</p>
Sustainability and the environment	<p>Environmental protection is a key expectation. Respondents would like consideration of waste management and recycling, along with post event clean-up accountability.</p> <p>Some concerns were raised about impacts on wildlife, fireworks and noise levels of event delivery.</p> <p>Sustainable transport options, such as bike parking and public transport planning, are seen as essential components of responsible event delivery.</p>	<p>The benefits and outcomes have been reordered to elevate Environmental Sustainability to second priority after social connection.</p> <p>The environmental outcome has been strengthened to: <i>Environmental sustainability: demonstrate and promote leading practices in event delivery</i></p> <p>Key actions have been refined to better achieve the environmental sustainability outcome including implementing waste minimisation and sustainability initiatives and strengthening transport options</p> <p>Measures of success related to these refined key actions have also been amended to include compliance, communications and evaluation.</p>
Quality and innovation	There is an appetite for high-quality, distinctive events that position the Northern Beaches as a leading destination while retaining local character.	The Strategy recognises the diversity of events on the Northern Beaches and provides a framework outlining the categories that identify opportunities to benefit the region including major, signature, community and civic events.

Theme	Issues, change requests and other considerations raised	Council's response
	<p>Feedback calls for a balance between professional and local entertainment, more creative programming, raised marketing awareness and strong event management capability – including support for third parties.</p>	<p>It also outlines support for third party organisers in Outcome 5 including capacity building and access to guidelines and toolkits.</p>
Risk and safety	<p>Some respondents expressed desire for events with minimal disruption.</p> <p>Key items include transport availability, parking, road congestion, overcrowding and capacity limits. There are mixed views on alcohol management and licensing restrictions, but consistent calls for safe, comfortable environments.</p> <p>Attention to basic amenities – cleanliness, accessible facilities and crowd flow – is considered fundamental to positive event experiences.</p>	<p>A key measure of success of the Strategy is to achieve an 80% satisfaction rate for events and ongoing evaluation and review over the 10 year duration.</p> <p>Another key measure is to strengthen community transport options to lessen impact on non-event community.</p> <p>The Strategy also seeks to align event related priorities with strategic place planning to improve event experience relating to issues such as traffic, safety and public amenities.</p>

During the consultation, Council received a number of questions either through direct contact or within feedback received.

Table 2: Questions raised and Council's answers

Question raised in feedback	Council's answer
Why does Council not support the Manly Marlins v Warringah Rats ANZAC Day rugby match?	Community organisations can apply for a variety of Council grant programs to support the delivery of their event. Further information on grants including eligibility requirements and criteria are available on Council's website .
I wish we had a theatre in manly. What happened to that idea?	A report will be taken to the March 2026 Council meeting based on the Notice of Motion 27/2025 from Cr Bingham/ Cr Giltinan at the July 2025 Council meeting, item 14.2.
Will Council include a minimum number of events they will deliver? or funding that will be allocated	Funding for events is allocated as part of the annual budget process and is within Council's Operational Plan. The process of allocating funding is independent of the Strategy.
How does Council decide which events they deliver or not?	The Strategy is an overarching document that details principles, goals, actions and measures that are aligned with Council's Community Strategic Plan. Consideration of a specific events program and the financial impacts of implementing this would be for Council determination through the annual operational budget planning process in future years.
What is the process for a new event to be delivered by Council?	Consideration of a new event and the financial impacts of delivering this would be for Council determination through the annual operational budget planning process in future years.
Is it possible to bring Taste of Manly back to its former glory?	Taste of Manly was a much-loved event which had to adapt over time to meet more stringent licencing requirements including fencing off the area and bag and identification checks. The community expressed disappointment about the necessary changes. Following community feedback, and extensive review and consultation with key stakeholders a decision was made to discontinue the event as Council could no longer adhere to regulatory obligations whilst also meeting community expectations.
What does the council think is going to happen if we sell alcohol openly like we used to?	In delivering events Council and third parties must comply with the Liquor Regulation set by Liquor and Gaming NSW.

Document administration	
Version	1.0
Date	24 February 2026
Approval	Content provided and approved by Events & Partnerships Team. Responsible manager: Lisa Dowsett
Status	Final
Notes	Community and stakeholder views contained in this report do not necessarily reflect the views of the Northern Beaches Council or indicate a commitment to a particular course of action.



Draft Northern Beaches Events Strategy 2026 - 2035





We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of these lands
and show respect to Elders, past, present and emerging.

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Overview

The Northern Beaches Events Strategy 2026 - 2035 provides a 10 year vision for the delivery of events, ensuring they meet the needs and benefits of our community by engaging and connecting our people and places, promoting environmental awareness and driving a vibrant visitor economy.

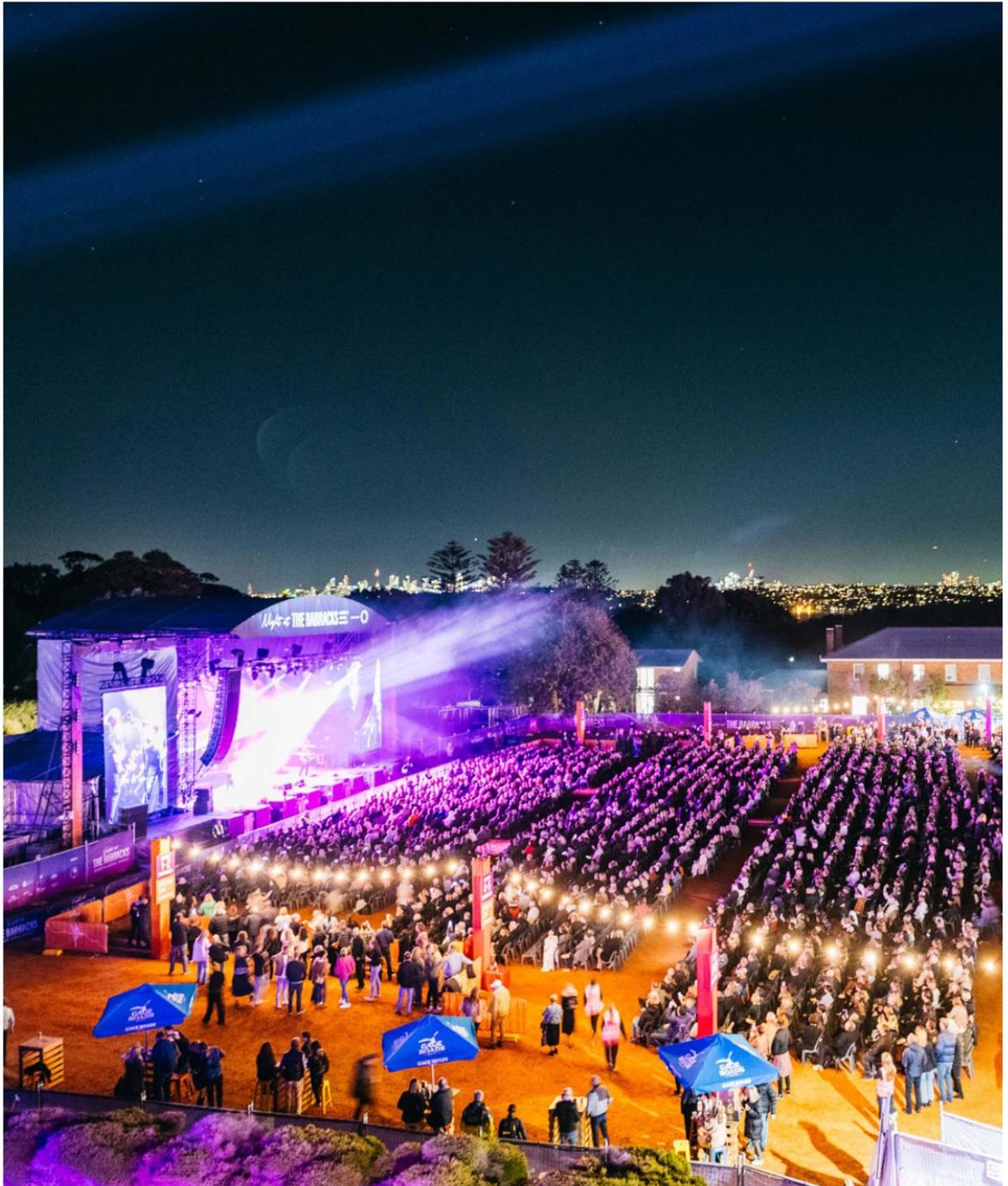
The refreshed Strategy builds on the success and outcomes of the previous 2018-2023 Strategy.

It is designed to be aligned with the aspirations of the Social Sustainability Strategy – Better Together, Northern Beaches Destination Management Plan – Creating a sustainable visitor economy and the Economic Development Strategy – Business on the Beaches. It also supports Council in achieving the broader regional and community objectives envisioned in the Northern Beaches Community Strategic Plan 2040 and other key strategies and plans with mutually beneficial goals.

The Strategy is designed to provide a clear pathway – it is the reason why Council will continue to focus on delivering, supporting and attracting events that will sustain and promote the Northern Beaches as an iconic and extraordinary place. It will also ensure opportunities are maximised that will benefit our community socially, economically and environmentally.

Scope

The events referred to in this document are delivered and supported by Council including those in the Event Grants and Sponsorship Program. It is acknowledged that a wide range of other events are delivered throughout the region that contribute significantly to the achievement of the overall goals of this Strategy. The Strategy does not include events where Council venues are used for private events, regular gatherings or sporting events such as Nippers.



Draft Northern Beaches Events Strategy 2026 - 2035

Strategic alignment

Community Strategic Plan

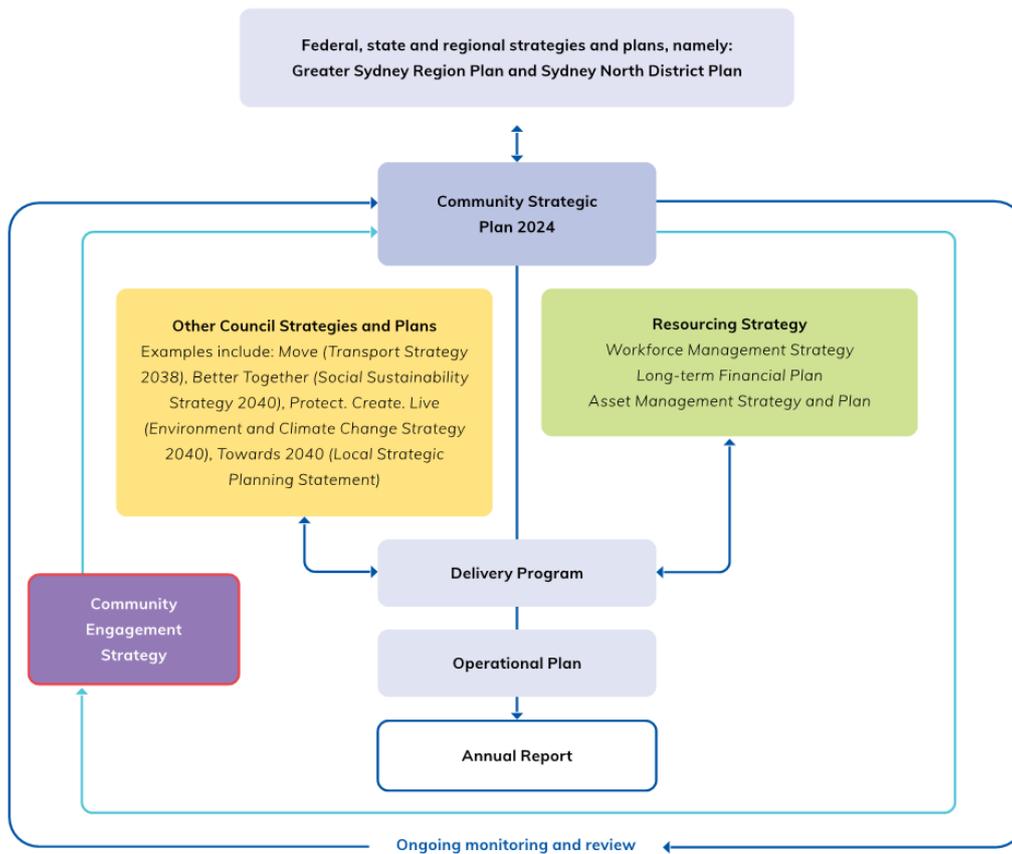
The Community Strategic Plan (CSP) defines our community's vision and sets a direction for everything Council must do over the next 20 years with our future planning, budgets and actions. The responsibility for making the long term community vision a reality rests with everyone and we look forward to working in close collaboration with the community, key partners and stakeholders in making Northern Beaches an even better place to live, work and play. Aligned to state and regional plans, the CSP also sets out the range of government and other agencies with which we partner.

Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

The integrated planning and reporting framework requires every NSW council to undertake long term planning with their community on services and facilities, informed by plans for finances, assets and the workforce. The framework is designed so that Council and the community both have a clear picture of:

1. Where we want to go (Community Strategic Plan and Local Strategic Planning Statement)
2. How we plan to get there (Delivery Program, Operational Plan, Resourcing Strategy)
3. How we will measure our progress (quarterly, annual and end of term reports)

Figure 1
Integrated planning and reporting framework



Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework
- Guidelines for Local Government in NSW.
Office of Local Government NSW 2021.

Strategy summary

The Northern Beaches has a long tradition of hosting and delivering diverse, fun and exciting events. Council recognises and values the diversity and benefits they each bring to our community.

Benefits of events

- Strengthen social connection and inclusion
- Enhance community safety and wellbeing
- Activate public spaces with culture and creativity
- Build community capacity and support third party organisers
- Drive economic and tourism benefits
- Promote environmental sustainability

The Strategy offers a 10 year vision ensuring events engage and connect our people and places, promote environmental sustainability and drive a vibrant visitor economy.

The principles

- Connect people through diversity and shared experiences
- Activate our unique places, making them vibrant, safe, inclusive and accessible
- Build capacity in event organisers to deliver new events
- Balance the economic, social and environmental outcomes across events

To maximise benefits from events for our community the Strategy is focused on 5 key goal areas:

1. Social connection: Enhance inclusion and a sense of wellbeing
2. Place-based vibrancy: Activate public spaces and enhance a sense of place
3. Economic growth: Support local businesses and attract visitors
4. Environmental sustainability: Demonstrate and promote leading practices
5. Partnerships: Collaborate with third party organisers to deliver events

Measuring success

The Strategy represents an important step towards ensuring that events across the Northern Beaches deliver meaningful social, environmental, and economic outcomes.

This Strategy outlines the goals, actions, and measures that will guide us towards realising our vision for events and advancing the objectives set out in the Community Strategic Plan.

While economic impacts are often more easily quantified, the social and cultural benefits of events are equally significant. Recognising and valuing these broader contributions remain central to our approach.



Draft Northern Beaches Events Strategy 2026 - 2035

Events on the Northern Beaches

Events come in many shapes and sizes, each with a different purpose and benefit to our community.

Our incredible natural environment and unique town centres are deeply valued by our community. While major events that bring significant visitors to places like Manly are valued for their benefits to the local economy, there is a strong desire in the community for more local events to be spread throughout other town centres and locations across the Northern Beaches.

The Strategy recognises the diversity of events and this framework clearly shows the different categories that help identify opportunities to benefit the region.



Draft Northern Beaches Events Strategy 2026 - 2035

Tier 1 – Major events

These events have a strong resonance with a town centre or village and attract visitors to the destination from outside the region.

Characteristics include:

- attract significant numbers of visitors and upwards of 10,000 attendees
- contribute to immediate and/or long-term measurable economic and community outcomes
- attract significant social media and other media coverage

Tier 2 – Signature events

These are significant events in terms of the scale and the number of attendees however they attract more locals and visitors from across the Northern Beaches.

Characteristics include:

- generate support from local businesses and organisations, potential to be major events in the future
- attract visitors and upwards of 3,000 attendees
- contribute to measurable economic and/or community outcomes
- attract social media and other media coverage

Tier 3 – Community events

These events are targeted at the local community to provide place-based activities across the region. They focus on entertainment, fun and the value of being local.

Characteristics include:

- engage and activate local town centres, villages and/or public places
- generate support from local businesses, organisations and/or community groups
- contribute to social and/or community outcomes
- attract local media coverage

Tier 4 – Civic events

These events are held for a special purpose.

Council manages and delivers a range of civic events and supports the delivery of ceremonies including Anzac Day and other national service days.

Council also hosts citizenship ceremonies in accordance with Federal Government regulations and guidelines.

Council's role

Council, as the manager of our public spaces, plays a key role in the delivery of an overarching annual events calendar across the Northern Beaches.

Council run events

Council funds and delivers an annual events program including major, signature, community and civic events. In addition, Council delivers hundreds of events and activations through its numerous services including Library Services, Community Development, Arts & Culture, Children's Services, Waste Management, Road Safety, Natural Environment, Aquatic Services, Place and Economic Development and Glen Street Theatre.

Support for third party run events

Council recognises the important role events play in the social and cultural fabric of our community. These events activate our open spaces, towns and villages and create opportunities for our community and visitors to connect.

Council provides access to public spaces, financial assistance and resources to support third party organisers to deliver a range of experiences that benefit our community.

Strategic partnerships

Council recognises and values the important role events play in enriching our community, supporting local businesses, and enhancing the experience of visitors.

Through strategic partnerships with event organisations, government agencies, businesses and local and global brands, Council seeks to attract and promote major events that provide opportunities for greater diversity, wider audience engagement, shared resources, increased brand credibility and the creation of impactful and memorable events.

The Strategy prioritises partnerships that align with the goals and aspirations as set out in the Community Strategic Plan, demonstrate value for money, uphold good governance, and promote inclusion and equity that will benefit our community.



Draft Northern Beaches Events Strategy 2026 - 2035

The value and benefits of events

Events play a multifaceted role in our community. They are key catalysts for creating a safe, inclusive and connected community as set out in the Social Sustainability Strategy - Better Together. They also support and promote a vibrant local economy which is reflected in the Northern Beaches Economic Development Strategy – Business on the Beaches.

Overall, their value is seen in their capacity to build community wellbeing, social cohesion, and resilience by:

- **strengthening social connection, inclusion and belonging** by bringing people together and celebrating diversity that fosters social networks
- **enhancing community safety and wellbeing** by providing vibrant and positive social activities in public spaces that promote active lifestyles and wellbeing
- **activating public spaces with culture and creativity** by enlivening town centres, villages, parks, and other public spaces, making them vibrant through creative and cultural opportunities
- **building community capacity** by supporting third party organisers to deliver their own events
- **delivering economic and tourism benefits for local businesses** by attracting events to the Northern Beaches that drive visitation, boost the local economy and create employment and volunteer opportunities
- **promoting environmental sustainability** by role modelling waste minimisation, single-use plastic reduction and responsible transport options



Draft Northern Beaches Events Strategy 2026 - 2035

Strategic direction

Vision

Events on the Northern Beaches will celebrate our unique vibe by connecting our people, places, businesses and culture. They will be dynamic, creative, innovative and inclusive; reflecting our personality and promoting the Northern Beaches as an extraordinary place to live, invest in and play.

Principles

To maximise the benefits to our community, events will seek to adhere to the following principles. They will:

- connect people through diversity and shared experiences
- activate and make our public places vibrant, safe, inclusive and accessible
- build the capacity of event organisers to deliver new events
- balance economic, social and environmental outcomes.

Goals

These principles will drive positive outcomes across 5 key goal areas.



Social
connection



Place-based
vibrancy



Economic
growth



Environmental
sustainability



Partnerships through
collaboration

Goals, actions and measure of success

Goal 1 - Social connection: enhance inclusion and a sense of wellbeing

Key actions	Measures of success
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support ongoing delivery of an annual events program • Expand cultural events and creative opportunities • Promote events via social and digital communication channels • Support provision of appropriate resources and measures to minimise risk and promote safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased number of high quality, diverse and inclusive events • Continued excellence in governance and event management as seen in attendee feedback surveys and other mechanisms • Demonstrated evaluation and review of annual events • Increased levels of engagement and conversion from digital and social media • Minimal or no incidents or negative impacts

Goal 2 - Place-based vibrancy: activate town centres and public spaces

Key actions	Measures of success
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support opportunities to promote place-based events and activation programs • Support local community and business groups to deliver fast, affordable and low impact events • Contribute to place planning processes • Develop and implement communication strategies to promote events in conjunction with local partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive feedback from local community, businesses and retailers • Increased diversity and accessibility of locations utilised • Increased partnerships and number of third party delivered events

Goal 3 - Economic growth: support local businesses and attract visitors

Key actions	Measures of success
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a plan to identify potential partners, key stakeholder involvement and opportunities to schedule event delivery outside of peak periods • Develop a consistent approach to promote third party event organisers to bring their events to the Northern Beaches that deliver economic, tourism and community benefits • Measure the impact of events on local town centres and attendee/participant satisfaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased number of events that generate measurable economic benefits including an upward trend in event visitors • Increased visitation to the area in shoulder/low seasons • Increased economic yield from visitors during events • Positive feedback from businesses, attendees and/or participants • Opportunities identified to increase return on investment on major, signature and/or community events

Goal 4 - Environmental sustainability: demonstrate and promote environmental sustainability in event delivery

Key actions	Measures of success
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote Council's Event Waste Management Guidelines to event organisers • Promote waste minimisation and sustainability initiatives of events • Explore transport solutions to help people get to and from events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% compliance with Council's Single Use Plastics Policy • Increased number of events using recycling collection in addition to waste collection • Improved communications promoting event sustainability measures and outcomes

Goal 5 - Partnerships: collaborate with third party organisers to deliver events

Key actions

- Provide clear guidance, streamlined approvals and promotional support for third party run events
- Deliver an annual Event Grants & Sponsorship Program
- Attract investment in new major events on the Northern Beaches by collaborating with third party event organisers
- Support third party event delivery through capacity building, guidelines and toolkits, including accessibility

Measures of success

- Delivered event management information through various platforms
- Identified and increased return on investment on events supported by Council
- Positive feedback from stakeholders, attendees and/or participants
- Reviews of events undertaken to assess regulatory compliance



Draft Northern Beaches Events Strategy 2026 - 2035



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council

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R20. Reconciliation between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Australians

Title: Reconciliation between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Australians Policy
Policy No: R20
Keywords: Indigenous, Non-Indigenous, Australian, Aboriginal
Responsible Officer: Divisional Manager – Human Services and Facilities

1. PURPOSE AND AUTHORITY

The purpose and overall objective of this policy is to set out Manly Council's considered and adopted policy position with respect to the reconciliation process between indigenous and non-indigenous peoples living in Australia.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

1. Manly Council is committed to the reconciliation process between indigenous and non-indigenous peoples living in Australia.
2. Council is working towards healing the grief of the Aboriginal people by supporting Aboriginal self-determination in Australia.

*(O.M. 30.6.97)
(Confirmed 20.10.97)*

3. PRINCIPLES

The underlying principle of this policy is the need to redress, and make amends for, both past as well as present injustices suffered by indigenous peoples living in Australia, as well as the need to foster better ties and enhance greater understanding, learning and empathy between indigenous and non-indigenous peoples living in Australia.

4. SCOPE

This policy applies to all Council officials (including Councillors and Council staff and consultants engaged by Council) who are involved, directly or indirectly, in decision-making (including preparatory and recommendatory decision-making) with respect to the subject-matter of this policy.

5. DEFINITIONS

See the Dictionary at the end of the Local Government Act 1993, as well as the Native Title (New South Wales) Act 1994, for definitions of various terms and expressions used in this policy.

6. IMPLEMENTATION

This policy will be implemented without delay once adopted by Council. Upon adoption this policy will be entered into Council's policy register, made available online and provided to all staff and any other people directly affected by this policy.

Council and/or the General Manager may, during a civil emergency only, set aside any policy terms to ensure public safety.

7. MONITORING AND BREACHES

Regular monitoring of compliance with this policy, relevant legislation and Manly policies and procedures will be undertaken and documented by the responsible officer for this policy.

Breaches of this policy are considered to be breaches of Manly Council's Code of Conduct and therefore invoke the relevant sanctions outlined in that Code. Persons in breach of any legislation may be subject to relevant criminal action.

8. REPORTING

No specific reporting is required by this policy.

9. POLICY REVIEW

For the purposes of carrying out and giving effect to this policy, the General Manager may from time to time prepare, adopt or vary, and otherwise issue to Council staff, guidelines and directions relating to any aspect of this policy.

Any recognised change to relevant legislation; or directives or guidelines issued by agencies including the NSW Ombudsman and the Department of Local Government; or to Manly Council's related guidelines and procedures will activate an immediate review of this policy to ensure it remains current and aligned to best practice policies.

10. RELEVANT REFERENCES AND LEGISLATION

Local Government Act 1993
Native Title (New South Wales) Act 1994.

11. RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES

Nil.

12. REVISION SCHEDULE

Minute No	Date of Issue	Action	Author	Checked by
PS53/11	2 May 2011	Periodic Review	Secretariat, Corporate Services	Manager, Administration
	June 2013	Comprehensive Review		General Counsel
PS16/14	3 March 2014	Periodic Review	OM CSS	Manager Governance



MINUTES

COMMUNITY SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

held in Manly Town Hall on

THURSDAY 13 NOVEMBER 2025

MINUTES OF COMMUNITY SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE - 13 NOVEMBER 2025

Minutes of the Community Safety Advisory Committee

held on Thursday 13 November 2025

in Manly Town Hall at 9:00am

ATTENDANCE:

Cr Nick Beaugeard	Curl Curl Ward – Acting Chair
Cr Vincent De Luca OAM	Narrabeen Ward (alternate)
Cr Rowie Dillon	Pittwater Ward
Supt John Duncan	Northern Beaches Police Area Command
Aileen Ogilvie	Northern Beaches Community Drug Action Team
Doug Brooker	Northern Beaches Liquor Accord
Sarah Sweeney	Northern Beaches Mental Health Interagency
Sam King	Northern Beaches Youth Interagency
Michele Bell	Northern Sydney Community Network (Seniors sector)
Lisa Henning	Northern Sydney Housing and Homelessness Interagency
Melissa Palermo	Northern Sydney Local Health District
Anya Rowlandson	Sydney North Health Network – Northern Sydney PHN
Tracey Curnoe	Community Representative – Curl Curl Ward
Libby Paulsen	Community Representative – Frenchs Forest Ward
Mary Brearton	Community Representative – Narrabeen Ward
Kylie Ferguson	Community Representative – Pittwater Ward
Peta Garrett	Representing Dr Sophie Scamps Federal Member for Mackellar
Jill Bryant	Representing Zali Steggall OAM MP Federal Member for Warringah
Gypsy Bryant	Representing Michael Regan MP State Member for Wakehurst

Council Officer Contacts

David Kerr	Director Community and Recreation
James Farrington	Director Planning and Place
Kylie Walshe	Executive Manager Community, Arts and Culture
Azmeena Kelly	Executive Manager Environmental Compliance
Jeremy Smith	Executive Manager Parks & Open Space
Will Wrathall	Manager Community Development
Kath Young	Community Safety Coordinator
Helen Askew	Program Support Officer Community Development

Visitors

Det A/Insp Kris Ford	Northern Beaches Police Area Command
Sherryn Moltzen	Community and Partnership Lead, Sydney North Health Network – Northern Sydney PHN
Pam Sadler	Team Leader Community Development
Georgia Llewellyn	Community Development Officer

MINUTES OF COMMUNITY SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE - 13 NOVEMBER 2025

1.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Chair acknowledged the Traditional Custodians of the land on which the meeting gathered, and paid respect to Elders past, present and emerging.

2.0 APOLOGIES

Welcome to new members and visitors:

Tracey Curnoe	Community Representative Curl Curl Ward
Anya Rowlandson	Commissioning Manager Sydney North Health Network – Northern Sydney PHN
Sherryn Moltzen	Community and Partnership Lead, Sydney North Health Network – Northern Sydney PHN
Lisa Henning	Acting Regional Manager North – Bridge Housing
Det A/Insp Kris Ford	Northern Beaches Police Area Command
James Farrington	Director Planning and Place, Northern Beaches Council

Apologies were received from:

James Griffin MP	State Member for Manly
Jacqui Scruby MP	State Member for Pittwater
Cr Sue Heins	Frenchs Forest Ward – Mayor
Cr Candy Bingham	Manly Ward – Deputy Mayor
Cr Ruth Robins	Narrabeen Ward (alternate)
Scott Phillips	Chief Executive Officer, Northern Beaches Council

The following were not in attendance:

Matt Cross MP, State Member for Davidson
Community Representative – Manly Ward (position vacant)
Northern Beaches Domestic Violence Network (position vacant).

The Committee was advised that the community representative for Manly Ward, Lucy Band, has stepped down from her position due to her recent employment by Northern Beaches Council. The Chair acknowledged Lucy's valuable contributions to the Committee over the past 2 years.

3.0 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

There were no disclosures of pecuniary or non-pecuniary conflicts of interest.

4.0 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

4.1 MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 14 AUGUST 2025

The minutes of the Community Safety Advisory Committee Meeting held on 14 August 2025, copies of which were previously circulated to all members, were confirmed as a true and correct record of the proceedings of that meeting.

Moved Superintendent Duncan, seconded Gypsy Bryant.

MINUTES OF COMMUNITY SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE - 13 NOVEMBER 2025

5.0 ACTIONS UPDATE

5.1 ACTIONS UPDATE

Progress against the actions as included in the Agenda were noted by the Committee.

MEETING OF 14 AUGUST 2025

ITEM NO.	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	PROGRESS
6.1	Northern Beaches Police Area Command to provide a redacted version of the information shared, showing trends.	Northern Beaches Police Area Command	Completed
6.3	Council, in collaboration with the Northern Beaches Youth Interagency, conduct further community consultation and research regarding additional legal graffiti walls, to inform educational initiatives and consider any specific needs in the north of the Northern Beaches LGA.	Manager Community Development Sam King	Update to be provided in May 2026

6.0 AGENDA ITEMS

6.1 POLICE REPORT - SUPERINTENDENT JOHN DUNCAN

Superintendent Duncan and Detective Acting Inspector Ford provided an update on Northern Beaches Police Area Command matters. It was requested the Committee hold in confidence discussion of policing matters which do not appear in these Minutes.

ITEM NO.	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	DUE DATE
6.1	Note the report	-	-

6.2 ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE REPORT

Council provided an overview and presentation on compliance and regulatory statistics for the period August to October 2025.

Companion Animal Management:

- 75 dog attacks were reported to Council, 12 of which occurred on private property.
- 75 compliance actions were investigated in this period with 3 infringements issued to date.
- Proactive dog patrols continued across the LGA with instances of enforcement action taken.
- On 14 October 2025 the trial period began for off leash dogs on Mona Vale Beach (South), between 5-10am and 5-9pm during daylight savings. Council conducts daily patrols with a focus on education to ensure the community are aware of the rules of the trial. The space is being well utilised by compliant dog owners.
- A Companion Animals Education Officer has recently been employed. As well as participating in educational patrols, the officer is running pop-up events at the trial off leash dog area at Mona Vale Beach (south) and also recently undertook community education sessions at Glen Street Theatre and Manly Seniors Centre. The main focus of these events was to provide families information and helpful tips on keeping children safe around dogs.
- An outdoor educational event was also held at St Ives Showground on Sunday 9 November

MINUTES OF COMMUNITY SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE - 13 NOVEMBER 2025

2025 in collaboration with Ku-ring-gai Council.

School Zones:

- School parking patrols have continued with infringement notices issued in response to traffic safety concerns around schools.

Manly night patrols:

Community use of East and West Esplanade Parks and surrounding areas has increased with the spring season and warmer weather. Increased night patrols have commenced to support enforcement of [alcohol restrictions in open spaces](#).

DISCUSSION

[Assistance animals](#) and access to cafés were discussed:

- [NSW Food Authority](#) provides information about assistance animals in food premises.
- Food safety practices and general requirements for restaurants, cafes and licenced premises relating to assistance and companion animals are outlined at [Standard 3.2.2](#) Section 24(2).
- Discussed the value of guidance for the community on issues relating to assistance animals including: how to identify an assistance animal; accreditation; access to food businesses.

ITEM NO.	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	DUE DATE
6.2	Consider an update of Council's website to provide guidance to community members on issues relating to assistance animals.	Executive Manager Compliance	12 February 2026

6.3 NORTHERN SYDNEY WELLBEING COLLABORATIVE

The Sydney North Health Network (SNHN) representatives provided a presentation on the [Northern Sydney Wellbeing Collaborative](#) (Collaborative).

The three key aspects to this framework include:

- The Wellbeing Collaborative is the collective network of stakeholders representing services and communities, working together to transform wellbeing across the region. The initiative which commenced in June 2025 aims to widen the sphere of influence through meaningful collaborative partnerships to address health equity gaps and poor integration across the health and social care system.
- Community Cooperatives aim to capitalise on local assets (people and places) and to transform local ideas into sustainable programs.
- Integrated Service Hubs will offer coordinated care and are designed as the front door concierge for people seeking support, offering a single, visible entry point where individuals are welcomed and then guided to the right supports, coordinating across all service providers in the system. Service Hubs, whether place based or digital, are anticipated to commence in July 2026.

Governance will rest with the Sydney North Health Network and Commissioning funds will operationalise the Hubs, initially focusing on mental health, alcohol and other drugs (AOD) and suicide prevention.

The SNHN representatives called for community action to be a part of the process and encouraged the Committee to share the information with the community. The presentation will be shared with

MINUTES OF COMMUNITY SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE - 13 NOVEMBER 2025

Committee members.

[Join the Northern Sydney Wellbeing Collaborative](#)

DISCUSSION

Funding opportunities and how the end user learns about or accesses the services was discussed.

ITEM NO.	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	DUE DATE
6.3	Note the presentation	-	-

6.4 HOMELESSNESS GUIDELINES

Council provided a presentation on the draft Determination for Homelessness in Public Spaces and the accompanying Operational Guidelines.

Council is often the first to identify, be notified of, or have engagements with people experiencing homelessness in public spaces. The former Homeless Person’s Protocol has been the subject of the review.

Since 2024, Council have worked with relevant internal teams to develop a draft Determination and Operational Guidelines. The draft Determination aligns with the NSW Government Protocol for Homeless People in Public Places and NSW Implementation Guidelines. It encourages a coordinated response between Council and other key stakeholders so that people are offered support if they need or request it and to manage any impacts on public safety and amenity for the broader community. The draft Operational Guidelines aim to provide Council staff with a clear and consistent approach in responding to people experiencing homelessness in public places.

Council’s strategic focus is to work towards long term housing solutions and it was noted that positive steps of engagement often take time.

ITEM NO.	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	DUE DATE
6.4	Note the draft determination	-	-

6.5 REVIEW OF COMMUNITY SAFETY PLAN

An update was provided on the Community Safety Plan development.

From 19 September - 26 October 2025 the community was invited to provide feedback on their experience with safety across the Northern Beaches through the Your Say online platform. Participation was possible via a survey and/or through an online mapping exercise.

Council also consulted with the Youth Advisory Group on 29 September 2025.

Over 470 submissions were made by community members providing input on issues including:

- What community safety issues most concern the community.
- Where they feel safe or unsafe.
- What factors contribute to feelings of safety.
- What would make them feel safer.

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A broad overview of survey responses was presented to the Committee, noting that this only conveys the sentiments and experiences of those who responded and is not wholly representative of the broader community.

Initial survey results indicate that key aspects to feeling safe include: good lighting; place design that allows people to see what/who is around them; activated public spaces (but not too crowded); well-maintained areas; a good sense of community and visible security.

Key issues impacting safety were reported to include: pedestrian and road safety; e-bikes; loud intimidating behaviour / loitering; public drinking and drug use; maintenance of public spaces; and a fear of assault.

These survey outcomes will be combined with feedback from a range of other engagement mechanisms and research and an in-depth analysis will be undertaken to identify priority concerns. Stakeholders will then be consulted on opportunities to improve community safety.

The survey data included in the presentation will be shared with the Committee.

A further update will be provided at the February 2026 Committee meeting.

ITEM NO.	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	DUE DATE
6.5	Note the information presented	-	-

6.6 COMMUNITY SAFETY UPDATE

Committee Community Representatives

The term of office for the Committee’s community representatives ends in June 2026. Vacant positions will be advertised in June and July 2026. The next cohort of community representatives will be in place for the August 2026 Committee meeting.

2026 Committee Meeting Schedule

The schedule of Community Safety Advisory Committee meetings for 2026 was accepted:

Date	Time
Thursday 12 February 2026	9.00 – 11.00am
Thursday 14 May 2026	9.00 – 11.00am
Thursday 13 August 2026	9.00 – 11.00am
Thursday 12 November 2026	9.00 – 11.00am

ITEM NO.	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	DUE DATE
6.6	Note the community safety updates	-	-

MINUTES OF COMMUNITY SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE - 13 NOVEMBER 2025

7.0 GENERAL BUSINESS

The following items were raised without notice as General Business.

- 7.1 Council's smoking and vaping restrictions and related signage in public open spaces was raised. It was noted that Northern Beaches aquatic centres are both non-smoking areas. Section 6A of the Smoke-free Environment Act 2000 prohibits smoking within 10 metres of children's play equipment in outdoor public places in NSW and is able to be enforced. Sports field restrictions are more complex and more difficult to communicate to the public.
- 7.2 The Ministry of Health is undertaking community engagement on the issue of a new model for responding to mental health emergencies in the community. Submissions can be made at [Have your say](#) until Tuesday 2 December 2025.
- 7.3 NSW Health has been conducting operations on tobacco shops across the North Shore. Report non-compliance with tobacco and e-cigarette laws in NSW via the portal <https://reportsmokingvaping.health.nsw.gov.au/>
- 7.4 Councillor De Luca expressed his appreciation to all representatives for their service to this Committee and thanked Police for being so open with the Committee and taking calls.
- 7.5 It was noted Mona Vale Hospital Urgent Care Centre and Northern Beaches Medical Centre now both provide urgent care on a walk-in basis and are bulk billed.

ITEM NO.	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	DUE DATE
7.1.1	Provide advice to the Committee on smoking/vaping restrictions at rockpools and sports fields and how these restrictions are conveyed to community.	Executive Manager Parks & Open Space	12 February 2026
7.1.2	Provide response to NSW Health correspondence health on this matter.	Executive Manager Parks & Open Space	12 February 2026
7.2	Noted	-	-
7.3	Noted	-	-
7.4	Noted	-	-
7.5	Noted	-	-

The meeting concluded at 10.45am

This is the final page of the minutes comprising 8 pages numbered 1 to 8 of the Community Safety Advisory Committee held on Thursday 13 November 2025 and confirmed on Thursday 12 February 2026



Council Policy – NB-P-15

Northern Beaches Cultural Collections Management and Gifts Policy

Introduction

Northern Beaches Council is the custodian of a diverse cultural collection that includes artworks, public art, civic ephemera and local history items that directly relate to the Northern Beaches area and its communities.

A **cultural collection** is a collection of authentic objects, both natural and man-made, which have historic, aesthetic, scientific, artistic, research, technical, social or spiritual significance. This comprises objects of all types, including and not limited to antiquities; archaeological, ethnological and paleontological material; art; digital and multi-media works; and archives including written, sound, photographic and film objects.

The Cultural Collection encompasses a series of existing sub-collections including the Manly Art Gallery & Museum Collections, the Local Studies Collection, the Community Art Collection and the Civic Collection. It consists of many items of local, state and national significance, which document the unique social, artistic, cultural and local governance history of the Northern Beaches. It includes many nationally significant artworks and an unparalleled assemblage of historic material relating to both local beach culture and the history of surfing.

Policy Statement

Northern Beaches Council will build and maintain a cultural collection that preserves and expresses local identity and creates community well-being and connection to place on the Northern Beaches. As a resource the Collection will be used to:

- Enrich knowledge, understanding and experience of the Northern Beaches area and its communities
- Create a sense of place
- Conserve significant heritage and artistic expression for the benefit of the community and future generations
- Contribute to the development of an outstanding art gallery and museum for the area
- Interpret the history, development and significance of the area and its communities
- Contribute to and foster historical and cultural debate
- Provide an educational, research and display facility for the community.

Scope of Policy

This policy is the Northern Beaches Council reference for collection development and is a public facing document published on Council's website. This policy is applicable to all Northern Beaches Council employees, casual employees, contractors and volunteers. All references to 'employees' within this policy should therefore be read to include volunteers and contractors, as well as paid employees. The policy is essential for employees with collection development responsibilities aligned to their roles.



Principles

- Council will undertake targeted and coordinated collecting of cultural material to enhance the depth and value of its collections
- Council will only acquire items, including accepting gifts, bequests and donations, that fulfil its acquisition criteria and the generic requirements of relevance and provenance
- Council welcomes financial gifts for general purposes that support the overarching aims and objectives of the Northern Beaches Cultural Collections
- Artworks, objects or cultural material will only be acquired when Council can provide appropriate resources and storage to maintain and care for them
- No artworks, objects or cultural material will be acquired with conditions or restrictions on the way they may be used or displayed in the future
- No artworks, objects or cultural material will be acquired from significant heritage sites where removal will diminish the significance of the object or the place, except in circumstances where the object is at risk
- No artworks, objects or cultural material will be acquired that relate to Aboriginal heritage on the Northern Beaches. Aboriginal people are the cultural owners and managers of items or objects relating to their heritage, and as such, any cultural material offered to Council will be referred to the appropriate custodians
- Council will maximise the opportunity for access to, and use of, its cultural collections by the community
- Council will encourage interaction and connection with local communities, cultural organisations and the general public through its cultural collections
- Council will document its cultural collections to a standard that ensures it can consistently record the nature and location of its items
- Council will allow the temporary loan of items both into and from its collections, subject to the safety and security of the item being assured and appropriate documentation undertaken
- Council will seek to provide appropriate conditions at all times for the display and storage of its collections, including appropriate environments and housing materials
- De-accessioning of items from Council's collections is acceptable, subject to strict adherence to criteria and detailed documentation
- Disposal of an item in Council's collections will only be undertaken where it is de-accessioned, or has never been accessioned, and will follow strict disposal procedures
- All collecting activity and collection management processes will be conducted in accordance with the [ICOM Code of Ethics for Museums](#) and within the framework of the [NSW Heritage Office Movable Heritage Principles](#), the [Library Council of NSW Standards and Guidelines for NSW public libraries](#) and the [Australian Copyright Council Moral Rights](#).

Collection Development – Acquisitions

Acquisitions into the Cultural Collection can be made by donation, bequest, or through purchase or commissioning. Civic or ceremonial gifts awarded to or received by Councillors and staff in the course of their duties, may be considered for inclusion in the Collection. Items can only be purchased if funds are available in Council's budget or funds are made available through a financial gift or bequest. If there are no funds available in the current budget, a Report will be submitted to Council seeking funding.



To be eligible for acquisition into the Collection, an item must meet the essential acquisition criteria listed below, as well as the specific acquisition criteria relevant to the sub-collection category to which it will belong. The Community Arts & Culture and Library Services Executive Managers will oversee all acquisitions that are considered significant to their sub-collections.

Essential Acquisition Criteria

To be considered for the Northern Beaches Cultural Collection all items must meet the essential acquisition criteria. Incomplete items or works will not be considered.

1. Demonstrable significance for the Northern Beaches community
2. Comply with the stated purpose and key collecting areas of the Collection
3. Unconditional donation or purchase that has valid and clearly verifiable legal title
4. Whole, complete and finished item
5. Established and verifiable provenance
6. Acceptable standard of physical condition, presentation and format
7. Resource implications such as staffing, storage or display requirements are satisfied
8. There are no unreasonable or inappropriate restrictions on display of the item
9. Council can loan the item
10. That copyright agreement is not unreasonable
11. That Council can de-accession the item.

Specific Acquisition Criteria for each Sub-Collection

Manly Art Gallery & Museum Collection	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Works of high quality by significant Australian artists, both historical and contemporary, in a range of mediums 2. Significant artworks by artists associated with Manly and the Northern Beaches area that document the social, cultural and artistic history of the region 3. Objects for the Museum that reflect and expand on the knowledge of Australian beach culture, with specific reference to the role that Manly and the Northern Beaches area has played in this history 4. Permanent public artworks within the Northern Beaches area, acquired and managed according to the Northern Beaches Council Public Art Policy.
Local Studies Collection	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Items that have a distinct and verifiable connection to the Northern Beaches 2. Items that contribute to an understanding of people, life or the environment of the Northern Beaches in the past or the present 3. Items that improve the existing research and reference collections currently used by the community 4. Items deemed to be rare and/or have been assessed by experts as having local significance.
Community Art Collection	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Works of high quality by local artists for display within Council-owned buildings across the Northern Beaches, including community, civic and administrative spaces.
Civic Collection	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. An item of visual art, ephemera or memorabilia gifted to a Council representative in the course of official Council business (See also– Council’s Code of Conduct) 2. Framed photographs or ceremonial documents, such as scrolls and certificates, generated by the Northern Beaches Council, awarded to Northern Beaches Council or which represents a major Northern Beaches event, activity or initiative such as ‘Sister Cities’.



Collection Management and Gifts Guidelines

Guidelines to be used in conjunction with this Policy outline the decision making processes that shape the cultural collections of Northern Beaches Council. These Guidelines should be used as a reference document and may be amended through internal processes by senior management based on advice from Council's professional cultural officers.

The Guidelines provides a set of principles to manage:

- **Collection development** – purpose and priorities of the Northern Beaches Collection and its various sub-collections
- **Acquisitions** – purchases, commissions, donations, long-term loans
- **Gifts** – acceptance of financial gifts, including donations of material associated with the Commonwealth Government's [Cultural Gifts Program](#) which provide tax incentives to encourage gifts of culturally significant items from private individuals to public collections
- **Preservation and care** – documentation, conservation, storage and security
- **Access** – digital and physical access through exhibitions, loan agreements, publications, public programs and research.

Policy application

This policy applies to all employees, agents, officers, councillors, volunteers, contractors, and committee members of Northern Beaches Council and the general public.

References and related documents

Northern Beaches Council Public Art Policy NB-P-16

Northern Beaches Council Movable Heritage Policy

Northern Beaches Coast Walk Strategic Plan

Connected Through Creativity; Northern Beaches Council Arts and Creativity Strategy 2029

Northern Beaches Council Policy Framework NB-P-01

Northern Beaches Council Policy Implementation Guideline NB-G-28

Community Strategic Plan

This Council policy relates to the Community Strategic Plan Outcome of:

Community and belonging - Goal 7 Our community has access to a diverse range of cultural activities and events

Definitions

- **Authentic:** Of undisputed origin and supported by evidence; genuine.
- **Acquisition:** Acquiring or gaining possession of an item or collection.
- **Burra Charter:** Charter developed and adopted by Australia ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites), which establishes nationally accepted principles for the conservation of places of cultural significance.
- **Collection:** A body of acquired items held by a collecting organisation, or the accumulated items held by a collector.
- **Collection policy:** A publicly accessible document that guides the development and management of an organisation's cultural collection, specifying why, what, where, how and



when it collects, and how and why items may be deaccessioned from the collection. The collection policy includes a range of clauses or policy statements that provide an ethical framework for making sound decisions about the development and use of the collection.

- **Criteria (or assessment criteria):** A broad framework of cultural, aesthetic and natural values used in the significance assessment process to draw out or elucidate how and why the item or collection is significant.
- **Deaccession:** To de-register an item from a collection. Deaccessioning is the process of de-registering an item from a collection for clearly stated reasons, and disposing of it in accordance with approved policies and procedures spelt out in the collection policy or in a separate deaccessioning policy.
- **Documentation:** The process of record keeping for each item in a collection. Documentation includes registration, cataloguing and research notes.
- **Interpretation:** All the ways of presenting the significance of an item or collection, from simple object labels to exhibitions, education programs and web-based resources.
- **Moral rights:** Protecting the personal relationship between a creator and their work even if the creator no longer owns the work, or the copyright in the work. Moral rights concern the creator’s right to be properly attributed or credited, and the protection of their work from derogatory treatment.
- **Movable heritage:** Any reasonably portable item or collection of historic, aesthetic, scientific or social significance.
- **Provenance:** The documented chain of ownership of an item or collection, or more broadly the life history of an item including previous owners, origin, and context of use.
- **Significance:** The meaning and values of an item or collection, or what makes it important. Significance is the historic, aesthetic, scientific and social values that an item or collection has for past, present and future generations.

Responsible Officer

Executive Manager, Community, Arts and Culture

Review Date

As per adopted policy review schedule

Revision History

Revision	Date	Status	TRIM Ref
1	5/11/2018	First draft Northern Beaches Cultural Collections Management and Gifts Policy	2018/700784
2	29/4/2019	Approved Northern Beaches Cultural Collections Management and Gifts Policy	2019/243423
3	28/5/2019	Adopted by Council	2019/247884
4	12/02/2021	Amendments made for Public Exhibition in March 2021	2021/091664
5	11/05/2021	Amendments made following Public Exhibition in March 2021	2021/334783
6	25/06/2021	Amended version Adopted by Council	2019/247884
7	26/03/2024	Policy reference number applied – NB-P-15	2019/247884
8	09/02/2026	Governance review	2019/247884





Draft Customer Experience Strategy 2030





We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of these lands
and show respect to Elders, past, present and emerging.

Contents

Acknowledgement of Country	2	Direction 1 - Make it easy	18	Direction 3 - Make it personalised	21
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Document information

First year of plan - 2025/26

Draft presented: 21 October 2025 - 25CUST0315

Draft Customer Experience Strategy 2030

Message from the Mayor

Supporting our community, economy and environment to be strong and resilient.



One of the key principles for local government is recognising the diverse needs and interests of our communities while providing the best possible value for residents and ratepayers. One of the ways we achieve this is through a strong focus on the customer experience.

This 5-year Customer Experience Strategy, will:

- enhance the experience for our digital users
- make it easier to interact with us by improving our service delivery
- listen to customer feedback and ensure insight-led decision making.

In our fast-paced and highly connected world, customers have become more discerning, and their expectations have changed significantly. With the advent of technology and social media, customers have access to more information and they are increasingly looking for personalised and convenient experiences. We must recognise and adapt to these changing expectations to remain relevant and provide high-quality services to our community.

One of the key drivers of the changing customer expectations is the rise of digital technology. Customers now expect to be able to interact with local government through a variety of digital channels, including websites, social media and mobile apps. They also expect to be able to access information and services at any time and from anywhere, without the need to visit physical offices or make phone calls. This trend is particularly important for younger customers who have grown up with technology and have come to expect seamless digital experiences.

Another important factor is the increasing importance of overall customer experience. Customers are looking for more than good service; they want to be valued. They expect to be treated as individuals and have their unique needs and preferences taken into account.

This is why customer experience has become a critical factor in the success of local government. A positive customer experience is a key driver in customer satisfaction and organisational reputation.

Local government must also recognise that customer expectations are not static; they evolve over time. We must therefore remain agile and responsive, constantly monitoring and adapting to changes in customer preferences and expectations. This requires a customer-centric approach that puts the needs and preferences of our residents at the forefront of decision-making.

I am pleased to present this Strategy as our roadmap for achieving better customer experience outcomes for the Northern Beaches community.



Sue Heins
Mayor

Our commitment to customer experience

At Northern Beaches Council we are committed to understanding our customers' needs and delivering solutions that drive customer satisfaction.

Our Customer Experience Strategy will deliver this commitment through a seamless, efficient and personalised experience to every customer who interacts with Northern Beaches Council.

This Customer Experience Strategy 2030 provides the direction and plan to ensure that we achieve our community's goals, particularly Goal 20, as outlined in the Northern Beaches Community Strategic Plan 2040 -

Our Council is proactive, and efficiently and effectively responds to, and delivers on, the evolving needs of the community.

This Strategy will continue Northern Beaches Council's journey on the path to achieving customer experience excellence.

The Strategy identifies three directions and four outcomes for customer experience that underpin actions for the next 5 years to ensure we deliver on customer expectations and address current pain points.



6

A customer centric approach

Plan on a page



Directions	Make it easy	Make it seamless	Make it personalised
Purpose	Delivering digital service through multiple channels will make it easier for people to contact us when and how it suits them.	We can make the customer experience seamless by resolving customer enquiries at the first point of contact, providing proactive updates through the journey and ensuring the same level of service no matter who they speak to in the organisation.	Better understanding our customers and using that information to personalise and improve their experience with us will deliver higher customer satisfaction for the community.
Outcomes	<p>Outcome 1 Implement user-friendly and accessible digital platforms that meet the needs of our diverse customer base.</p> <p>Maintain our commitment to the needs of our customers who prefer to interact with us in alternative ways.</p>	<p>Outcome 2 Ensure consistent service delivery across all customer touchpoints, meeting or exceeding customer expectations.</p> <p>Outcome 3 Deliver a customer-centric culture that prioritises customer needs and preferences, placing them at the centre of all decision-making processes.</p>	Outcome 4 Explore one view of the customer across the organisation through a comprehensive data collection and analysis framework.
Key measures	Increase in the number of digital service transactions.	Increase in overall Customer Satisfaction score.	Increase in satisfaction score for customers feeling valued.

Customer experience

The compass that points us towards sustained success and growth.

Customer experience refers to the overall perception a customer has of a brand, organisation or product based on every interaction they have had with it throughout their entire customer journey.

It encompasses all aspects of a customer's journey engaging with Council, including interactions with employees, website usability, ease of access to information and services, speed of service and resolution of issues or problems.

In a digital age where customers publicly share their service experiences online, it is just as important to focus on how services are delivered and the management of customer enquiries, as it is to focus on the actual service levels and quality when measuring customer experience.¹

The goal of delivering a positive customer experience is to build high levels of customer satisfaction and foster a sense of trust and positive reputation within the community.

Levels of customer satisfaction are impacted by the underlying expectations of the customer founded on previous experience engaging with Council services. Opportunities to improve customer experience arise from the gaps between customer expectation and customer experience.²

Given the holistic nature of the touchpoints that affect customer experience, everyone within Council has a responsibility to have a positive impact on our customer interactions.

Capturing, analysing, and responding to customer experience data is key to fostering an organisation focused on continuous service improvement. By listening to the customer, those employees who interact directly with customers, and those who don't interact directly but are essential contributors to service delivery, you can establish a full picture of the expected and actual customer experience, including gaps identified, to prioritise areas of improvement.³

The customer experience gains achieved through this process will produce corresponding reputation, efficiency and productive benefits for the organisation through streamlined processes and better utilisation of Council resources.

¹ The Call to rethink Government Customer Experience, Mckinsey & Company July 2022

² Understanding Customer Experience, Schwager, A and Meyer C, Harvard Business Review, February 2007

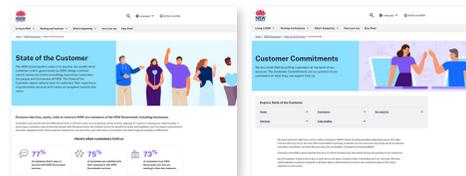
⁴ Prioritizing customer experience in government, Mckinsey & Company, February 2022

Our strategic line of sight

Taking direction from other strategies and plans in developing the Customer Experience Strategy.

Consideration was given to the alignment of this Strategy with direction provided in other Northern Beaches Council strategies and plans, as well as commitments made to customer experience by the NSW Government and the Federal Government.

Figure 1 - State



NSW Government State of the Customer Report

NSW Government Customer Commitments

Figure 2 - Local



Northern Beaches Community Strategic Plan 2040



Digital Transformation Strategy



Community Engagement Strategy



Customer Service Charter



Community Participation Plan



Better Together 2040



Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022 - 2026



Multicultural Inclusion Plan 2024 - 2029

Figure 3 - Key directions and actions from Council strategies and plans that inform the development of the Customer Experience Strategy:

Strategy/Plan	Direction/Action
Community Strategic Plan 2040	<p>Community Vision - Northern Beaches - a safe, diverse, inclusive and connected community that lives in balance with our extraordinary coastal and bushland environment.</p> <p>Goal 20 - Our Council is proactive, and efficiently and effectively responds to, and delivers on, the evolving needs of the community</p>
Digital Transformation Strategy	<p>Goal 1: Digitally Connected Community - We are a leader of our digitally connected community</p> <p>Goal 2: Available Anywhere, Anytime - We are available when you are, where you are</p> <p>Goal 3: Customer Needs Anticipated - We anticipate your needs and make your life simpler</p>
Community Engagement Strategy	<p>Principle 4 Communicate effectively</p> <p>Principle 5 Build and maintain relationships</p> <p>Principle 6 Listen and respond</p> <p>Principle 7 Learn and improve</p>
DIAP 2022-2026	<p>Focus Area 4 - Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes</p>
Multicultural Inclusion Plan 2024-2029	<p>Participating - A place where everyone feels safe, connected and included in community life.</p> <p>Outcome 5 - Resources and opportunities are accessible in community languages</p> <p>Outcome 7 – Strong relationships and partnerships between all stakeholders with the multicultural community</p>



Our community

The Northern Beaches is a community of 270,772 (ERP 2024, Profile.id) residents, making it the fourth largest Council area by population in NSW.

Bounded by Cowan Creek and Broken Bay in the north, the Tasman Sea in the east, Sydney Harbour and North Harbour in the south, and Middle Harbour and the Ku-ring-gai Council area in the west, the total land area of 253 square kilometres is mainly residential and national park, with some commercial, industrial and rural areas.

Customer interactions

Council provides 57 services which are delivered to the community each year. This ranges in diversity from libraries, swimming pools, and playgrounds to requesting help in areas such as development applications, compliance or waste.

This amounts to nearly 3 million customer interactions each year including over 300 000 requesting help with an issue or making an application and 2 million visitors to our libraries, aquatic pools, galleries and community centres.

Figure 4 - Households

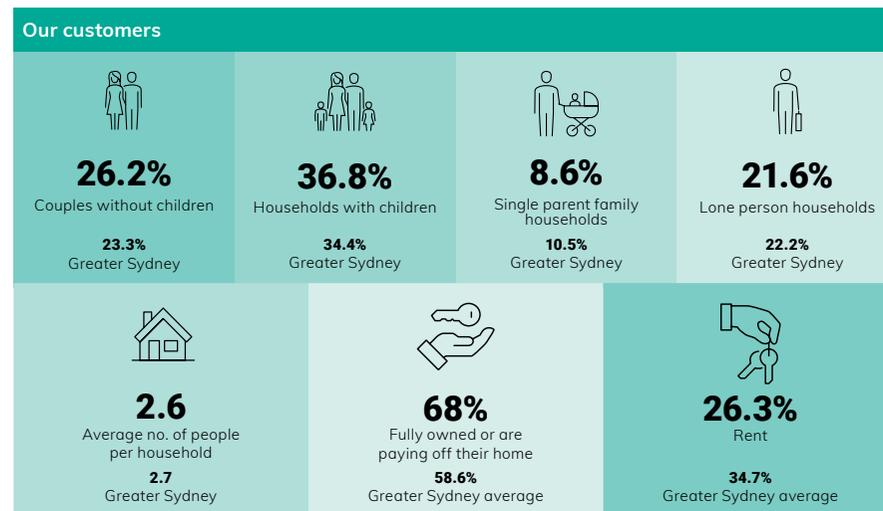
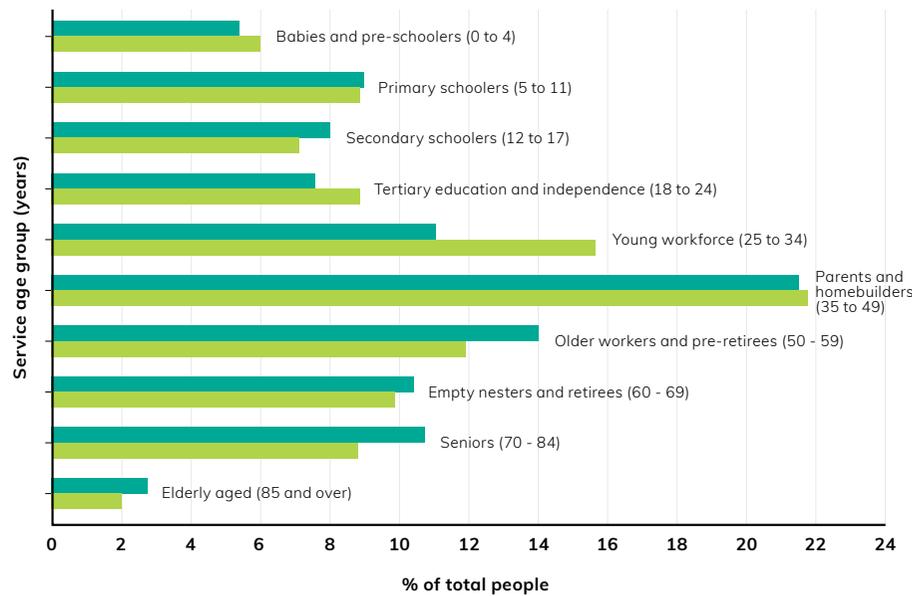


Figure 5 - Age structure
Service age groups, 2021

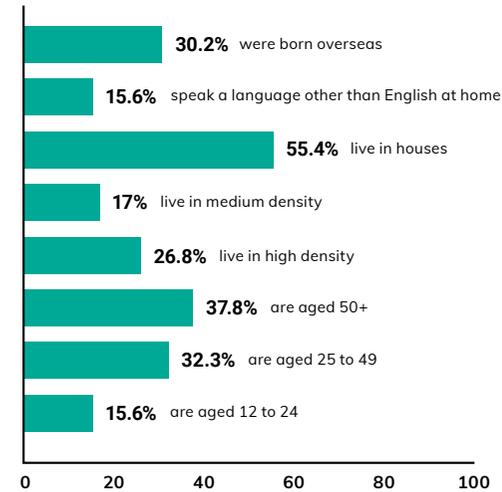


■ Northern Beaches Council area
■ Greater Sydney

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, 2021 (Usual residence data). Compiled and presented in profile.id by .id (informed decisions).

Draft Customer Experience Strategy 2030

Figure 6 - Socio-demographics





Draft Customer Experience Strategy 2030

Developing the Strategy

The development of this Strategy has been informed by research and consultation with the Northern Beaches community, external stakeholders and Council staff.

Engagement with different types of groups ensured a range of perspectives informed the Strategy.

Preparation of the Strategy has involved the following phases:



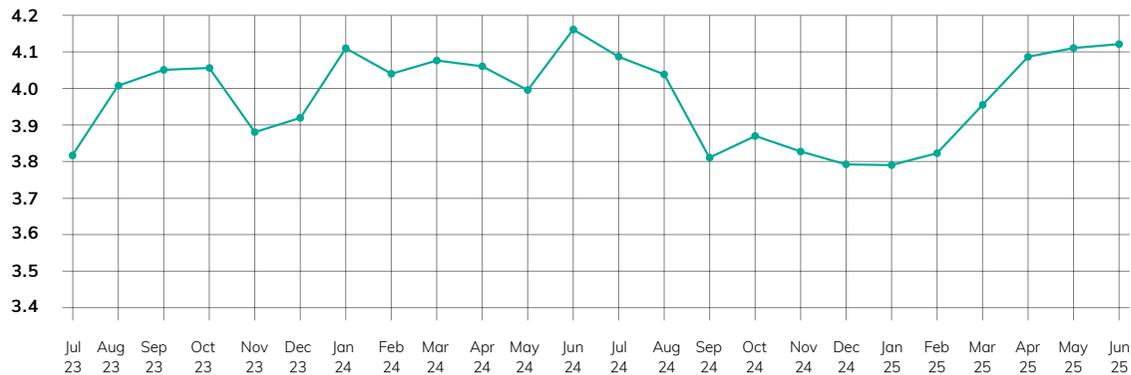
Research and analysis

The research and analysis phase consisted of conducting desktop research on customer experience, gathering and analysing community feedback, and undertaking stakeholder focus groups with internal and external stakeholders.

Community feedback

Customer satisfaction surveys (called Voice of the Customer) are sent to customers after their request has been closed. Between July 2023 and June 2025 nearly 20,000 responses were generated and analysed.

Figure 7 - Customer Satisfaction Score July 2023 - June 2025





Draft Customer Experience Strategy 2030

Stakeholder focus groups

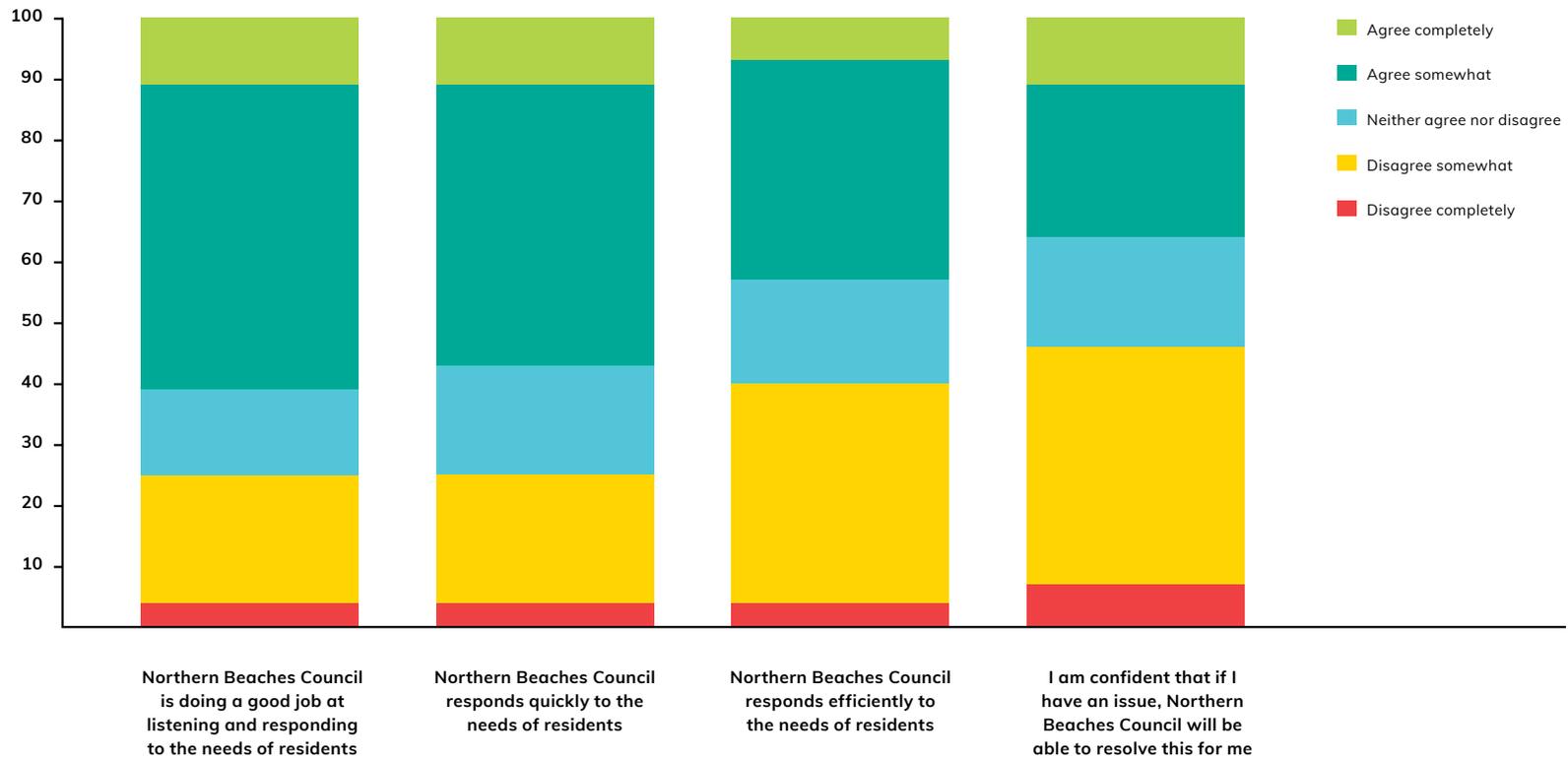
Using the Voice of the Customer feedback, we undertook focus groups with a broad cross-section of the community including residents and business customers to further explore customer experience.

Analysis highlighted areas where we are doing well and areas where we need to make improvements.

Customer experience, expectations and opportunities

Customer research with Northern Beaches Council residents has revealed that while we are attentive to and responsive to their needs, there is a lack of confidence among our community regarding our ability to efficiently and effectively resolve their issues and needs.

Figure 8 - Focus group feedback





Draft Customer Experience Strategy 2030

What we heard

A combination of feedback, research and workshops have highlighted customer pain points, expectations and opportunities to improve customer experience, shown in Figure 9.

Additionally, the results of our Community Survey have shown that there is a significant correlation between satisfaction with the performance of staff in handling enquiries and overall satisfaction with council performance.

Figure 9 - Customer pain points, expectations and opportunities

Pain points	Expectations	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility and responsiveness of interaction channels • Multiple contacts often required to follow up • Enquiry passed on to internal departments from customer service • Slow responses and inconsistent experience • Having to re-contact Council to follow up • Council doesn't know me/my enquiry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customers want to complete their interaction in the channel of their choice • Customers want quick resolution without needing multiple interactions • Customers want to easily connect to somebody that can resolve their issue • Customers value responsiveness and consistency of service experience • Customers value proactive updates on their enquiry • Customers appreciate personalisation in responses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy to deal with - offer multiple communication channels including digital service • Take ownership of issue resolution - reduce need for multiple contacts • Right person, first time - connecting with the right person from the first point of contact • Deliver consistent customer experience across all touchpoints • Proactive communication - keep customers updated throughout the process • Personalisation, 'know me' - understand individual needs and preferences

Direction 1 - Make it easy

Delivering digital service through multiple channels will make it easier for people to contact us when and how it suits them.

Outcome

1. Implement user-friendly and accessible digital platforms that meet the needs of our diverse customer base.

Maintain our commitment to the needs of our customers who prefer to interact with us in alternative ways.

What we are already doing:

- Improving the experience for customers logging requests online.
- Moving parking permits and other applications online.

What we will do:

Direction 1 - Make it easy

Outcome 1: Implement user-friendly and accessible digital platforms that meet the needs of our diverse customer base

Action	Commencing ¹
1.1 Continue to innovate and expand our online self-service offering.	2025
1.2 Develop and implement digital service options such as Live Chat.	2026
1.3 Evaluate emerging technologies such as AI to identify new opportunities to enhance the customer experience.	2026

¹Some actions will have discrete start and end dates. Others will, after a development phase, become embedded in everyday practice. For consistency, 'commencement' dates are shown against each action.

Direction 2 - Make it seamless

We can make the customer experience seamless by resolving customer enquiries at the first point of contact, providing proactive updates through the journey, and ensuring the same level of service no matter who they speak to in the organisation.

Outcomes

- 2. Ensure consistent service delivery across all customer touchpoints, meeting or exceeding customer expectations.
- 3. Deliver a customer-centric culture that prioritises customer needs and preferences, placing them at the centre of all decision-making processes.

What we are already doing:

- CRM improvement project went live in August 2023 which streamlined CRM processes with a focus on communicating and updating customers on the progress and outcome of their service request.
- Extensive training program in place for all new Customer Service staff.
- Online knowledge base providing our front-facing staff with the information required to respond to customer enquiries.

What we will do:

Direction 2 - Make it seamless

Outcome 2: Ensure consistent service delivery across all customer touchpoints, meeting or exceeding customer expectations

Action	Commencing
2.1 Redesign and embed our Customer Charter based on customer expectations with clear KPIs and reporting, including request timing and priority.	2025
2.2 Continuously improve service delivery processes, leveraging Voice of the Customer program to identify and re-engineer processes that are driving low satisfaction.	2025
2.3 Explore creating measures relating to the speed, efficiency and effectiveness of dealing with customer requests.	2026
2.4 Investigate opportunities to improve the customer experience when requests involve external public authorities.	2026

Outcome 3: Deliver a customer-centric culture that prioritises customer needs and preferences, placing them at the centre of all decision-making processes

Action	Commencing
3.1 Entrench customer experience principles in our Induction program.	2026
3.2 Continuously review the service delivery operating model to improve efficiency and deliver a consistent customer experience.	Ongoing
3.3 Work with priority populations (incl. multicultural communities) to improve access and inclusion for an improved customer experience	2026



Draft Customer Experience Strategy 2030

Direction 3 - Make it personalised

Better understanding our customers and using that information to personalise and improve their experience with us will deliver higher customer satisfaction for the community.

Outcome

4. Explore one view of the customer across the organisation through a comprehensive data collection and analysis framework.

What we are already doing:

- Commencing single view of the customer as part of the core systems replacement.
- Customer Service data collection through the Customer Activity Tracker to understand customer behaviour and accurately plan future resourcing needs.
- Expansion of the Voice of the Customer Program has commenced.
- Power BI training to enable the creation of real-time dashboards to inform strategic thinking.

What we will do:

Direction 3 - Make it personalised

Outcome 4: Explore one view of the customer across the organisation through a comprehensive data collection and analysis framework.

Action	Commencing
4.1 Explore one central view of our customers that captures customer feedback, preferences and behaviours across all touchpoints.	2027
4.2 Roll out the Voice of the Customer program (customer research) to all areas of the business.	2025
4.3 Strengthen our data analytics capability to deliver timely and relevant insights to business leaders that drive continuous improvement.	2026

Monitoring and evaluation

The actions listed in this Plan are presented against the three Directions and will be monitored and reported on through the annual reporting process. Where applicable, more detailed actions will be documented each year in Northern Beaches Council Operational Plan and the Customer Service Annual Business Plan.

Council will monitor and report on the following key performance indicators (KPIs) through annual reporting.

Direction	KPI	Baseline	Reporting Timeframe
1. Make it easy	Increase in the number of digital service transactions	20%	Annually 2025 - 2030
2. Make it seamless	Increase in overall Customer Satisfaction score	79%	Annually 2025 - 2030
3. Make it personalised	Increase in satisfaction score for customers feeling valued	79%	Annually 2025 - 2030



Draft Customer Experience Strategy 2030



northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au



Community Engagement Summary Report

Project name	Customer Experience Strategy
Consultation period	3 November – 1 December 2025
Background	<p>We are committed to putting our customers at the centre of everything we do.</p> <p>Late last year we developed our draft Customer Experience Strategy 2030 which sets out a clear direction for delivering seamless, efficient and personalised services that will meet the evolving needs of our community.</p> <p>Over the next 5 years, the implementation of the Strategy will focus on improving digital access, making it easier to interact with us, and ensuring decisions are guided by customer feedback. By enhancing the overall experience, we aim to provide greater value, build trust, and ensure every customer feels heard and supported.</p> <p>We invited our community to share feedback on the draft Customer Experience Strategy over a four week period and received a total of 15 submissions.</p> <p>Key feedback on the draft Strategy included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital Transformation – the majority of feedback see digitisation as key to progress but some fear alienation of non-digital users. • Responsiveness and Simplicity – the majority of feedback supports greater efficiency, simpler processes and better communication channels. • Trust and Engagement –there were some references to recent special variation to rates (SRV) consultation and commentary on us ignoring feedback.
Total number of unique submissions	<p>15</p> <p>15 via Your Say digital submission form (zero responses via phone, mail or in-person)</p>
Summary of findings	<p>We exhibited the draft Strategy and advertised the consultation period in a variety of community newsletters.</p> <p>Nine respondents were in favour of the draft Strategy.</p> <p>Most of the positive respondents agreed that the draft Strategy addressed key customer experience challenges but required clarification on digital transformation.</p>





	<p>One respondent did not support the draft Strategy, noting that Council strategies do not include the cost and resources required to implement them. It is noted that Implementation plans will include the cost-benefit analysis of any activities that require additional budget.</p> <p>The remaining responses referenced other non-related issues with Council, mainly regarding Council's decision to implement a Special Rate Variation.</p>
Engagement approach	<p>The engagement was planned, implemented and reported in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Strategy (2022).</p> <p>A project page¹ was established on our engagement platform with information provided in an accessible and easy to read format, including a robust set of FAQs and clear strategic directions and outcomes.</p> <p>The project was primarily promoted through our regular email newsletters (EDM) and media channels.</p> <p>Feedback was captured through a submission form embedded on the Your Say project page. We also invited comment through email and in writing.</p>

How we notified	
Visits to Your Say page	653 visits from 542 visitors
E-News EDM	56,823 distribution x 2 editions
Fortnightly CE Newsletter	20,401 distribution x 2 editions
The Wave – disability newsletter	1,386 x 1 edition
Beaches Biz News	6,934 x 1 edition
Stakeholder emails	3,369 CRM closure emails were sent to customers between 14 November 2025 to 1 December 2025 and included the Customer Experience Strategy Your Say information
Media	Peninsula Living x 1 edition
Social media	Instagram and Facebook total reach: Organic – 3,206 Paid – 101,132





Findings		
Theme	What we heard	Council response
Digital transformation	Strong support for digitisation with some concerns about over-reliance on digital channels, especially for older residents.	Digital channels will complement existing communication channels to cater for residents who prefer to transact digitally. Assisted (human) contact channels will still be available for those who prefer this support.
Responsiveness and communication	Support for more timely feedback on complaints and requests as well as open communication lines and personalised service.	This feedback reflects what the research that went into developing this draft Strategy also told us, i.e. Direction 2 – Make it Seamless and Direction 3 – Make it Personalised were created in response to this community desire.
Trust and engagement	Perception that we do not listen to community feedback (e.g., past decisions ignored submissions). Comments were raised that there are no measures to track customer service improvement in general community confidence.	Council is empowered by the Local Government Act to act in the public interest. At times, Council makes decisions that whilst aligning with the public interest do not align with all stakeholders' expectations.

During the consultation period, Council received questions either through direct contact or online.

Question raised in feedback	Council's answer
Why so much focus on online? Please don't forget those that like to do in person or speak to a real person transactions.	Digital channels will complement existing communication channels to cater for residents who prefer to transact digitally. Assisted (human) contact channels will remain available for those who prefer this support.
Is the cost of this Experience Strategy included in the Financial Statements? Or will the Strategy cost even more?	The strategy will set direction for Council and some of the actions may require future funding allocations. Council's annual budget process includes community consultation and is ultimately





	endorsed by the elected Council. Any future funds to implement the directions of this strategy would be considered through this process.
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Document administration	
Version	1.0
Date	9 February 2026
Approval	Content provided and approved by Executive Manager Customer Service
Status	Final
Notes	Community and stakeholder views contained in this report do not necessarily reflect the views of the Northern Beaches Council or indicate a commitment to a particular course of action.

ⁱ <https://yoursay.northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au/customer-experience-strategy-2030>

Proposed Road Closure
 Laneway behind
 20-28 Montauban Av, Seaforth NSW 2092



- Legend**
- Proposed Road Closure Area
 - Land Parcel Boundary

 <p style="margin: 0;">northern beaches council</p>	<p>Scale (A4) - 1:400 GDA 94 MGA Zone 56</p> <p style="text-align: center;">N</p> <p style="font-size: 6px;">The publisher or vendor contributes to this map accept no responsibility for injury, loss or damage arising from the use or errors or omissions therein. While all care is taken to ensure a high degree of accuracy, users are invited to report any map discrepancies and should use this map with due care.</p> <p style="font-size: 6px;">Data Project: 6/03/2025 Produced by: Spatial Information</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">© Northern Beaches Council 2025</p>
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Public Notice Summary Report

Project name	Proposed Road Reserve Closure – adjoining 20-28 Montauban Avenue, Seaforth.
Public notice period	16 May 2025 to 13 June 2025.
Background	Council proposes to close the public road reserve adjoining 20-28 Montauban Avenue, Seaforth. The purpose of the proposed road reserve closure is to enable the sale of the subject land to the adjoining owner.
Total number of submissions	0 submissions were received.
Summary of findings	<p>The owners of 20-28 Montauban Avenue, Seaforth applied to Council to formally close and subsequently purchase the unformed road reserve adjacent to their property.</p> <p>The unformed lane (Subject Land) has an area of 347.8m² and runs between Montauban Avenue to the south and Phillip Avenue to the east.</p> <p>Council staff have assessed the Subject Land as surplus to operational requirements and suitable for closure and sale.</p> <p>The proposal was publicly notified and received no objections.</p> <p>It is recommended to progress the proposal to close and sell the Subject Land to the adjoining owner(s).</p>
Notification approach	This public notice was published and disseminated in accordance with Section 38B of the <i>Roads Act 1993</i> . The notice was promoted through letters to adjoining owners, on-site signage and a public notice page published on Council's website. Contact details were provided should people have questions.

How we notified	
Properties notified by letter	24 properties were notified via letter.
Authorities notified	Authorities notified were Crown Lands, Jemena, Transgrid, Transport for NSW, APA, NPWS, DPI. The only comment Council received was from Jemena Gas who noted sub-surface infrastructure runs along the Montauban Ave frontage of the property; however, this is not located within the area of land proposed for sale.
Signage installed onsite	1 sign.
Council website	https://www.northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au/council/news/proposed-laneway-closure-20-28-montauban-avenue-seaforth

Document administration	
TRIM	C000830/09
Version	1.0
Date	29 January 2026
Approval	Content provided and approved by Property Commercial & Tourist Assets Team
Status	Final

Address	Site A - Howard Avenue Carpark - 44 Oaks Avenue, Dee Why
Legal Description	Lots 17, 18, 19, 44, 45 & 46 Sec 16 DP 8172, Lot 2 DP 526306, Lot 43 DP 341020
Summary	Approximately 6,221sqm. An aging at-grade carpark in the centre of Dee Why with the potential for significant uplift via a high-rise mixed-use development above a basement carpark including public parking, within one of the State Government's targeted low and mid-rise density hubs. Requires a new-link road to be constructed between Oaks Avenue and Howard Avenue along the eastern boundary.
Classification	Operational Land
Zoning	MU1 Mixed Use under the provisions of the Warringah LEP 2011 which encourages a range of business, retail, office and light industrial uses.
Planning Controls	Maximum Building Height ranging from 25 metres to 52.5 metres. Planning controls and highest and best use / maximum development capacity based on site being amalgamated with adjoining Post Office site. Planning Proposal would be required to maximise development if the site is to be developed on its own.
Development Assumptions	Longer payback period for Council if residential accommodation is used for affordable rental housing. Would need to include 10% affordable housing if Planning Proposal proposed to increase development capacity for this site above the existing controls.
Schedule / Timeline	Requires a Planning Proposal to maximise development potential without adjoining Post Office site as the max permissible height sits over both sites. Then will require Development Consent / construction approvals and procurement process to find development partner. Therefore, planning / approvals / procurement timeline of approximately 3-5 years and development timeline of approximately 2-3 years.
Risks	Unknown excavation costs. Geotech investigation would be required to assess underground conditions. Loss of public parking for the duration of the development and permanent loss of ground level accessible parking spaces adjacent to church, post office, shops, medical centres and across the road from primary school and public hall. Not optimizing the site through a Planning Proposal would likely leave Council less financial benefit than could possibly be delivered for this site.
Financial Cost	Significant capital required to develop a site of this scale. Would require a Public Private Partnership if not divested as a development site.
Highest & Best Use	Mixed Use Development comprising basement carpark, ground level retail and approx. 10-12 storeys of residential units (i.e. ~120-160 units). A component of these residential units could potentially be used for Affordable Housing if developed by Council. Additionally, the mixed use could include a community / library space funded with developer contributions from the development itself.
Opportunity Costs	Council would be forgoing a significant potential financial benefit in the short term should the accommodation on the site be used solely for Affordable Housing and potential delivery of a community / library space in the centre of Dee Why. Reduced income from Affordable Housing on this site will mean a longer payback period for Council, however, this would be the case for all Affordable Housing developed by Council.
Overall Comment	Well-located with potential for significant residential accommodation and delivery of a community / library space in the centre of Dee Why as part of a mixed-use development. Would require significant capital funds – likely in the form of a Public Private Partnership. Some potential for development costs to be paid off with future Affordable Housing contributions collected by Council. This site is not currently captured by Council's Affordable Housing Contributions Plan. Need to obtain traffic / parking analysis on demand / use of carpark and determine if Dee Why Town Centre can cope with this carpark being unavailable during any redevelopment of the site.

Address	2 Bangaroo Street, North Balgoolah
Legal Description	Lot 1 DP 1296934
Summary	4,547sqm of land with an old, renovated cottage currently leased to a tenant. This site has a lapsed DA for subdivision into 3 residential lots with open space along the creekline. Requires subdivision to dedicate creekline open space and relocation of Council stormwater drainage affecting site. Close to bus route, primary school and Seaforth shops.
Classification	Part Operational Land and part Community Land (riparian zone open space).
Zoning	Part R2 Residential and part RE1 Public Recreation under WLEP 2011.
Planning Controls	Height limit 8.5m, minimum lot area 600sqm Dual Occupancy permitted as complying development under provisions of Low and Mid-Rise Housing Policy.
Development Assumptions	Requires subdivision and dedication of Community Land as open space before any development.
Schedule / Timeline	Approximately 2 years for Development Consent, relocation of Council stormwater infrastructure and construction of dwellings.
Risks	Council seen as a property developer, approving its own developments and competing with the private market.
Financial Cost	Relocation of Council stormwater drainage affecting the site will need to be funded (approx. \$200,000-\$250,000) prior to any development of site.
Highest & Best Use	Residential subdivision. Could potentially accommodate dual occupancy or other low rise medium density with current zoning, however, this is proposed to change to E4 Environmental Living under the draft NBLEP which does not permit medium density development.
Opportunity Costs	Reduced income from Affordable Housing on this site will mean a longer payback period for Council, however, this would be the case for all Affordable Housing developed by Council.
Overall Comment	Realisation of value of site maximised if site is subdivided into 3 lots. Potential for dual occupancy developments on site for affordable housing or boarding house.

Address	1596-1600 Pittwater Road, Mona Vale
Legal Description	Lot 3 DP 251053, Part Lot 2 DP 110299
Summary	Approximately 5,300sqm. Former Mona Vale Bowling Club Caretakers Cottage close to Mona Vale CBD currently leased to residential tenant and adjacent to vacant open space on main road. Pittwater Council previously attempted to rezone & reclassify this land for development to fund the nearby skate park but failed due to community feedback. Potential future affordable housing development, however, would require rezoning / reclassification which may attract community opposition.
Classification	Community Land.
Zoning	RE1 Public Recreation Pittwater LEP 2014.
Planning Controls	Requires rezoning to R2 Low Density Residential and reclassification to Operational Land to maximize development potential. With R2 zone, max height 9.5m, min lot size 450sqm, FSR 0.65:1, min lot width at building line 12m (under SEPP (Housing) 2021).
Development Assumptions	Higher density permitted if rezoned and reclassified as Mona Vale is one of the State Govt's targeted low and mid-rise density hubs.
Schedule / Timeline	2 years for Planning Proposal to rezone and reclassify land. Then 2-3 years for Development Consent and construction.
Risks	Requires Planning Proposal to rezone and reclassify, with no guarantee of successful outcome.
Financial Cost	Potential for development to be staged and for development costs to be paid off with future Affordable Housing contributions collected by Council.
Highest & Best Use	Medium density housing such as those in NSW Pattern Book.
Opportunity Costs	Reduced income from Affordable Housing on this site will mean a longer payback period for Council, however, this would be the case for all Affordable Housing developed by Council.
Overall Comment	Well-located with potential for significant residential accommodation near the centre of Mona Vale as part of a mixed-use development. Would require significant capital funds likely in the form of a Public Private Partnership. Potential for development costs to be paid off with future Affordable Housing contributions collected by Council. Council's Parks & Open Space Group will need to provide advice on demand / use of this Council reserve impacts of its reallocation to affordable housing.

Address	Balgowlah Carpark – 185 & 187-189 Condamine Street, Balgowlah
Legal Description	Lot D DP 331143, Lot 1 DP 134713, Lot B DP 331688
Summary	Approximately 2,670sqm. At-grade carpark and dwelling (currently leased by a business on commercial terms) behind Sydney Road shops. Potential to be redeveloped for shop-top housing, noting Balgowlah is one of the State Govt's targeted low and mid-rise density hubs.
Classification	185 Condamine Street – Community Land 187-189 Condamine Street – Operational Land
Zoning	E1 Local Centre Manly LEP 2013
Planning Controls	Max height 12.5m, Floor Space Ratio (FSR) 2:1 (but can be raised to 2.5:1 if 50% site used for commercial). Needs a site specific DCP. 10% of residential component would need to be affordable housing under SEPP(Housing) 2021
Development Assumptions	Requires reclassification of 185 Condamine Street.
Schedule / Timeline	Shorter planning / approvals timeline than Site A Dee Why as only requires reclassification of 185 Condamine Street. Estimated as 2 years with a development timeline of approximately a further 2-3 years.
Risks	185 Condamine Street requires a Planning Proposal for reclassification to Operational Land with no guarantee of outcome. Loss of public car parking.
Financial Cost	Significant capital required to develop a site of this scale.
Highest & Best Use	Mixed Use Development comprising basement carpark, ground level retail and approx. 3 storeys of residential units. These residential units could potentially be used for Affordable Housing if developed by Council.
Opportunity Costs	Council would be forgoing a potential financial benefit in the short term should the accommodation on the site be used solely for Affordable Housing and potential delivery of a community space in the centre of Balgowlah. Reduced income from Affordable Housing on this site will mean a longer payback period for Council, however, this would be the case for all Affordable Housing developed by Council.
Overall Comment	Well-located with potential for significant residential accommodation in the centre of Balgowlah as part of a mixed-use development, however, would require significant capital funds, likely in the form of a Public Private Partnership. Potential for development costs to be paid off with future Affordable Housing contributions collected by Council. Council's Transport & Civil Infrastructure Group will need to obtain traffic/parking analysis on demand/use of carpark to assist in local centre analysis.

Address	1 Pittwater Road, Manly
Legal Description	Lot 1 DP 933364
Summary	Approx. 209sqm site with heritage listed building.
Classification	Operational Land.
Zoning	E1 Local Centre Manly LEP 2013.
Planning Controls	A range of uses are permitted in this zoning including commercial / retail, residential and business.
Development Assumptions	As the site is heritage listed and the building is in a good state of repair, it is unlikely that consent would be granted to demolish the building or remove heritage listing.
Schedule / Timeline	Development likely in 2-3 years
Risks	Heritage listed site. Site size limits developability As a standalone site, the amount of affordable housing provided would be very limited. No on site carparking and no space to provide.
Financial Cost	As required for the development.
Highest & Best Use	Offices or retail use retaining the existing building.
Opportunity Costs	This site is better developed as an amalgamated site with neighbouring properties to maximise yield and community benefit
Overall Comment	Due to heritage listing and small size, future use would be limited to uses that can be contained in the existing building such as offices, retail or possibly a small restaurant / cafe.

Address	Lagoon Street Carpark - 11 Lagoon Street, Narrabeen
Legal Description	Lot 5 Sec 38 DP 111254, Lot 1 DP 1117584
Summary	Approximately 1,881sqm. At-grade car park. The site is close to services and shops.
Classification	Community Land.
Zoning	E1 Warringah LEP 2011 which permits shop top housing.
Planning Controls	Height limit 11m.
Development Assumptions	Requires reclassification to Operational Land, with a likely community requirement to retain existing carparking.
Schedule / Timeline	2 years for planning proposal to reclassify and 2-3 years for Development Consent and construction.
Risks	Requires independent public hearing for reclassification to Operational Land with no guarantee of outcome. Electricity substation may need relocation or designing around. Loss of car parking spaces in a local retail centre
Financial Cost	Significant capital required to develop a site of this scale.
Highest & Best Use	Mixed Use Development comprising basement carpark, ground level retail and approx. 3 storeys of residential units. These residential units could potentially be used for Affordable Housing if developed by Council.
Opportunity Costs	Reduced income from Affordable Housing on this site will mean a longer payback period for Council, however, this would be the case for all Affordable Housing developed by Council.
Overall Comment	Well-located with potential for significant residential accommodation in the centre of Narrabeen as part of a mixed-use development. Would require significant capital funds, likely in the form of a Public Private Partnership. Potential for development costs to be paid off with future Affordable Housing contributions collected by Council. Would need traffic / parking analysis on demand / use of carpark and determine if Narrabeen Town Centre can cope with this carpark being unavailable during any redevelopment of site.

Address	North Harbour Preschool, Burton Street Balgowlah
Legal Description	Lots 1, 2, 3, 4 DP 1098262, Lot 1 DP 85609
Summary	Approximately 2,670sqm. Some potential for affordable housing but needs rezoning. Around 500 metres downhill from shopping centre with bus stop 150 metres away.
Classification	Operational Land
Zoning	RE1 Public Recreation Manly LEP 2013
Planning Controls	Requires rezoning to R1 General Residential to maximize development potential. If rezoned, max height likely 8.5m and min site area min 300sqm
Development Assumptions	Requires rezoning in order to achieve development potential.
Schedule / Timeline	2 years for planning proposal to rezone land and 2-3 years for Development Consent and construction.
Risks	No guarantee planning proposal will be approved. Loss of childcare provision on the site.
Financial Cost	Potential for development costs to be paid off with future Affordable Housing contributions collected by Council.
Highest & Best Use	If rezoned to R1, possible boarding house, dual occupancy or multi dwelling housing, residential flat building possibly with childcare included if required.
Opportunity Costs	Reduced income from Affordable Housing will mean a longer payback period for Council, however, this would be the case for all AH developed by Council.
Overall Comment	Council's Children's Services Group to provide advice on demand / use of Council-run childcare centre at this site and determine if the service can manage through the period of it being unavailable during any redevelopment of site (assumes childcare centre returns to site after any redevelopment). Site would be appropriate for low rise medium density housing and is close to shops, public transport and other amenities. Prior feasibility study determined the site was barely feasible on the basis the preschool remained part of the redevelopment.

Address	Civic Centre site, Dee Why
Legal Description	Part Lot 100 DP 1041823
Summary	Approximately 670sqm. Zoned for shop-top housing. Would need to be subdivided from the main site, part of heritage listing over wider precinct, provision of legal access to road would need to be addressed.
Classification	Operational Land.
Zoning	MU1 Warringah LEP 2011.
Planning Controls	Max height 16m, FSR 1.45:1.
Development Assumptions	670sqm is a small site for development, concern might be raised by Planning team about isolating residential in this location between two Council office buildings.
Schedule / Timeline	Development Consent and construction say 3 years.
Risks	Would severely curtail Council's future options for combining operational office facilities Access road is not a public road under the Roads Act and subdivision would not be approved by the Land Registry Service without road frontage.
Financial Cost	Potential for development costs to be paid off with future Affordable Housing contributions collected by Council.
Highest & Best Use	Residential / commercial with Council office facilities on lower floors.
Opportunity Costs	Reduced income from Affordable Housing will mean a longer payback period for Council, however, this would be the case for all Affordable Housing developed by Council.
Overall Comment	This site is an identified civic site and is considered best utilised for future civic development.

Address	Collaroy Street Carpark - 6 Collaroy Street, Collaroy
Legal Description	Lot 36 DP 11374
Summary	Approximately 463sqm. Representative of a number of individual lots purchased via developer contributions for public purposes (open space or carparking) in the 1970s. Question as to whether Council can redevelop sites for different purposes to that which it was acquired for. Requires reclassification.
Classification	Community Land.
Zoning	E1 Local Centre Warringah LEP 2011.
Planning Controls	Height limit 11 metres.
Development Assumptions	Small site for development with limited developability.
Schedule / Timeline	2 years for planning proposal to reclassify and 2-3 years for Development Consent and construction.
Risks	Requires independent public hearing for reclassification to Operational Land with no guarantee of outcome. New neighbouring building to east (DA2020/1453) appears to borrow amenity from carpark.
Financial Cost	Potential for development costs to be paid off with future Affordable Housing contributions collected by Council.
Highest & Best Use	Shop top housing, consistent with the zoning and surrounding development.
Opportunity Costs	Reduced income from Affordable Housing will mean a longer payback period for Council, however, this would be the case for all Affordable Housing developed by Council.
Overall Comment	Small site which would only generate limited residential accommodation and would also need a retail element to comply with zoning. It is highly unlikely to retain public car parking on this site.

Address	Oaks Avenue Reserve - 68 Oaks Avenue, Dee Why
Legal Description	Lot 3 DP 959825
Summary	Approximately 405sqm. Representative of a number of individual lots purchased via developer contributions for public purposes (open space or carparking) in the 1970s. Question as to whether Council can redevelop sites for different purposes to that which it was acquired for. Requires reclassification.
Classification	Community Land.
Zoning	RE1 Public Recreation Warringah LEP 2011.
Planning Controls	Requires rezoning to R3 Medium Density Residential to maximize development potential. If R3, max height likely 11m. Boarding houses permitted with consent in R3.
Development Assumptions	No guarantee that planning approval to rezone / reclassify would be successful.
Schedule / Timeline	2 years for planning proposal, 2-3 years for DA and construction.
Risks	Requires planning proposal for reclassification to Operational Land with no guarantee of outcome. Loss of public open space in a high density area, noting that its current utilisation is very low.
Financial Cost	Potential for development costs to be paid off with future Affordable Housing contributions collected by Council.
Highest & Best Use	Housing, either a boarding house or dual occupancy, depending on successful rezoning.
Opportunity Costs	Reduced income from Affordable Housing will mean a longer payback period for Council, however, this would be the case for all AH developed by Council.
Overall Comment	Small site which would only generate limited residential accommodation. A boarding house could provide the greatest level of accommodation.

Address	Dalwood Avenue Reserve, Seaforth
Legal Description	Lot 1 DP 508590 Lot 50 DP 817267 Lot 3 DP 508590
Summary	Approximately 1,138sqm. Requires rezoning and reclassification. Adjacent to a Telstra facility.
Classification	Community Land.
Zoning	RE1 Public Recreation Manly LEP 2013.
Planning Controls	Requires rezoning to R2 Low Density Residential to maximize development potential. If R2, max height 8.5 metres, minimum lot size 500sqm.
Development Assumptions	Requires reclassification to Operational Land.
Schedule / Timeline	2 years for planning proposal with 2-3 years for DA and construction.
Risks	Requires planning proposal for reclassification to Operational Land and rezoning to residential with no guarantee of outcome. Loss of public open space and informal parking arrangements.
Financial Cost	Potential for development costs to be paid off with future Affordable Housing contributions collected by Council.
Highest & Best Use	Residential dwellings in the form of terraces / dual occupancy similar to NSW Pattern Book.
Opportunity Costs	Reduced income from Affordable Housing will mean a longer payback period for Council, however, this would be the case for all AH developed by Council.
Overall Comment	The site is not optimal in terms of locations when compared with the assessment criteria.

Address	Winbourne Avenue Carpark - 87 Winbourne Road, Brookvale
Legal Description	Lot 10 DP 818068
Summary	Approximately 2,442sqm. Submission under Brookvale Structure Plan to rezone and reclassify to Operational Land to retain maximum options – i.e. potential uplift of site.
Classification	Community Land.
Zoning	RE1 Public Recreation Warringah LEP 2011.
Planning Controls	Requires planning proposal for rezoning to E4 General Industrial and reclassification to Operational Land to maximize development potential. This zoning does not permit housing and it is unlikely to receive support for a zoning that differs from surrounding development, noting that E3 zoning does bound the site on the Pittwater Rd side.
Development Assumptions	It is likely to require the retention of some level of public carparking spaces.
Schedule / Timeline	2 years for planning proposal to reclassify and 2-3 years for Development Consent and construction.
Risks	Requires planning proposal for rezoning and reclassification with no guarantee of outcome. Loss of public car parking leading
Financial Cost	Potential for development costs to be paid off with future Affordable Housing contributions collected by Council.
Highest & Best Use	If rezoned – industrial. As RE1 zoned Community Land – retain as carpark.
Opportunity Costs	Reduced income from Affordable Housing will mean a longer payback period for Council, however, this would be the case for all AH developed by Council.
Overall Comment	While this is well-located site and would meet the assessment criteria, the likelihood of the reclassification and rezoning being supported is not high. The development would also require traffic / parking analysis on demand / use of carpark and determine if Brookvale operate effectively with this carpark being unavailable during any redevelopment of site.

Address	Mooramba Road Carpark, Dee Why
Legal Description	Lot 3 DP 805645
Summary	Approximately 3,283sqm. Carpark was acquired partially by developer contributions. Would need to retain existing provision of public carparking and there is the question as to whether Council can redevelop site for different purposes to that which it was acquired for.
Classification	Community Land.
Zoning	RE1 Public Recreation Warringah LEP 2011.
Planning Controls	Requires rezoning to R3 Medium Density Residential to maximize development potential. If R3, max height 11m.
Development Assumptions	Is highly likely to require retention of a large number of the existing public car parking spaces.
Schedule / Timeline	2 years for planning proposal to reclassify and 2-3 years for Development Consent and construction.
Risks	Requires planning proposal for reclassification to Operational Land and rezoning with no guarantee of outcome. The financial impact that may result in Council redeveloping site for different purposes to that which it was acquired for as it was purchased with developer contributions.
Financial Cost	Potential for development costs to be paid off with future Affordable Housing contributions collected by Council.
Highest & Best Use	Multi-unit housing / residential flat building. These residential units could potentially be used for Affordable Housing if developed by Council.
Opportunity Costs	Reduced income from Affordable Housing will mean a longer payback period for Council, however, this would be the case for all AH developed by Council.
Overall Comment	Well-located with potential for significant residential accommodation near the centre of Dee Why, however, would require significant capital funds, likely in the form of a Public Private Partnership. Potential for development costs to be paid off with future Affordable Housing contributions collected by Council. Traffic / parking analysis on demand / use of carpark would need to be determined regarding the impact on the Dee Why Town Centre.

Address	521 Pittwater Road, Brookvale
Legal Description	Lot 1 DP 1081971
Summary	Approximately 392sqm. Commercial property owned by Northern Beaches Council as an investment. This site could be redeveloped in joint venture with property at 519 Pittwater Rd, but unlikely to be able to be redeveloped in isolation due to location of site at intersection of two main roads, shape and small size.
Classification	Operational Land.
Zoning	E3 Warringah LEP 2011.
Planning Controls	Max height 11m.
Development Assumptions	Would need to be amalgamated with neighbouring property for development purposes as site is too small to develop in isolation.
Schedule / Timeline	Unknown – based on potential requirement to amalgamate with neighbouring property.
Risks	Capacity to develop the site in its current form. Developability and site access issues.
Financial Cost	Potential for development costs to be paid off with future Affordable Housing contributions collected by Council.
Highest & Best Use	Current use for commercial / retail.
Opportunity Costs	Reduced income from Affordable Housing will mean a longer payback period for Council, however, this would be the case for all AH developed by Council.
Overall Comment	This site is unlikely to be capable of development independently due to small size, shape and location. As an intensified use it would require additional carparking which cannot be provided on site.

Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure

Office of Local Government

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Council Led Affordable Housing on Operational Land in NSW

Guide to assist councils to explore using operational land for Affordable Housing

February 2026





Acknowledgement of Country

The Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure acknowledges that it stands on Aboriginal land. We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land, and we show our respect for Elders past, present and emerging through thoughtful and collaborative approaches to our work, seeking to demonstrate our ongoing commitment to providing places in which Aboriginal people are included socially, culturally and economically.

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Minister's Forward



I am pleased to present this guide that serves as a resource for local councils in New South Wales. This guide offers a strategic framework for effectively utilising operational land for affordable housing, a mission of utmost importance for our communities.

Affordable housing is a cornerstone of a thriving, inclusive society. This guide aims to empower local councils with the knowledge, tools, and best practices to make significant strides in addressing the pressing issue of housing affordability.

By fostering partnerships, leveraging resources, and adopting innovative approaches, we can create sustainable solutions that not only meet the immediate housing needs of the people of NSW but also lay the foundation for stronger, more resilient communities in the long term.

I extend my gratitude to all those who have contributed to the development of this guide and thank the many stakeholders who have shared their expertise and experience.

I trust that this guide will serve as a valuable reference for local councils as they embark on the crucial mission of providing affordable housing opportunities for the people of New South Wales.



The Hon. Ron Hoenig
NSW Minister for Local Government

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Introduction

This resource is designed to support local councils in New South Wales (NSW) as key partners in delivering better housing outcomes for people across the state. Councils also have a key role in helping NSW to meet targets under the National Housing Accord, a strategic initiative committed to delivering hundreds of thousands of homes by 2027 to address the pressing issues of housing supply and affordability challenges.

Affordable housing is critical for fostering community diversity, stimulating local economies, and promoting long-term sustainable housing, socio-economic growth, and well-being. The current stock of affordable housing in NSW has struggled to keep pace with population growth, and demand.

A record-low supply of long-term rental homes places a significant financial strain on low-income renters, including essential workers, single-parent families, and older individuals, while exacerbating homelessness. Moreover, certain regions face heightened pressure on long-term rental markets due to the increasing popularity of short-term rental accommodation properties.

One of the most significant challenges in making affordable housing a reality often comes down to the cost of acquiring well-located land. This guide acknowledges this challenge, and positions councils to play a vital role in overcoming it.

The cost of suitably located land is often a significant barrier to affordable housing

By leveraging under-utilised operational land for affordable housing projects, councils can facilitate access to homes for those in need. It is important to note that there are practical and legislative limitations to the amount of land a council can readily provide.

This guide is an early reference point for councils considering the use of operational land for affordable housing. It offers step-by-step guidance on various aspects of using operational land for affordable housing.

It covers the identification of suitable under-utilised land, management of affordable housing initiatives on council-owned land at every stage, accessing grants and support mechanisms available to councils, and showcasing real-world success stories through case studies of council-led affordable housing projects on operational land.

Key contacts and additional resources are provided at the end of this guide to help councils make meaningful progress in addressing the pressing issue of affordable housing.

Key Terms

Affordable housing

Affordable housing is housing that is appropriate for the needs of a range of very low to moderate income households and priced so that these households are also able to meet other basic living costs, such as food, clothing, transport, medical care and education (NSW Affordable Housing Ministerial Guidelines 2023-2024).

As a rule of thumb housing is usually considered affordable if it costs less than 30% of gross household income

The State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing) 2021, also known as the Housing SEPP, outlines the eligibility thresholds that must be met to access affordable housing. These thresholds are based on a percentage of the median household income for Greater Sydney or the Rest of NSW, as follows:

- a) very low-income household – earns less than 50% of the median income,
- b) low-income household – earns between 50 and 80% of the median income,
- c) moderate-income household – earns between 80 and 120% of the median income.

Under the Housing SEPP, affordable housing eligibility should be income based; however councils may also identify priority groups as sub criteria.

Affordable housing is different from ‘**housing affordability**’ which is a general term used to describe a range of market forces that influence the cost of housing payments. Councils may influence housing affordability by implementing land-use planning measures, but this is distinct from facilitating affordable housing supply for eligible households.

Affordable housing is also different from ‘**lower-cost housing**’ which could be housing delivered through cost-saving construction methods, lower-quality housing, or housing located in areas with lower land values.

‘**Social housing**’ is secure and affordable rental housing for people on very low incomes with housing needs. Eligibility requirements for social housing are set by the NSW Government. Applications are managed through the NSW Housing Pathways system.

‘**Public housing**’ is managed by Homes NSW while community housing is managed by non-government organisations.

‘**Aboriginal housing**’ is specifically for Aboriginal people. These properties are managed by Homes NSW or community housing providers, including Aboriginal Community Housing Providers.

Each housing provider manages its tenancies in accordance with the *Residential Tenancies Act 2010*.

Operational land

Operational land refers to council-owned land that has no special restrictions on its use, apart from those that may apply to any piece of land. It is distinct from 'Community land' which is classified to reflect the importance of the land to the community because of its use or special value or significance to the local community.

Generally, community land is intended for public access and use, or where other restrictions applying to the land create some obligation to maintain public access.

Community land cannot be sold, leased or licensed for more than 21 years and must have a plan of management prepared for it. If community land is to be leased for more than 21 years (including options), the Minister for Local Government must approve the special circumstances justifying the long term. The term of lease or license must not exceed 30 years (including any option to renew).

Housing providers

This guide refers to Community Housing Providers and Aboriginal Community Housing Providers. In this guide, they are collectively referred to as 'Housing Providers'.

Further information on community housing is available on the Department of Communities and Justice website: <https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/housing/help/ways/community-housing>

Exploring the benefits of using operational land for housing

The high cost of suitable land is often cited as a major obstacle in addressing the critical need for affordable housing. Local governments play a vital role in facilitating affordable housing through land use planning, advocacy, and strategic partnerships.

Councils can make a substantial impact by harnessing under-utilised operational land for affordable housing in partnership with the NSW Government and Housing Providers to address local housing needs.

Affordable housing projects require financial subsidies due to high land and construction costs and reduced rental income. By providing operational land through discounted sale, gifting or long-term lease arrangements councils can help make affordable housing developments more viable to meet community needs.

Additionally, councils can expand the reach of affordable housing initiatives by considering strategic land purchases adjacent to under-utilised operational land.

State-owned land for Affordable Housing

While this guide relates to the use of council owned operational land for affordable housing projects, the NSW Government is taking similar proactive steps to explore the use of state-owned land for affordable housing through a land audit.

One notable project under this initiative is the examination of surplus Crown Land in regional NSW. This project is a partnership between Crown Lands, Homes NSW, Landcom, local councils, and Local Aboriginal Land Councils in Albury, Cooma, Forbes, North Tuncurry and Tamworth.

Similarly, local councils can play a role to engage closely with their communities in identifying and assessing under-utilised operational land that can be repurposed for affordable housing initiatives.

By working together, we can unlock the potential of these resources and make significant strides in addressing the critical need for affordable housing.

Understanding local Affordable Housing needs

Before considering the use of council operational land for affordable housing initiatives, it is helpful to gather up to date data on local housing needs. This will support the council's

decision-making process, partnership development and the pursuit of funding opportunities. Table 1 below provides data sources that may assist with determining housing needs.

Table 1: Data sources for determining housing needs and opportunities

Category	Considerations
Demographic Analysis	Consider including a demographic breakdown of the local population, highlighting groups that may have specific housing needs, such as essential workers, seniors, families, individuals with disabilities, or indigenous communities.
Economic and employment data	Incorporate data on local employment opportunities, wage levels, and job sectors. This information can help identify income levels and employment stability in your area, which directly impact affordable housing requirements.
Major developments	Consider major employment generating developments that are being planned in the local area as these will also impact on housing demands.
Current housing inventory	Provide an overview of the community's existing housing stock, including the types of housing (apartments, single-family homes, etc.), condition, occupancy rates, and affordability status. Consider in addition, the availability of social and affordable housing.
Homelessness statistics	Include data on homelessness in the community, detailing the number of homeless individuals or families and their specific needs.
Public transport and infrastructure	Evaluate the accessibility of public transport and essential infrastructure, as proximity to these amenities can influence housing preferences and needs.
Market conditions	Analyse local housing market conditions, including trends in property values, rental rates, and market demand. This information can help assess whether there is a gap between market-rate housing and what residents can afford.
Community surveys and feedback	If available, incorporate the results of community surveys or feedback sessions that gauge local sentiment on affordable housing. This can provide valuable insights into community priorities and concerns.
Future population projections	Consider including population growth projections for the area, as they can help anticipate future housing demands and requirements.

Category	Considerations
Government Policies and Regulations	Discuss any relevant state or local government policies, incentives, or regulations that impact affordable housing initiatives in the region.
Partnerships and stakeholders	Highlight key stakeholders and partners in the community, such as non-profit organisations, housing developers, or advocacy groups, who can play a role in addressing affordable housing needs.
Case studies	Share success stories or case studies from other areas that have effectively addressed local affordable housing needs. This can provide inspiration and guidance for your own initiatives.
Mapping tools	Consider including maps or geographical information system (GIS) data that illustrate housing affordability, proximity to amenities, or areas with the greatest housing need. Visual representations can be powerful tools for conveying information.

Much of this data may already be available from councils' work in implementing their Community Engagement Strategy as part of developing their Community Strategic Plan, their Local Strategic Planning Statements and other plans (for example, it may be included in the councils Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework).

In some cases, councils are additionally required to prepare Local Housing Strategies to translate the housing objectives identified through their Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework, their Local Strategic Planning Statements, as well as regional and district housing targets, into detailed plans that can be implemented at the local level.

The [Local Housing Strategy Guideline](#) and template is available to help councils prepare these strategies and set them out in a consistent format.

Affordable housing policies can be drawn from the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework and be integrated into various planning documents, such as councils' Delivery Programs, Operational Plans, Local Housing Strategies, Local Strategic Planning Statements, or dedicated social and affordable housing strategies or policies, depending on the councils approach.

Local councils know their local communities best which make them well placed to facilitate housing solutions that respond to local needs

The [Local Government Housing Kit](#) provides data and evidence on affordable housing need and provides examples and advice on establishing a clear vision for affordable housing. More resources for building the local evidence base are at the end of this guide.

By combining affordable housing policies with ongoing community engagement efforts, councils can foster more positive community perceptions of affordable housing. This proactive approach makes it easier for councils to assess affordable housing developments positively, mitigating potential community opposition.

How to identify suitable land for Affordable Housing

Local councils generally have a good understanding of operational land that may be suitable for use as affordable housing, such as land located in areas that are well serviced, in close proximity to amenities and have convenient access to public transport. Table 2 below outlines criteria that should be used to identify potential land parcels for release, development and delivery of affordable housing.

Table 2: Criteria and considerations for identifying suitable land

Criteria	Considerations
Adequate size	Ensure the land is of sufficient size (typically more than 800 square metres) to accommodate affordable housing projects. It is worth considering instances where merging adjacent parcels into a single site could enhance the development's overall viability and impact.
Zoning compatibility	Verify that the land is, or can be, appropriately zoned to allow for residential housing development.
Yield potential	Assess the land's yield potential based on factors like size and permissible building height, which may accommodate multi-dwelling or residential flat building configurations.
Proximity to essentials	Seek locations within 800 meters of a town centre or 1,200 meters of a major transport hub or assess accessibility using the Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) to ensure convenient public transport access.
Adequate road access	Confirm that the land has or is able to secure suitable road access, such as sealed roads, dual lanes, or arterial roads.
Nearby services and amenities	Consider the land's proximity to shopping facilities, medical services, and other essential amenities.

Criteria	Considerations
Infrastructure availability	Ensure the presence of essential infrastructure, including water, power, and sewer systems is, or that it will be available.
Community need	<p>Examine whether the land is situated in areas with a high percentage of low-income households, small renting households, or where there is a demonstrated need for affordable housing.</p> <p>Note: Councils should look holistically at opportunities across their local government area as affordable housing tends to be spread across the area. In areas of undersupply, there may be no development opportunities however there may be opportunities in other locations not exhibiting a current need. In addition, areas with low percentage of low-income households may be evidence of a lack of affordable housing supply which is preventing low-income households from locating there.</p>
Environmental considerations	Evaluate potential environmental constraints, such as flood risk, bushfire danger, contamination potential, and the biodiversity value of the land.

Access Land iQ to identify sites

Councils have been granted access to the Land iQ platform, with all 128 councils provided a single license to access the system. Land iQ provides advanced, multiple-criteria site searching including land size, planning controls, constraints, infrastructure and proximity to services to help find potential sites for particular land uses, or test particular sites for different land uses.

To find out more contact the team at Land iQ via the [Land iQ Help Desk](#).

Councils should contact Homes NSW and Landcom to discuss and prioritise land parcels. Contact details are available at the end of this guide.

Prioritising Affordable Housing project sites

Further criteria can be considered when prioritising potential sites for affordable housing initiatives. Table 3 below outlines several factors that may assist with this process.

Table 3: Additional factors for assessing site suitability

Criteria	Factors
Optimising affordable housing quantity	Assess the potential of the affordable housing project to maximise the number of high-quality affordable homes.
Serving diverse communities	Evaluate the project's ability to cater to the housing needs of very low to moderate-income households, including those from diverse backgrounds and communities. For example, consider what other needs those households have such as access to public transport, education, community and other support services.
Alignment with local strategies	Consider how the project aligns with local strategic planning, housing strategies, and established targets.
Enhancing neighbourhoods	Examine the potential for the project to contribute to place-making and enhance the local neighbourhood by introducing greater housing diversity.
Community support	Gauge the level of community support and engagement for the proposed project.
Suitability of current planning controls over the site and need for rezoning	Assess the financial feasibility of developing and maintaining quality affordable housing, ensuring its long-term sustainability and financial viability. Consider development permissibility and capacity of current planning controls and whether the site can accommodate additional density.
Timely completion	Consider whether the project can be completed within reasonable timeframes to address housing needs promptly.

The **NSW Movement and Place Built Environment Indicators** is a useful resource to plan and evaluate the suitability of a project site. Councils may also choose to engage suitably qualified professionals, such as urban design and architectural consultants, to conduct in-depth neighbourhood and site studies for site assessment and prioritisation.

The process of prioritising sites can be streamlined if council has made clear decisions on its expectations for the delivery of affordable housing on council owned land.

For example:

- Does the council expect to make any financial return on its land? Note the risk of an expectation of financial return eroding the feasibility of affordable housing or limiting opportunities.

- Does the council want to facilitate affordable housing for a specific cohort/s?
- Is there an appetite to deliver some private market housing as part of the project or does the council want to maximise the affordable housing outcomes?

Confirming councils' strategic direction when using land for affordable housing

Recent research produced by the [Paxon Group Report](#) and commissioned by the Community Housing Industry Association NSW reveal that "*Local Councils generally recognise it was preferred to have a property development that consisted entirely of affordable housing dwellings, rather than it having a mixture of private/market and affordable housing because of the negative effect of strata fees on project economics, the challenges of obtaining economies of scale and the resource intensity of having to manage affordable housing that is scattered throughout larger property developments that contain very limited affordable housing.*" The Community Housing Industry Association is of the view that this appears to be more an issue with developer contributions where affordable housing is delivered in-kind as part of a larger strata development. Purpose built mixed tenure projects delivered by community housing providers and or councils can address the drawbacks as they tend to have a larger component of affordable housing and less fragmented ownership. They are purpose built and can address operational issues up front through the design process.

Central Coast Council has a commitment to fostering mixed-tenure developments encompassing social, affordable, and private rental/owner-occupied components through its Affordable and Alternative Housing Strategy. Council considered this approach important to "improve social inclusion, reduce stigma and have the ability to cross subsidise the social or alternative housing components of a development."

It is important to identify the council's expectations for affordable housing developments at the outset. This will help streamline decision-making processes throughout the project's lifecycle, ensuring clarity, and alignment in pursuit of affordable housing.

Partnerships for maximising affordable housing impact

Local councils are encouraged to explore strategic partnerships with various entities, including government agencies like Landcom and Homes NSW, Housing Providers and Aboriginal Land Councils. These organisations possess the necessary resources, expertise, legislative authority, regulatory oversight and reporting requirements, and delivery frameworks to facilitate the development and long-term management of affordable housing.

Partnering with a Housing Provider can optimise affordable housing delivery by enabling them to access financing from commercial lenders, institution investors or Housing Australia

especially when favourable land ownership arrangements, grant funding, or other concessional terms are available.

Aboriginal Community Housing Providers are expanding in size and capabilities, with some having access to land resources, as many Aboriginal Land Councils are now registered under the National Regulatory System for Community Housing (NRSCH) or the NSW Local Scheme.

Additionally, councils may consider partnerships with private sector developers and not-for-profit organisations to achieve affordable housing goals, noting that most community housing providers are not-for-profit.

For guidance on such collaborations, councils should refer to the [Public Private Partnership \(PPP\) Guidelines](#), which can be found on the Office of Local Government website.

These legislative guidelines outline the procedures councils must follow when considering or implementing PPPs for infrastructure and service delivery, ensuring compliance with the Act's requirements.

Advantages of partnering with housing providers

- **Innovation and sustainability:** At the forefront of innovative housing design, construction, environmental sustainability, and long-term asset management.
- **Specialised expertise:** Unique expertise, innovation, and a track record in delivering and managing high-quality affordable housing tailored to local needs on council-owned land.
- **Regulatory oversight:** Highly regulated by the NSW Registrar of Community Housing, ensuring adherence to industry standards.
- **Alignment with local needs:** Housing providers are motivated to collaborate with councils as council-owned land often aligns with local needs and is well located, enhancing project feasibility by attracting funding and investments.
- **Participation in urban renewal:** Many housing providers actively participate in various State Government urban renewal initiatives.
- **Social support:** Community housing providers integrate support services alongside tenancy management. This focuses on community building, tenant wellbeing, sustaining tenancies, and improving opportunities. This can result in tenants transitioning into the private housing market and in some cases in achieving home ownership. Local community housing providers can also provide benefits through active local management.

- **Concessions:** Most housing providers are not-for-profit with charitable purposes. They also have access to tax concessions which reduces the cost of delivery, compared to partnering with the private sector.

Community housing providers represent a key partner for councils in delivering affordable housing projects as they can bring debt and equity as well as greater access to grant funding. Homes NSW is the NSW Government agency that maintains relationships with community housing providers including performance management where government funding or contributions are provided.

Homes NSW can also support councils with end-to-end delivery processes including tendering and contracting, reducing complexity and costly duplication in commissioning infrastructure while also reducing costs to community housing providers.

Program data over recent years from Homes NSW demonstrates that Housing Provider involvement significantly boosts overall funds for affordable housing projects, as demonstrated in the table below.

Table 4: Analysis of Government funding programs and CHP contributions

Government Program	DCJ Grant	CHP Contribution	Total Government Investment
Affordable Housing Innovations Fund 2007	55.5%	44.5% (12.6% contribution and 31.9% debt)	\$24.3M
Social Housing Growth Fund 2009	70%	30%	\$182.6M
Community Housing Innovation Fund Programs 2021 to 2025	51.61%	49.39%	\$308.7M

Leveraging capital through Housing Australia

Traditionally, housing assistance programs have been channelled through Housing Providers. However, local governments in NSW now have an additional avenue to explore. They can seek support from Housing Australia for concessional loans, grants, or equity finance.

These financial resources can be instrumental in funding social and affordable housing projects, as well as the critical enabling infrastructure required to bring these projects to fruition. Local councils have the flexibility to apply for Housing Australia funding independently or choose to collaborate with Housing Providers.

Housing Australia oversees the implementation of the Federal Government's commitments, which form a part of the substantial \$10 billion Housing Australia Future Fund. These changes signify a significant development in the landscape of affordable housing financing, opening up exciting opportunities for local councils to make meaningful strides in addressing housing challenges.

The [National Housing Infrastructure Facility Social and Affordable Housing](#) also provides an avenue for local councils to access financing for affordable housing.

Options to release and manage operational land for Affordable Housing

Councils should assess the advantages and potential drawbacks of various approaches for releasing and managing operational land for affordable housing, as detailed in Tables 5 and 6 below. It is also essential for councils to consider their obligations under the *Local Government Act 1993* (LG Act), which mandates specific actions when councils are:

- exercising functions (s355) providing financial assistance (s356)
- forming a corporation, partnership, trust, joint venture or other entity (s358) considering a Public Private Partnership (ss 400B-400N).

Councils should seek independent legal counsel for expert advice to ensure they are meeting the legislative requirements under the LG Act, and other relevant laws, when considering releasing and managing land for affordable housing.

The Homes NSW Programs and Partnerships branch can offer support to councils in various ways:

- Facilitating land transaction agreements with Housing Providers and other partners
- Securing council contributions for affordable housing in perpetuity, including land
- Ensuring ongoing performance oversight of Housing Providers in the management of affordable housing projects.

Once land is identified (very early in the affordable housing planning phase) – a council must decide how they will release operational land for affordable housing. The following tables provide options to release operational land for affordable housing as well as options to develop and manage affordable housing projects.

Table 5: Options to release operational land for Affordable Housing

Options	Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>Sale at a discount: Provides financial return to councils.</p> <p>Not suitable where preferred Housing Provider cannot finance the purchase.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides a financial return in addition to socio outcomes (depending on discount, interest and capacity of Housing Provider to purchase) • Agreement terms can ensure delivery and prudential management of project • Agreement can also ensure a council's registerable interest over land means that the land value is reinvested for affordable housing in perpetuity • Relatively simple and quick • Low financial risk • CHP can leverage equity and grow affordable housing stock • May suit larger projects with a community housing provider or private developer. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discount may be unfeasible for Housing Provider or insufficient to deliver optimal affordable housing outcomes • Tendering complexity in determining discount • Council must transfer land from its ownership, reducing its land stock • Potential reputational risk of public land sale even though the sale is for a use that delivers a tangible public benefit • Potential failure if the Housing Provider is not carefully chosen or the agreement is not carefully brokered.

Options	Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>Gifted: Council decides to transfer the land from ownership for no monetary benefit</p> <p>Suitable where council has limited resources to administer disposal, development or manage the construction, where there is an urgency to release land for affordable housing or where council prefers a simple, quick option with low financial risk.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximises socio-economic value or land for public benefit • Removes land supply barriers. CHP can leverage equity and grow affordable housing stock • Provides large contribution by council towards affordable housing in the form of developable land • Provides maximum support to the feasibility of the affordable housing development • Minimises monetary cost to council as construction costs are generally met by Housing Provider through borrowings, equity or grants • Relieves council from ongoing costs of ownership such as maintenance, asset recycling and insurances • Agreement terms can ensure delivery and prudential long-term project management • Investment may be made secure – council or Homes NSW may place a registerable interest over land, so land value is reinvested for affordable housing in perpetuity and require consent for any future asset recycling • If the Housing Provider ceases to exist or winds up, national community housing law requires ownership of community housing assets to be transferred to another Housing Provider or the housing agency • Simplest and quickest option • Low financial risk. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council must transfer land from its ownership, reducing its land stock • Perception of there being no financial return from land to bolster council’s financial position and/or invest in other community priorities in the future even though councils are increasing and securing affordable housing stock • Potential reputational risk of gifting public land, even though the sale is for a use that delivers a tangible public benefit • Failure if the Housing Provider is not carefully chosen or agreement is not carefully brokered.

Options	Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>Leasing: Long term lease at peppercorn/discount rent</p> <p>Suitable where a council's key objective is to retain the asset, or where there is a complex transfer, or where there is an expectation that the land will be returned to council in the future.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council retains ownership of the land and regains control or it at the end of the agreed lease period • Lease terms can ensure delivery of project and ongoing maintenance during lease term and how (in what state) assets will be returned to the council • Allows for future council and community to decide to take back land. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Provider's lack of ownership and lease tenure would impact project feasibility as land cannot be used to secure finance and restrict access to grant funding. This limits the ability for additional affordable housing to be leveraged in the future • Housing Providers may be less willing to invest as this may impact feasibility of affordable housing • Need to consider the transition of tenancies and land and asset condition at end of lease • Affordable housing may not be retained in perpetuity • Implications to council from ongoing costs of ownership such as maintenance, asset recycling, depreciation and insurances. Potential funding gap between operating costs and rental revenue. • Potentially classified as a Public Private Partnership (PPP) under the LG Act. If so, this results in onerous requirements and potentially significant legal costs for council.

Options	Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>Joint Venture/Partnership: Requires an active council role in development decision making, risks and rewards sharing in accordance with the LG Act.</p> <p>Suited to large scale redevelopments and multiple sites.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council retains active role in decision making and control to ensure delivery • Council shares cost with partner • It may be more appropriate for sites suited to a range of public benefit not just affordable housing and best supported by joint venture and shared assets and costs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council may lack the expertise to co-manage • More complex and resource intensive • Requires Ministerial approval is Special Purpose Vehicle (such as a corporation or trust) or a significant Public Private Partnership (PPP) of over \$50M is to be used <p>Note: See OLG Guidelines for “Formation of Corporations and Entities” and Public Private Partnerships (PPP) Guidelines.</p>

During the affordable housing planning phase – a council must decide which project and management option will best facilitate the development, delivery and maintenance of quality affordable housing.

Table 6: Options to develop and manage affordable housing projects

Options	Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>Management by an Affordable Housing Provider</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potentially complex to establish/administer • Potential for council to become a registered CHP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Providers are expert, prudent affordable housing managers • Housing Providers also have efficiencies of scale from managing a larger portfolio of properties than just those delivered by the council. They also are entitled to GST and land tax concessions which reduce operating costs. • Attracts funding and finance free of covenants • Provides long-term, regulated management of affordable housing assets • Investment in community housing into the future is secure. Council or Homes NSW may place a statutory interest over land so land value is reinvested for affordable housing in perpetuity, and may require consent for any future asset recycling • If the Housing provider ceases to exist or is wound up, national community housing law requires ownership of community housing assets to be transferred to another Housing Provider or housing agency • Provides flexibility in where the affordable housing is located over time which can help optimise Housing Provider viability and can be more responsive to tenants' and local housing needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordable housing not 'locked in' to a specific piece of land. It can be moved to a new parcel of land or elsewhere within the LGA over time. However, it would generally be a condition of development consent that the project provides affordable housing in perpetuity and a positive covenant or registered interest is placed on the land.

Options	Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>Management by a Joint Venture entity (i.e. via a Legal Agreement):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 358 or 400(d) of the LG Act may apply, requiring prior approval from the Minister for Local government 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common mechanism to secure agreement between parties • Range of legal agreements that can be structured to needs (such as contract for sale, lease, voluntary planning agreements, etc.) • Council maintains a level of control over operational matters • Council can require statutory interest in value of land to be used for affordable housing in perpetuity and consent for asset transfer if a Housing Provider is wound up • Council and Housing Provider responsible if issues arise • Non-compliance with the agreement can be pursued through courts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May be time and resource intensive to reach agreement and seek Ministerial approval • Can be difficult to amend • Requires council expertise and active monitoring over time • Council takes on a degree of risk and liability with respect to the development and ongoing management of the housing component.
<p>Management through a Special Purpose Vehicle (For example, Land Trust)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 358 or 400(d) of the LG Act may apply, requiring prior approval from the Minister for Local government • Trusts of this nature may typically be a community or non-for-profit entity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeps at 'arm's length' the development, liabilities and risk from the council • Can have a specific focus, such as development of certain types of affordable housing within the LGA • May be able to receive council assets without council requiring an open procurement process • May be able to be structured as a charitable entity with financial concessions and benefits • An incorporated company could be the trustee of the trust, it can be a company limited by a guarantee • The Board of Directors can include representation from council, Housing Provider and representative from investment part, and/or the community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a Public Private Partnership, council remains responsible for issues • Significant cost and process to establish and resource over time • Once assets are transferred, they are no longer owned by council • Generally, only assets within the Special Purpose Vehicle can be used for borrowing • Requires careful consideration and legal and taxation advice to ensure charitable status • Additional decision-making layer, increased resourcing and risk for the Housing Provider.

Options	Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>Management by Council</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council retains complete control over the building and management of the affordable housing project into the future • Council ownership and control may be a positive for the community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing and managing affordable housing is not a primary role for a council • Council may lack the expertise and funds to build and manage affordable housing • Implications to council from ongoing costs of ownership such as maintenance, asset recycling, depreciation and insurances. Potential funding gap between operating costs and rental revenue. • Project cannot leverage off the borrowing power of a Housing Provider

Table 7: Key steps to use suitable operational land for affordable housing in partnership with Housing Providers

Key Steps	Helpful Contacts	Resources
<p>1: Audit Council’s operational land to assess potential sites</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is an affordable housing project in line with Council’s Community Strategic Plan, land use plan and housing strategies? • Is potentially suitable land available in an appropriate place, close to support services, public transport etc.? Does the potential land meet Council’s criteria for affordable housing? (see Table 2) • Does the project have the potential to be supported by the community, subject to design, operation etc.? <p>Tip: If no operational land is suitable, consider other affordable housing incentives such as reclassifying land, using planning levers or streamlining approval processes for affordable housing developments.</p>	<p>Homes NSW NSW Planning Portal DPHI Planning Land IQ</p>	
<p>2: Site prioritisation and feasibility assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk to Homes NSW to obtain and adapt existing site feasibility assessment tools for affordable housing or engage an expert • Consider site suitability against Council’s criteria for affordable housing projects • Consider initial discussions with local Housing Providers to gauge viability, objectives and identify potential roadblocks before significant investment. <p>Tip: Look for affordable housing grants that may be available at this stage or a later stage of the project.</p>	<p>Homes NSW DPHI Planning</p>	<p>Site feasibility assessment tool Council’s criteria for the affordable housing project Government Architect NSW advisory notes</p>

Key Steps	Helpful Contacts	Resources
<p>3: Determine key partners to support delivery and decide land transaction and management options (Tables 5 & 6 above)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarify legal requirements • Consider potential title transfer processes (if applicable) • Get independent legal advice on options • Contact Homes NSW to discuss options, potential Housing Provider partners and get support to negotiate land transaction and project management agreements. <p>Tip: Bring the likely Housing Provider partner/s into the conversation as early possible to get their expert input.</p>	<p>Homes NSW DPHI Planning</p>	<p>Site feasibility assessment tool Council's criteria for the affordable housing project Government Architect NSW advisory notes Community Housing Industry Association (CHIA NSW) local council resources</p>

Key Steps	Helpful Contacts	Resources
<p>4: Development – Procurement Phase</p> <p>Prepare project feasibility assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine project cost, timeframes, impacts, risks and feasibility • Assess legal and regulatory considerations • Consider engaging suitably qualified professionals to undertake neighbourhood and site studies such as property development consultants, urban design and architectural consultants. <p>Matters for Consideration</p> <p>Value Reinvestment: This is a consideration in council’s approach to developing land and seeking development partners. Councils should explore strategies for ensuring ongoing reinvestment of the value of their contribution to affordable housing within the local government area, particularly if the affordable housing is ever sold or repurposed.</p> <p>Social and economic impact: Analyse opportunities to maximise the project’s social and economic impact.</p> <p>Regulatory compliance: Ensure the project adheres to all relevant regulatory requirements and standards.</p> <p>Risk mitigation: Implement measures to minimise various risks to the council, including financial, reputational, operational, and outcome-related risks.</p>	<p>DPHI</p> <p>Homes NSW and Housing Provider</p> <p>Consider engaging experts</p>	

Key Steps	Helpful Contacts	Resources
<p>5: Consult with community about proposed option/s, finalise and approve best option</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare a consultation and engagement plan • Keep the community informed and consulted throughout the process about what Council is proposing and why Present preferred option to Council for approval to proceed. <p>Tip: Early consultation with the community helps remove or manage concerns, or perceptions about affordable housing projects, and speeds up the DA process. Noting that community consultation on affordable housing projects is often challenging and requires considered planning. Resources are available to assist with community conversations.</p> <p>This step will largely depend on the partnership model chosen by council - council could select a partner first and undertake this work with the partner or seek proposals from prospective partners as part of an EOI/tendering process.</p>	<p>CHIA NSW</p> <p>Homes NSW</p>	<p>CHIA resources for local councils</p>
<p>6: Finalise contractual arrangements with key partners and establish governance arrangements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broker agreement/s with the Housing Provider and/or other partners with Homes NSW support to maximise project success and ensure Council’s investment is safe • Establish Steering Group or appropriate governance structure and report regularly to Council • Identify grants or other funding opportunities with partners. <p>Tip: Regular meetings with key partners including the Housing Provider can keep the project on track.</p>	<p>Homes NSW and Housing Provider</p> <p>CHIA NSW</p>	<p>CHIA NSW resources for local councils</p>

Key Steps	Helpful Contacts	Resources
<p>7: Concept design</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with the Housing Provider and community to develop concept design, including the look, feel, number and mix of affordable housing units <p>Tip: Check-in with the local community at this point to gather input to the design and help build community support for the project.</p>	<p>CHIA NSW</p>	<p>CHIA NSW's Affordable Housing Toolkit</p>
<p>8: Pursue grant opportunities and prepare documents for applications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research eligibility requirements • Prepare and submit relevant documentation <p>This will depend on the delivery model the selected partner may do this instead of council.</p> <p>Tip: Consider seeking expert advice to prepare supporting material.</p>	<p>Homes NSW</p>	
<p>9: Construction tender and build</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tender for building partners and commences build (after Planning Consent - see Step 10) • Steering/Project Governance Group meets regularly to oversee construction is occurring to time, budget and specification <p>This will depend on the delivery model the selected partner may do this instead of council.</p> <p>Tip: Consider setting up a website or webpage to communicate project timeframes, costs, progress and outcomes.</p>	<p>Homes NSW and Housing Provider</p> <p>CHIA NSW</p>	

Key Steps	Helpful Contacts	Resources
<p>10: Planning Consent (Development Application Assessment)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit all relevant documentation, including plans to the consent authority • Negotiate and consult on any changes required • Conduct public notification of the development as required • Consider a pre-DA meeting with consent authority. • Submit final plans for approval to consent authority • Obtain a Construction Certificate <p>Tip: Contact DPHI Planning or Council to ask about fast-track approval options. A process of community consultation and engagement before public notification can help build community support for the project and prevent objections.</p>	<p>Homes NSW and Housing Provider CHIA NSW</p>	<p>CHIA NSW – Resources for local councils</p>
<p>11: Implementation and maintenance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenant selection process by Housing Provider according to agreed policy on priority and need • Regular meeting of Steering/Project Governance Group to ensure smooth implementation and maintenance, as agreed and depending on model approach • Communications, including media release and opening 	<p>Funding bodies regarding communications</p>	

Key Steps	Helpful Contacts	Resources
<p>12: Monitoring and Evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Steering/Project Governance Group agrees KPIs and monitoring and evaluation strategy to ensure project is meeting ongoing affordable housing needs locally <p>Tip: Agree KPIs, monitoring and evaluation strategy early on.</p>	<p>Homes NSW</p>	<p>National Regulatory Code for the National Regulatory System for Community Housing</p>

Case studies

Coomea Street, Bomaderry – Shoalhaven City Council

The Coomea Street project in Bomaderry is a testament to the successful collaboration between Shoalhaven City Council (SCC), Southern Cross Housing (SCH), and the NSW Department of Communities & Justice (DCJ), now Homes NSW. This partnership is transforming Council operational land in Coomea Street, Bomaderry, into a new development featuring 39 affordable housing units of varying sizes, ranging from 1 to 3 bedrooms.

In 2017, as part of its original Affordable Housing Strategy work, SCC worked with key partners, including SCH, Property Council of Australia, Edmiston Jones Architects, and the community, to initially identify and consider the potential of three parcels of existing operational land. These parcels were originally acquired by SCC in the 1980s to provide potential additional car parking for the Bomaderry CBD in the longer term and were occupied by older fibro dwellings.

Council and its key partners envisioned a more impactful use for the Bomaderry site through an innovative exemplar affordable housing project. An initial two-day workshop involving key stakeholders led to the design of a hypothetical project on the proposed site. SCC subsequently acquired two adjacent properties to create a larger developable parcel and, after evaluating various options, generously gifted the entire site, valued at approximately \$2.25 million to SCH.

With the support of DCJ, SCC negotiated a Community Housing Assistance Agreement to transfer the operational land to the affordable housing provider (SCH).

The agreement includes stringent contractual assurances for the maintenance of community housing stock in perpetuity.

The gifting was complemented by DCJ's funding through a NSW government Community Housing Innovation Grant Fund. Funding was also obtained to facilitate the timely assessment of the project's Development Application (DA), which involved approval from the Regional Planning Panel. SCH covered the significant remaining project costs, and SCC refunded the DA fees. The project funding breakdown is as follows:

- SCC \$ 2.25 million
- DCJ \$ 4.8 million
- SCH \$13+ million.

Early community consultations on concept and design work helped streamline the DA process. Each dwelling within the development is fully self-contained, with private open spaces, parking spaces, outdoor community gardens, a BBQ area, and a children's playground.

A local builder from the Illawarra South Coast has completed construction work. The development will be officially opened early in 2026. This project, enriched by extensive community engagement, is overseen by an experienced steering group composed of SCH, SCC, and DCJ.

For further information, please contact the Homes NSW at CAH@homrd.nsw.gov.au or Shoalhaven City Council at council@shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au.

Images of Coomea Street development





Goonellabah Projects - Lismore City Council

Lismore City Council's plan to increase the availability of affordable housing in the region has come to fruition through a strategic partnership involving the Council itself, the NSW Government's Landcom, the DCJ (now Homes NSW), and a Community Housing Provider.

This collaborative effort will result in the construction of 56 new affordable housing units, representing a total investment of \$20 million.

Landcom, Council and the CHP have entered into a Heads of Agreement to oversee the development of these units, with 16 units to be situated on Bristol Circuit in Goonellabah exclusively for key workers.

Council is looking for a 'land for housing swap' at this site so it will end up potentially owning two of the dwellings.

This is a quite unique case study in that Council has an MoU with the Federal Government to use unexpended funds from a historic grant, Building Better Regional Cities (BBRC) specifically on affordable housing initiatives. Council's contribution to this project is the land and \$2.5 million from the BBRC funds.

The site at Cynthia Wilson Drive, is also in Goonellabah and it is likely to generate around 40 dwellings. Council is contributing the land as a gift, while DCJ will provide \$5 million in support of the development.

The Northern Rivers Reconstruction Corporation is also making a valuable contribution of \$2.5 million that can be utilised across both sites.

As per the Heads of Agreement, Landcom will assume the role of project manager for both sites, while the housing units will be owned and/or managed by a CHP. This arrangement ensures that the council incurs no ongoing maintenance or property management costs, and it is not required to contribute to the construction expenses. Furthermore, this collaborative

effort empowers the CHP to leverage these new developments as collateral for securing additional funding for future affordable housing initiatives.

For more information contact Homes NSW at CAH@homes.nsw.gov.au or Lismore Council at council@lismore.nsw.gov.au.

11 Gibbons Street Redfern - City of Sydney

In July 2016, the City of Sydney granted conditional approval for the sale of the Redfern depot site at 11 Gibbons Street for the delivery of social and affordable housing dwellings. Like many affordable housing projects, delivery relied on the layering of contributions from multiple sources. In addition to Council selling the land at a significant discount, the project required funding from the NSW Social and Affordable Housing Fund to facilitate the creation of 162 units (42 social housing and 120 affordable housing units).

The land was surplus to the City of Sydney's requirements after the consolidation of a number of former depots into a new facility to better service the local government area.

The sale of the land for affordable housing was at a discount in recognition of the importance of affordable housing and the commitment of the City of Sydney to support the provision of affordable housing. The Council placed a covenant on title to ensure that the site was used for affordable housing in perpetuity as the need for affordable housing is ongoing.

This project marked the transformation of the depot into a thriving urban renewal initiative in the heart of Redfern. Completed in June 2021, the 18-storey building, comprises 162 units.

Among these, 27 units are adaptable for residents with disabilities, and 45% of the units are occupied by First Nations people, acknowledging Redfern's cultural significance, exceeding an original target of 25 per cent.

The development includes a ground floor commercial space, community recreation spaces and a playground. The building features "The Way Home" by an Aboriginal artist, Joe Hurst and is a symbol of connection and country for the Redfern community. Notably, the building meets an average 8-star rating under the Nationwide House Energy Rating Scheme (NatHERS) and is owned and managed by St George Community Housing.

For further information contact City of Sydney at council@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au.

Images of development at 11 Gibbons Street, Redfern



Exterior of 11 Gibbons Street, Redfern



Interior of 11 Gibbons Street, Redfern



Lobby of 11 Gibbons Street, Redfern



Play area at 11 Gibbons Street, Redfern

Key contacts and resources

Key contacts

Agency/Department	Details
<u>Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure NSW Government</u>	
Crown Lands	Website: Home Crown Lands Strategic Policy Team strategicprojects@crowland.nsw.gov.au
Land iQ	Website: https://www.nsw.gov.au/departments-and-agencies/property-and-development-nsw/what-we-do/strategy-analytics-and-policy/land-iq Email: landiq@dpie.nsw.gov.au
Office of Local Government	Website: https://www.olg.nsw.gov.au/ Email: olg@olg.nsw.gov.au
Planning NSW	Website: Home Planning Welcome to the NSW Planning Portal Planning Portal - Department of Planning and Environment Email: housingpolicy@planning.nsw.gov.au
<u>Homes NSW NSW Government</u>	
Aboriginal Housing Office	Contact us Aboriginal Housing Office requests@aho.nsw.gov.au

Agency/Department	Details
Homes NSW Programs and Partnerships	Email: homesnsw-oceo@homes.nsw.gov.au Websites: Information on understanding affordable rental housing; Plan; Develop; Manage; Rent affordable housing and Homes NSW working with Councils: https://www.nsw.gov.au/housing-and-construction/social-affordable/affordable-rental-housing/understand The Local Government Housing Kit and Database: https://dcj.nsw.gov.au/about-us/families-and-communities-statistics/nsw-local-government-housing-kit.html
Land and Housing Corporation	Website Webform: https://www.dpie.nsw.gov.au/land-and-housing-corporation/contact-us Locked Bag 5022 Parramatta NSW 2124
Registrar of Community Housing	Registrar of Community Housing NSW Government Government Architect NSW Planning
Government Architect Data and insights Policy and Legislation	Plans for your area Planning Policy and legislation Planning Email government.architect@planning.nsw.gov.au or phone 02 9860 1450 .

Resources

The resources below provide information about the legislative framework, incentives, and requirements to supply affordable and diverse housing in NSW.

Resource	Description
<u>NSW Affordable Housing Ministerial Guidelines</u>	Describes the framework for delivering affordable housing developed with financial assistance from the NSW Government or under state planning and is owned or managed by registered community housing providers.
<u>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979</u>	The EP&A Act aims to promote affordable housing, allowing councils to set consent conditions for affordable housing contributions in their areas.
<u>State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP)</u>	The Housing SEPP encourages diverse housing development, including affordable rental and short-term rental accommodation, in suitable locations for various communities at all life stages.
<u>Plan Affordable Rental Housing - Including planning agreements</u>	Information for councils on preserving and expanding affordable housing, emphasising negotiated planning agreements allowing developers to provide affordable housing in exchange for incentives like density bonuses or land contributions. Offers tools, support and information to plan and deliver affordable housing.
<u>Housing Snapshots</u>	District and regional housing snapshots to help councils, planners, housing providers, and others understand housing demand, markets, and supply in their area, aiding the development of housing strategies.
<u>Local Government Housing Kit</u>	Provides housing strategy guidance and essential data, aligning with Housing Snapshots for enhanced housing needs understanding and strategy support.
<u>Local Housing Strategy Guideline</u>	Guidelines for councils to develop Local Housing Strategies.
<u>Community Housing Industry Association NSW - Local Council Resources</u>	Resources for councils to collaborate with community housing providers on housing initiatives. Includes the CHIA NSW <u>Data Dashboard</u> which shows the spread of community housing across NSW including who they are owned and managed by, the numbers of social and affordable homes built and to be built in NSW, etc.
<u>Public Private Partnership (PPP) Guidelines</u>	Outlines council procedures when considering or using PPPs for infrastructure and services in compliance with the Act.

Resource	Description
<u>Formation of Corporations and Entities (Section 358) Guideline</u>	This guidance must be used when forming separate entities to deliver affordable housing.
<u>CHIA Local Council Partnerships for Provision of Affordable Housing</u>	<p>CHIA NSW has made available many other resources for local councils and can be found here: https://communityhousing.org.au/local-councils-and-community-housing/</p> <p>The implementation guide for councils is being launched soon. It touches on common operational questions councils have raised with respect to the delivery of affordable housing.</p>
<u>Affordable Housing Reference Guide</u>	Affordable housing guide developed by Urban Development Institute of Australia (UDIA) NSW with assistance from the Community Housing Industry Association NSW (CHIA NSW)
<u>The National Regulatory Code</u>	The National Regulatory Code for the National Regulatory System for Community Housing.



Community Engagement Summary Report

Project name	Outdoor Dining and Mobile Food Notice of Motion 37/2025																							
Background	<p>Following the Council meeting held on 21 October 2025, Council resolved Notice of Motion No 37/2025 - Outdoor Dining & Food Trucks which required Council to survey relevant stakeholders. This included outdoor dining licence holders, food truck permit holders, and local chambers of commerce regarding Council's Outdoor Dining and Footpath Merchandise Guide, and the processes that enable outdoor dining and food trucks to operate on Council land.</p> <p>The survey also sought to identify potential amendments to the Outdoor Dining and Footpath Merchandise Guide and Council's approval processes for food trucks operating on Council land.</p>																							
Total number of submissions	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Vendor type</th> <th>Survey responses</th> <th>Surveys issued</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>General F&B</td> <td align="center">29</td> <td align="center">974</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Chambers</td> <td align="center">1</td> <td align="center">6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Open Space Permit</td> <td align="center">4</td> <td align="center">13</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mobile Food</td> <td align="center">3</td> <td align="center">30</td> </tr> <tr> <td>OD Permit</td> <td align="center">8</td> <td align="center">239</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Totals</td> <td align="center">45</td> <td align="center">1,262</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			Vendor type	Survey responses	Surveys issued	General F&B	29	974	Chambers	1	6	Open Space Permit	4	13	Mobile Food	3	30	OD Permit	8	239	Totals	45	1,262
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Summary of findings	<p>Overall feedback was mixed, with most food and beverage operators generally satisfied with the Outdoor Dining and Footpath Merchandise Guide and approval process, however, some concerns were raised over the high cost of outdoor dining fees.</p> <p>A dominant theme among fixed-food businesses was the perceived economic imbalance between fixed-food businesses and mobile food vehicles, with respondents noting that fixed operators carry ongoing costs that mobile operators do not, creating an "unlevel playing field".</p> <p>Comparatively, all respondents who operate a mobile food vehicle were supportive of outdoor dining linked to mobile food operations in Open Space areas.</p> <p>When surveying mobile food vehicles regarding the application process, feedback was mixed, with operators evenly split between positive and negative experiences.</p>																							

<p>Engagement approach</p>	<p>Community and stakeholder direct mail-outs for the Outdoor Dining and Mobile Food Notice of Motion 37/2025 were conducted during December 2025. While this timing is not ideal for small business operators, the timeline on reporting back to Council for March 2026 meant that this was required.</p> <p>The engagement was planned, implemented and reported in accordance with the Northern Beaches Council Community Engagement Strategy (2025).</p> <p>Five project pages¹ were established on our <i>Have Your Say</i> platform, with a separate survey for each vendor type.</p> <p>Feedback was captured through an online submission form embedded onto the project pages. The form directly asked respondents about their experience and views on Council's approach to outdoor dining and mobile food vending on Council land.</p> <p>An open-field comments box provided respondents a space to elaborate on their response and share any other feedback.</p> <p>A total of 45 submissions were received. No weighting was applied to the data.</p> <p>The project was promoted solely via direct email with open rates for both EDMs were strong (63% and 59%), indicating high awareness of the survey. A total of 45 responses were received, predominantly from general food and beverage operators (63%), resulting in an overall participation rate of 3.57%.</p> <p>The low response rate suggests potential non-response bias, which may indicate limited concern about the current outdoor dining arrangements or general satisfaction with how the system is operating. Accordingly, findings should be interpreted as most representative of established general food and beverage operators, with insights relating to other vendor groups considered indicative only.</p>
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¹ <https://yoursay.northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au/outdoor-dining-and-mobile-food-vending-general-fb-operators>, <https://yoursay.northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au/outdoor-dining-and-mobile-food-vending-outdoor-dining-permit-holder>, <https://yoursay.northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au/outdoor-dining-and-mobile-food-vending-chambers-commerce>, <https://yoursay.northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au/outdoor-dining-and-mobile-food-vending-mobile-food-open-space-permit>, <https://yoursay.northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au/outdoor-dining-and-mobile-food-vending-mobile-food-open-space-permit>

How we notified					
Notified by email	EDMs:				
	Vendor type	Delivered Mail out 1	Opened Mail out 1	Delivered Mail out 2	Opened Mail out 2
	General F&B	974	623	967	574
	Chambers	6	2	6	0
	Open Space Permit	13	11	13	9
	Mobile Food	30	18	30	16
	OD Permit	239	144	239	142
Totals	1,262	798	1,255	741	
Visitors to Your Say page	Vendor type		Page visits		
	General F&B		112		
	Chambers		9		
	Open Space Permit		15		
	Mobile Food		42		
	OD Permit		58		
	Totals		236		
Council newsletters	N/A				

Food and Beverage operators and Outdoor Dining approval holders Findings		
Theme	What we heard	Council response
Outdoor dining guide and process	<p>6/8 respondents were satisfied with the Outdoor Dining guide and approval process and felt they were helpful, clear and comprehensive.</p> <p>Some provided feedback that the process was too long.</p> <p>Non-OD approval holders said that the process is complex, calling for it to be streamlined.</p>	<p>Council appreciates the feedback on the process to obtain an outdoor dining approval and endeavours to process applications in an efficient timeframe which may vary on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>Council would be happy to work through with any businesses interested in obtaining an outdoor dining approval of the feasibility and process involved.</p>

Food and Beverage operators and Outdoor Dining approval holders Findings		
Theme	What we heard	Council response
Approval conditions and fees	<p>5/8 respondents were satisfied with current approval conditions being reasonable and recognised them as helping small businesses and bringing the community together.</p> <p>There was some dissatisfaction with the high level of fees and inflexibility of provisions and conditions.</p>	<p>Outdoor dining fees are determined based on the size of the approved outdoor dining area against Council's adopted Fees and Charges. This is done through an independent valuation.</p> <p>These fees were adopted through a formal process that included public exhibition and Council resolution and are applied consistently to all outdoor dining approvals across the Northern Beaches.</p> <p>Conditions attached to outdoor dining approvals are established to ensure public safety, accessibility and equity, and are applied to provide a fair and transparent approach for all operators.</p>
Opportunities for improvement	<p>Suggestions included reducing or adjusting fees to better reflect seasonality and site conditions, improving communication and collaboration with operators, enhancing streetscape quality, and more support from Council in the implementation of outdoor dining and mobile food vehicle approvals.</p>	<p>Outdoor dining fees considers factors such as location, amenity, foot traffic and already considers the fluctuations that seasonality brings.</p> <p>Council endeavours to provide a clear, quick and informed service however there are instances where the circumstances require deeper examination which can lead to a longer assessment time.</p> <p>Council provides onsite services to assess any site-specific issues and endeavours to be flexible as long as it is safe and appropriate to do so.</p>
Comments regarding Mobile Food Vehicles	<p>Respondents acknowledged the social and community benefits of mobile food vehicles and outdoor dining, including their role in creating</p>	<p>Council notes the concerns raised by some respondents regarding equity between mobile food vehicle operators and fixed food businesses, particularly in relation</p>

Food and Beverage operators and Outdoor Dining approval holders Findings		
Theme	What we heard	Council response
	<p>vibrant, inclusive spaces and enhancing choice and diversity.</p> <p>However, 4/8 respondents were unsupportive of mobile food vehicles due to:</p> <p>Inequality: Noting that fixed food businesses carry the burden of ongoing costs (rent and outgoings) that mobile operators do not, creating an uneven playing field and potential risks to the viability of permanent businesses. Some called for protection of these businesses rather than creating more competition.</p> <p>Safety concerns: Non-compliance by mobile food vehicle holders of conditions within their approval, calling for additional restrictions on conditions such as proximity, scale and offerings (alcohol and outdoor dining).</p> <p>Considerations were raised by respondents including pedestrian access, public safety, amenity and fairness for existing businesses.</p> <p>Pack-down conditions: Within the conditions of outdoor dining approvals, operators must pack away furniture at the end of each trading day. 1 respondent queried how the same outcome would be achieved for mobile food vendors.</p>	<p>to differing cost structures and the potential impact on the viability of permanent businesses.</p> <p>Council seeks to balance these considerations by applying consistent approval frameworks, fees and conditions, while supporting a diverse and sustainable local business environment.</p> <p>Concerns regarding non-compliance with approval conditions by some mobile food vehicle operators are also acknowledged. Council expects all operators to comply with the conditions of their approvals, including requirements relating to location of not being located within 200m of a fixed food premises, as well as the scale, offerings and public safety.</p> <p>Council acknowledges the considerations raised regarding the need for consistent application of requirements for mobile food vehicles, noting that the provision of outdoor dining is not permitted for mobile food van operators.</p>

Mobile Food Vehicle Operator Findings		
Theme	What we heard	Council response
Provision for outdoor dining for mobile food operators.	All respondents supported opportunities for outdoor dining linked to mobile food vehicle operations in Open Space areas.	<p>Council notes the support for outdoor dining associated with mobile food vehicle operations in open space areas.</p> <p>The provision of outdoor dining facilities will be considered as part of the Generic Open Space Plan of Management, expected in 18 months.</p> <p>Council may also explore the creation of a Commercial Use Policy to guide the assessment of commercial activities including mobile food vehicles.</p>

Chambers of Commerce Findings		
Theme	What we heard	Council response
Fairness and competition for outdoor dining and mobile food operators.	The desire of outdoor dining and food trucks to complement another, rather than undermining and compete.	Council acknowledges the need to seek a balanced activation and economic opportunities while supporting existing businesses through equitable rules that manage location, scale, and operating conditions.
Space, noise and access of outdoor dining.	The response received highlighted the need to manage noise, smoke, and congestion while maintaining safe and accessible footpaths, particularly for prams, older people, and people with disabilities.	Council appreciates the concerns raised and acknowledges that outdoor dining guidelines are based on minimum safety clearances to ensure operating conditions and amenity are applied to ensure public safety, accessibility and pedestrian movement are not compromised.
Approvals, costs and certainty.	<p>There was a desire for outdoor dining approvals to have a clear, consistent approval processes, transparent fees, and certainty around permitted locations and operating times to support business investment decisions.</p> <p>Suggestions for mobile food approval processes included providing clear visual guidance on ideal layouts and sightlines, trialling simplified low-cost approvals for small, low-impact setups, and using structured seasonal feedback to refine fees, operating hours, and location rules to ensure a fair and responsive system.</p>	<p>Feedback from outdoor dining approval holders demonstrate that Council provides a clear approval pathway whilst maintaining the safety guidelines.</p> <p>Council will consider the suggestions provided as part of the development of a more structured approach, as outlined above.</p>

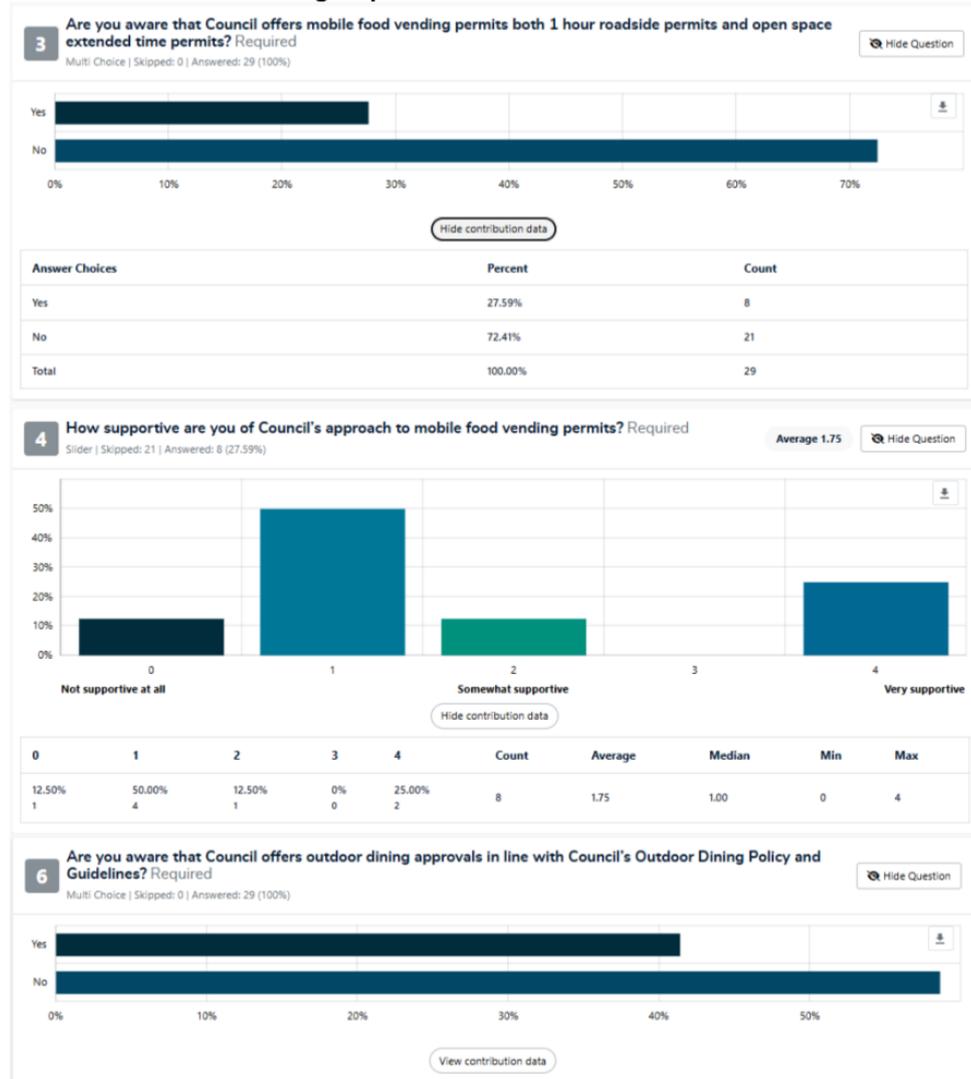
During the consultation period, Council received questions either through direct contact or online.

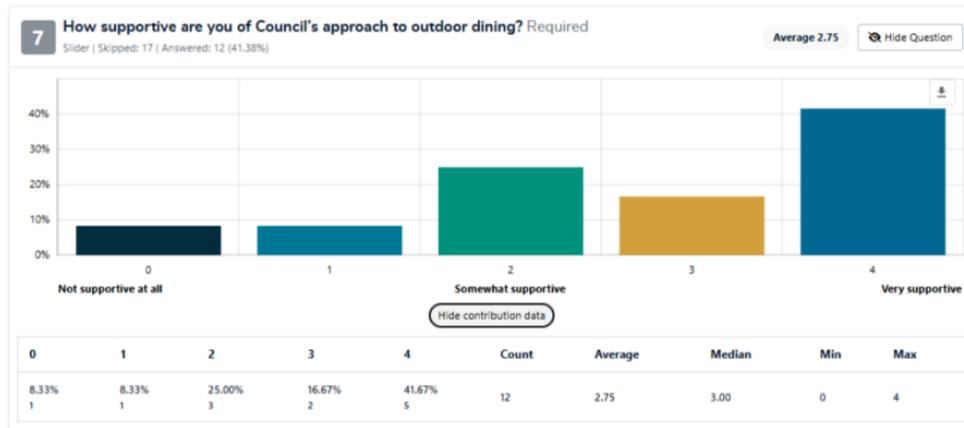
Question raised in feedback	Council's answer
I also I noticed some cafes now can have seating without being 2m away from gutter is that the new rule?	Council's outdoor dining guide has remained unchanged, requiring outdoor dining areas to preserve safety and circulation on public footpaths by maintaining a minimum of 2 metres of unobstructed footpath, and a minimum of 2.5 metres on a Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) classified road or clearway, subject to RMS approval. Any identified non-compliance will be investigated.

Document administration	
Version	1.0
Date	6 February 2026
Approval	Content provided and approved by Property, Commercial & Tourist Assets
Status	Final
Notes	Community and stakeholder views contained in this report do not necessarily reflect the views of the Northern Beaches Council or indicate a commitment to a particular course of action.

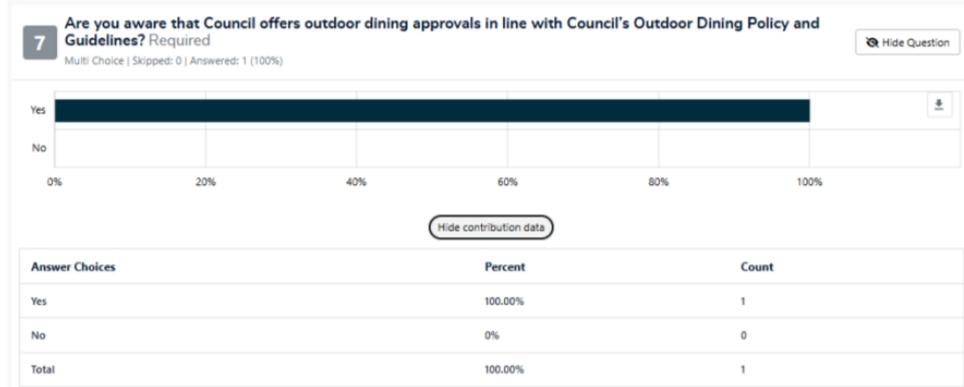
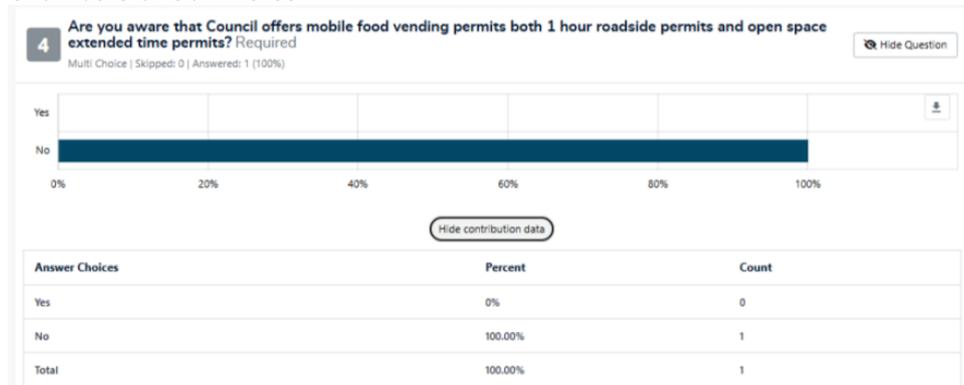
Response Data

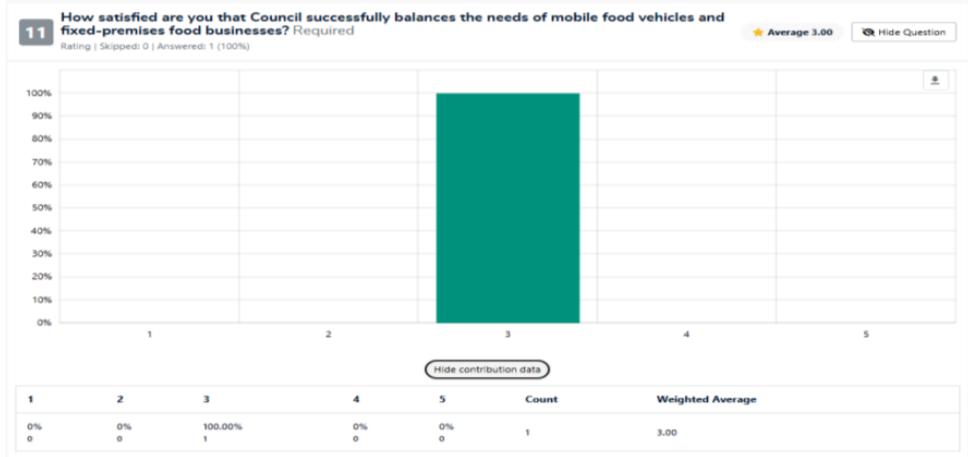
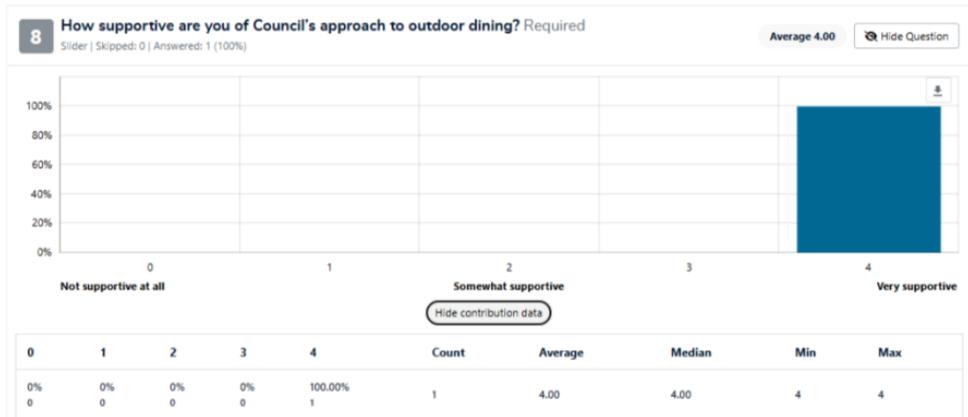
General Food and Beverage Operators



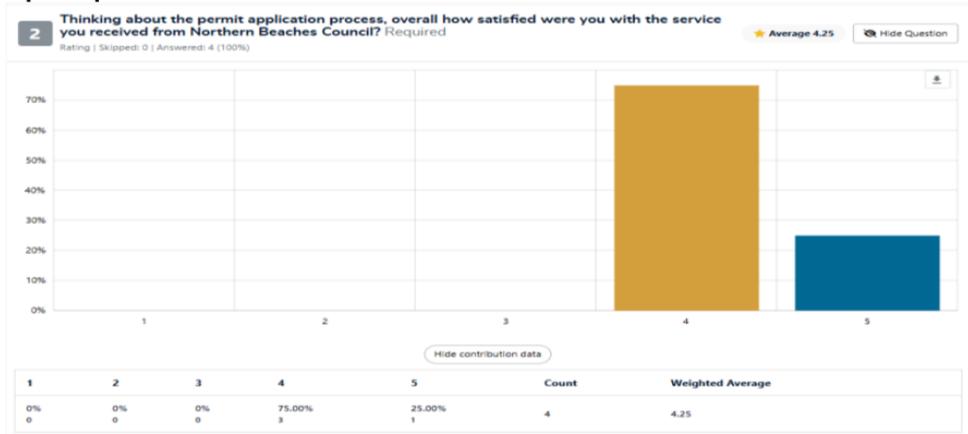


Chambers of Commerce



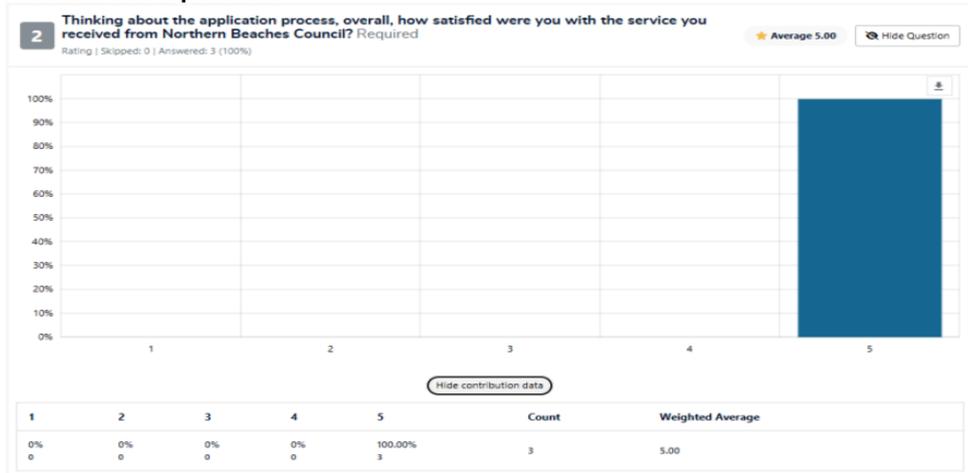


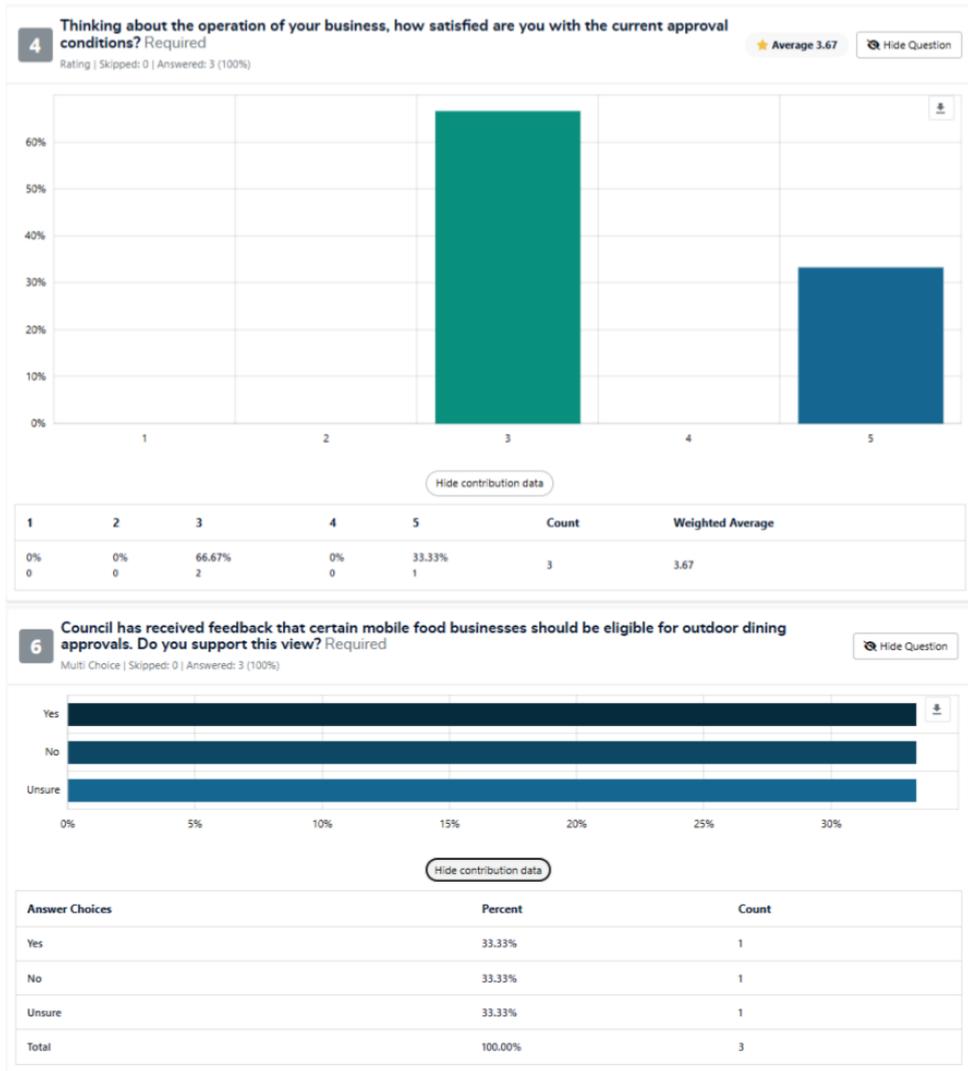
Open Space Permit Holders





Mobile Food Operators

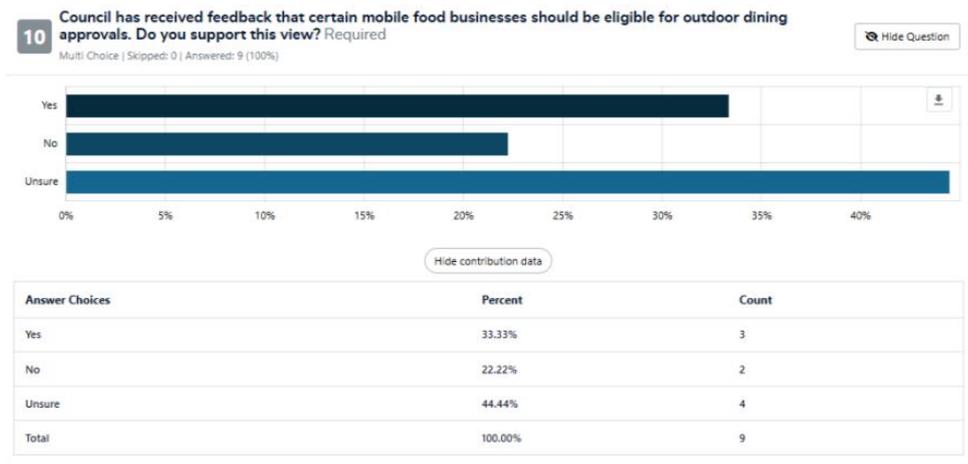
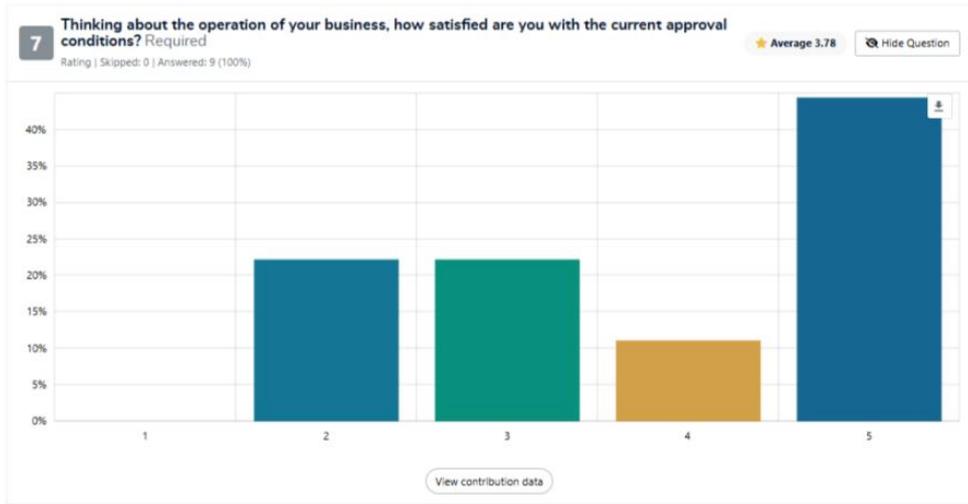


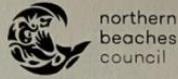


Outdoor Dining Permit Holders²



² One of the 9 responses was not from an Outdoor Dining Permit Holder and has been excluded in the final count.





To: The Chief Executive Officer
Northern Beaches Council

Notice of Motion to Rescind or Alter a Resolution

in accordance with s372(1) of the Local Government Act, 1993.

Passed By Council on 16 December 2025

We give notice of the following motion to rescind or alter a resolution of Council:

"That Council's resolution relating to Item No 9.2, point/s _____
adopted at the Council Meeting held on 16 December 2025 be rescinded".

Notice of Replacement Motion

in accordance with clauses 18.3 to 18.14 of the Northern Beaches Council Code of Meeting Practice.

Should the motion to rescind or alter a resolution be adopted we give notice that it is our intention to move the following motion:

~~The amendment moved at the meeting by~~
~~C. Vincent De Luca OAM~~
see Attached.

Vincent De Luca OAM
Name of Councillor

16.12.25
Date

Mandeef Singh
Name of Councillor

16.12.25
Date

Robert Williams
Name of Councillor

16.12.25
Date

TRIM: 2017/338901

ALTERNATE MOTION

That Council:

1. Adopt the Northern Beaches Council Code of Meeting Practice 2025 (Code) at Attachment 1, with the Code to come into effect on 1 January 2026 with the exception of:
 - a. A1.2 The public forum will be held in Council Chambers from 6.00pm 7 days prior to an ordinary meeting of the Council change so it now reads:

The Public Forum for items on the agenda will be held in the Council Chambers, prior to an Ordinary Meeting of Council from 6.00pm and close strictly at 6.45pm.
 - b. Delete the non-mandatory clause that provides an option for the chairperson to be granted authorisation to expel any person, including any Councillor from a Council or committee meeting.
 - c. Replace 14 days with 8 days, being:

3.10 A Councillor may give notice of any business they wish to be considered by the Council at its next ordinary meeting by way of notice of motion. To be included on the agenda of the meeting, the notice of motion must be in writing and must be submitted by 12 noon 8 days before the meeting is to be held.
 - d. All voting at Council meetings (including meetings that are closed to the public) must be recorded in the minutes of meetings noting the names of Councillors who voted for and against each motion or amendment (including the use of the casting vote).
2. Note its opinion that the amendments to the draft Code are not substantial and it may adopt the amended draft Code without public exhibition as its code of meeting practice.
3. Staff prepare options for open public forums to be held separately to Council meetings to be presented to the first scheduled Council meeting in 2026; these should include possibilities for up to 5 forums per year, where residents can advocate to Councillors on topics of interest or concern.

ITEM 9.2	OUTCOME OF PUBLIC EXHIBITION - DRAFT CODE OF MEETING PRACTICE
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PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to advise of the outcome of public exhibition and facilitate the adoption of the draft Code of Meeting Practice 2025.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The NSW Government released a new Model Code of Meeting Practice in August 2025 which includes mandatory and non-mandatory provisions for all NSW councils.
- Council is obligated to adopt a new Code of Meeting Practice, which includes the mandatory provisions of the new Model Code of Meeting Practice, by 31 December 2025.
- Council placed the draft Northern Beaches Council Code of Meeting Practice on public exhibition and received 73 submissions, which largely focused on the mandated change to move public forums out of the Council meeting, and the proposed approach to hold public forums one week prior to Council meetings.
- The exhibition of the draft Northern Beaches Council Code of Meeting Practice provided the opportunity for Council to hear from the community on the framework governing Council meetings, however the draft Code predominantly consists of mandatory provisions set by the NSW Government.
- It is recommended that the Code of Meeting Practice be adopted as exhibited.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council adopt the Northern Beaches Council Code of Meeting Practice 2025 (Code) at Attachment 1, with the Code to come into effect on 1 January 2026.

ITEM 9.2 NORTHERN BEACHES COUNCIL MEETING - 16 DECEMBER 2025

BACKGROUND

The Model Code of Meeting Practice for Local Councils in NSW prescribes a set of uniform meeting rules for councils across NSW to ensure meetings of councils and committees of councils comprising only of councillors are open, accessible, orderly, effective and efficient.

In accordance with section 360 of the Local Government Act 1993, councils are required to adopt a Code of Meeting Practice which is consistent with the Model Code of Meeting Practice issued by the NSW Government.

As part of a tranche of reforms to the Councillor Conduct Framework, the NSW Government released a revised Model Code of Meeting Practice in August 2025 (2025 Model Meeting Code) with the stated aim to 'ensure meetings are conducted in a dignified and orderly way befitting to a chamber of democracy and to promote community confidence in councils and their decisions.'

The 2025 Model Meeting Code has 2 elements:

- **mandatory provisions** (indicated in black font)
- **non-mandatory provisions** (indicated in red font) covering areas of meeting practice that are common to most councils but where there may be a need for some variation in practice between councils based on local circumstances. The non-mandatory provisions also operate to set a benchmark based on what the Office of Local Government (OLG) sees as best practice.

Other provisions that are not inconsistent with the mandatory provisions may also be included.

Council is obligated to adopt a new Code of Meeting Practice which includes the mandatory provisions of the 2025 Model Meeting Code by 31 December 2025.

At its October 2025 Council meeting, Council resolved (271/25) to place the draft Northern Beaches Council Code of Meeting Practice (Code) (Attachment 1) on public exhibition for a period of 42 days with the outcome of the public exhibition to be reported to Council.

The exhibited draft Code included the mandatory provisions, some non-mandatory provisions and a small number of additions to provide greater clarity on the operation of the Council meeting. These additions, which are not mandatory for Council to accept, are highlighted in green text for ease of reference.

Where optional non-mandatory clauses are available to Council (as indicated in red font in the 2025 Model Meeting Code), the draft includes a recommended selection. These selections include:

- Providing the chairperson with the authorisation to expel any person, including any Councillor, from a Council meeting or committee meeting. This provision is put forward so as not to limit the options available to the chairperson in exercising their duties.
- Updating the voting arrangements that must be recorded in the minutes by removing the optional clauses 11.11 and 20.25 of the 2025 Model Meeting Code. In selecting this approach it provides the opportunity for Council to enable a more efficient processing of procedural matters, administrative matters and any other reports during the meeting, whilst retaining the ability to call for a division when desired, to record the names for and against any matter.

Other optional clauses that have been selected to be consistent with Council's current practice or Code of Meeting Practice include:

- provisions which allow Council to adopt items by exception
- provisions regarding altering or rescinding Council decisions (by way of rescission motion)
- provisions regarding recommitting resolutions to correct an error

ITEM 9.2 NORTHERN BEACHES COUNCIL MEETING - 16 DECEMBER 2025

- provisions to set a time limit on Council meetings, with the meeting closure time proposed as 10pm, with a 30 minute extension available, to limit meetings to a maximum of 4.5 hours, to support the health and safety of Councillors and attending staff.

DISCUSSION

The draft Code of Meeting Practice was publicly exhibited from 24 October to 4 December 2025 and attracted 73 submissions. Verbatim responses are provided in the Community Engagement Report (Attachment 2). The key themes raised in the submissions were:

- concerns about democratic values, restriction of participation, public voices and expression
- lack of transparency and accountability
- excessive authority and control.

The main issue raised by those who shared their feedback was, in a general sense, an 'objection' to the proposal to move the public forum one week prior to Council meetings instead of during or just prior to Council meetings.

It is the NSW Government's position that the primary purpose of a council meeting is to make strategic decisions relating to the business of the council. Holding a public forum is, and has always been, optional.

Under the NSW Government's framework, the council meeting is the primary forum for democratic decision-making at the local government level, and that as a chamber of democracy, the council meeting must be transparent and allow the community to bear witness to the deliberations and decision-making at the meeting. However, under the NSW Government framework, the public forum must not form part of the meeting, though a council may hold a public forum prior to a meeting of the Council.

Council is committed to maintaining a high level of community engagement to ensure that residents and stakeholders have opportunities to participate in the decision-making processes that may impact them.

In line with the NSW Government requirement that public forums, if Council decides to hold them, cannot form part of the Council meeting, the draft Code placed on exhibition proposed the public forum be held the Tuesday evening one week prior to the Council meeting, with the business papers for the meeting to be made public the week before the public forum.

The intent is to:

- ensure sufficient time is provided in the public forum to allow for up to 2 speakers for and 2 against each agenda item
- ensure both Councillors and the community are able to attend by being held outside business hours
- to provide time for Councillors to consider the matters addressed by speakers, prior to the Council meeting.

If the forum were to be held on the same day as the Council meeting, it would be necessary to commence earlier and it would need to have a fixed end time, in order to be completed prior to the advertised start time for the Council meeting. This could result in some community members or Councillors not being able to attend due to work commitments, as well as some registered speakers not being able to talk if the forum end time is reached before all are heard.

The proposed rules for the forum are provided in Appendix 1 of the draft Code of Meeting Practice at Attachment 1.

Subject to the schedule of Council meetings, the indicative process for the forum and the publication of Council business papers would be as follows:

ITEM 9.2 NORTHERN BEACHES COUNCIL MEETING - 16 DECEMBER 2025

1. Business papers published to the community and Councillors (first Wednesday of the month)
2. Applications for public forum open when the business papers are published (first Wednesday of the month)
3. Applications for the public forum close at 5pm the business day before the forum (ordinarily the second Monday of the month)
4. Hold livestreamed public forum from 6pm at Council (second Tuesday of the month)
5. Hold livestreamed Council meeting from 6pm in Council Chambers (third Tuesday of the month)

While the exhibition of the draft Code provided the opportunity for Council to hear from the community on the regulatory and decision-making framework of Council meetings, the Code predominantly consists of mandatory provisions set by the NSW Government.

Following review and consideration of the feedback received through this consultation process, no changes are proposed to the draft Code of Meeting Practice as exhibited.

On 28 November 2025 Council received correspondence from the OLG as shown at Attachment 3. Council was advised that the Legislative Council had debated a motion on 25 November 2025 to disallow the Local Government (General) Amendment (Model Code of Meeting Practice) Regulation 2025 (Amendment Regulation). This is the amending regulation that prescribed the updated 2025 Model Meeting Code. There was not a vote on the motion, and with the adjournment of Parliament for the year, it will not be until February 2026 that a vote may be held.

Council has been advised by OLG that the Amendment Regulation and the 2025 Model Meeting Code still have legal force and the new provisions will come into effect on 1 January 2026 as previously advised

CONSULTATION

The proposed changes to the draft Code of Meeting Practice were placed on public exhibition from 24 October to 4 December 2025. Public exhibition of the draft Code of Meeting Practice and the opportunity to provide feedback was promoted via Council's e-mail newsletter, stakeholder emails and a Your Say online project page. Feedback was collected through an online form and via email. During the public exhibition period 73 submissions were received. The Community Engagement Report is provided at Attachment 2.

TIMING

If Council does not adopt a Code of Meeting Practice that incorporates the mandatory provisions of the 2025 Model Meeting Code by 31 December 2025, then from 1 January 2026, any provision of the Council's Code of Meeting Practice that is inconsistent with a mandatory provision of the 2025 Model Meeting Code will be automatically overridden by the relevant mandatory provision of the 2025 Model Meeting Code.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

There are no financial impacts associated with the adoption of the draft Code of Meeting Practice.

The costs associated with the facilitation of public forums one week prior to Council meetings are equivalent to the costs currently incurred for the facilitation of councillor briefings, such that no budget adjustments would be required.

GOVERNANCE AND RISK CONSIDERATIONS

Council is required to adopt a Code of Meeting Practice that incorporates the mandatory provisions of the 2025 Model Meeting Code and may also include the non-mandatory and other provisions. The draft Code complies with these requirements.

ITEM 9.2 NORTHERN BEACHES COUNCIL MEETING - 16 DECEMBER 2025

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

The recommendation of the report does not have any significant adverse environmental impacts.

SOCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

While the exhibition of the draft Code provided the opportunity for Council to hear from the community on the framework governing Council meetings, the Code predominantly consists of mandatory provisions set by the NSW Government.

Ongoing community participation will occur through members of the public registering to speak at the public forum on matters listed in the Council agenda, and the opportunity to either attend the Council chambers or view the livestream of the Council meeting to hear the elected council's consideration of the matters.

LINK TO STRATEGY

This report relates to the Community Strategic Plan Outcome and Goal:

- Good governance and participation - Goal 19 Our Council is transparent and trusted to make decisions that reflect the values of the community.

Reporting team	Governance & Assurance Services
TRIM file ref	2025/705957
Attachments	⇒1 Draft Code of Meeting Practice (Included In Attachments Booklet) ⇒2 Community Engagement Report (Included In Attachments Booklet) ⇒3 Email from OLG on Legislative Council motion (Included In Attachments Booklet)

Green text – Northern Beaches Council supplementary
Black text – OLG Mandatory
Red text – OLG Optional

DRAFT NORTHERN BEACHES COUNCIL CODE OF MEETING PRACTICE

2025

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1 INTRODUCTION

The Northern Beaches Council Code of Meeting Practice (Meeting Code) is based on the Model Code of Meeting Practice for Local Councils in NSW (the Model Meeting Code) which is prescribed under section 360 of the *Local Government Act 1993* (the Act) and the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* (the Regulation).

The Meeting Code applies to all meetings of Council and Committees of Council of which all the members are Councillors (Committees of Council). Council committees whose members include persons other than Councillors may adopt their own rules for meetings unless the Council determines otherwise.

This Meeting Code incorporates the mandatory provisions of the Model Meeting Code.

2 MEETING PRINCIPLES

2.1 Council and committee meetings should be:

Transparent: Decisions are made in a way that is open and accountable.

Informed: Decisions are made based on relevant, quality information.

Inclusive: Decisions respect the diverse needs and interests of the local community.

Principled: Decisions are informed by the principles prescribed under Chapter 3 of the Act.

Trusted: The community has confidence that Councillors and staff act ethically and make decisions in the interests of the whole community.

Effective: Meetings are well organised, effectively run and skilfully chaired.

Orderly: Councillors, staff and meeting attendees behave in a way that contributes to the orderly conduct of the meeting.

Note: The Office of Local Government has issued a guideline on free speech in local government in NSW. The Guideline provides practical guidance to Councils on what free speech means in the context of NSW local government, including in relation to Council meetings. The Guidelines have been issued under section 23A of the Act meaning Councils must consider them when exercising their functions at meetings.

2.2 Council acknowledges:

(a) it has obligations with respect to the health and safety of employees, Councillors and members of the public who attend a Council meeting in accordance with the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* and related regulations, and

(b) employees, Councillors and others who attend a Council meeting have obligations under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* and related regulations including that:

(i) they must take reasonable care that their acts or omissions do not

- (ii) adversely affect the health and safety of others, and they must comply, so as far as they are reasonably able, with any reasonable instruction that is given by Council to allow Council to comply with the Act.

- 2.3 Council is committed to ensuring:
- (a) its meetings are conducted in a manner that satisfies its obligations under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* and related regulations, and
 - (b) it promotes a culture of safety and respect for all attendees at Council meetings.

3 BEFORE THE MEETING

Timing of ordinary Council meetings

- 3.1 Council shall, by resolution, set the frequency, time, date and place of its ordinary meetings.

Note: Under section 365 of the Act, Councils are required to meet at least ten (10) times each year, each time in a different month unless the Minister for Local Government has approved a reduction in the number of times that a Council is required to meet each year under section 365A.

Extraordinary meetings

- 3.2 If the Mayor receives a request in writing, signed by at least 2 Councillors, the Mayor must call an extraordinary meeting of the Council to be held as soon as practicable, but in any event, no more than 14 days after receipt of the request. The Mayor can be one of the 2 Councillors requesting the meeting.
- 3.3 The Mayor may call an extraordinary meeting without the need to obtain the signature of 2 Councillors.

Notice to the public of Council meetings

- 3.4 The Council must give notice to the public of the time, date and place of each of its meetings, including extraordinary meetings, and of each meeting of committees of the Council.
- 3.5 For the purposes of clause 3.4, notice of a meeting of the Council and of a committee of Council must be published before the meeting takes place. The notice must be published on the Council's website, and in such other manner that the Council is satisfied is likely to bring notice of the meeting to the attention of as many people as possible.
- 3.6 For the purposes of clause 3.4, notice of more than one meeting may be given in the same notice.

Notice to Councillors of ordinary Council meetings

- 3.7 The **Chief Executive Officer** must send to each Councillor, at least 3 days before each meeting of the Council, a notice specifying the time, date and

place at which the meeting is to be held, and the business proposed to be considered at the meeting.

- 3.8 The notice and the agenda for, and the business papers relating to, the meeting may be given to Councillors in electronic form, unless the Council determines otherwise, but only if all Councillors have facilities to access the notice, agenda and business papers in that form.

Notice to Councillors of extraordinary meetings

- 3.9 Notice of less than 3 days may be given to Councillors of an extraordinary meeting of the Council in cases of emergency.

Giving notice of business to be considered at Council meetings

- 3.10 A Councillor may give notice of any business they wish to be considered by the Council at its next ordinary meeting by way of a notice of motion. To be included on the agenda of the meeting, the notice of motion must be in writing and must be submitted **by 12 noon, 14 days before the meeting is to be held.**

Note: If a Councillor wishes to include a photograph or image in the business papers with their notice of motion, the Councillor must provide appropriate evidence supporting copyright approval for use of the images to the Chief Executive Officer or their delegate.

- 3.11 A Councillor may, in writing to the **Chief Executive Officer**, request the withdrawal of a notice of motion submitted by them prior to its inclusion in the agenda and business paper for the meeting at which it is to be considered.

Questions with notice

- 3.12 A Councillor may, by way of a notice submitted under clause 3.10, ask a question for response by the **Chief Executive Officer** about the performance or operations of the Council.

- 3.13 A Councillor is not permitted to ask a question with notice under clause 3.12 that would constitute an act of disorder.

- 3.14 The **Chief Executive Officer** or their nominee may respond to a question with notice submitted under clause 3.12 by way of a report included in the business papers for the relevant meeting of the Council **or verbally at the meeting.**

Note: If the preparation of a response is likely to divert significant time and resources of staff the Chief Executive Officer will notify the Councillor.

Agenda and business papers for ordinary meetings

- 3.15 The **Chief Executive Officer** must cause the agenda for a meeting of the Council or a committee of the Council to be prepared as soon as practicable before the meeting.

- 3.16 The **Chief Executive Officer** must ensure that the agenda for an ordinary meeting of the Council states:

- (a) all matters to be dealt with arising out of the proceedings of previous meetings of the Council, and
 - (b) if the Mayor is the chairperson – any matter or topic that the chairperson proposes, at the time when the agenda is prepared, to put to the meeting, and
 - (c) all matters, including matters that are the subject of staff reports and reports of committees, to be considered at the meeting, and
 - (d) any business of which due notice has been given under clause 3.10.
- 3.17 Nothing in clause 3.16 limits the powers of the Mayor to put a Mayoral minute to a meeting without notice under clause 9.7.
- 3.18 The **Chief Executive Officer** must not include in the agenda for a meeting of the Council any business of which due notice has been given if, in the opinion of the **Chief Executive Officer**, the business is, or the implementation of the business would be, unlawful. The **Chief Executive Officer** must report, without giving details of the item of business, any such exclusion to the next meeting of the Council.
- 3.19 Where the agenda includes the receipt of information or discussion of other matters that, in the opinion of the **Chief Executive Officer**, is likely to take place when the meeting is closed to the public, the **Chief Executive Officer** must ensure that the agenda of the meeting:
- (a) identifies the relevant item of business and indicates that it is of such a nature (without disclosing details of the information to be considered when the meeting is closed to the public), and
 - (b) states the grounds under section 10A(2) of the Act relevant to the item of business.
- Note: Section 10A(2) of the Act provides for a meeting to be closed to the public in various circumstances including in relation to the discussion of:**
- (a) personnel matters concerning particular individuals (other than Councillors), and**
 - (b) in certain circumstances, advice concerning litigation, or advice that would otherwise be privileged from production in legal proceedings on grounds of legal professional privilege.**
- 3.20 The **Chief Executive Officer** must ensure that the details of any item of business which, in the opinion of the **Chief Executive Officer**, is likely to be considered when the meeting is closed to the public, are included in a business paper provided to Councillors for the meeting concerned. Such details must not be included in the business papers made available to the public and must not be disclosed by a Councillor or by any other person to another person who is not authorised to have that information.

Availability of the agenda and business papers to the public

- 3.21 Copies of the agenda and the associated business papers, such as correspondence and reports for meetings of the Council and committees of Council, are to be published on the Council's website, and must be made available to the public for inspection, or for taking away by any person free of charge at the offices of the Council, at the relevant meeting and at such other venues determined by the Council.
- 3.22 Clause 3.21 does not apply to the business papers for items of business identified under clause 3.19 as being likely to be considered when the meeting is closed to the public.
- 3.23 For the purposes of clause 3.21, copies of agendas and business papers must be published on the Council's website and made available to the public at a time that is as close as possible to the time they are available to Councillors.
- 3.24 A copy of an agenda, or of an associated business paper made available under clause 3.21, may in addition be given or made available in electronic form unless the Council determines otherwise.

Agenda and business papers for extraordinary meetings

- 3.25 The Council must ensure that the agenda for an extraordinary meeting of the Council deals only with the matters stated in the notice of the meeting.
- 3.26 Nothing in clause 3.25 limits the powers of the Mayor to put a Mayoral minute to an extraordinary meeting without notice under clause 9.7.
- 3.27 Despite clause 3.25, business may be considered at an extraordinary meeting of the Council at which all Councillors are present, even though due notice has not been given of the business, if the Council resolves to deal with the business on the grounds that it is urgent and requires a decision by the Council before the next scheduled ordinary meeting of the Council. A resolution adopted under this clause must state the reasons for the urgency.
- 3.28 A motion moved under clause 3.27 can be moved without notice but only after the business notified in the agenda for the extraordinary meeting has been dealt with. Despite any other provision of this code, only the mover of a motion moved under clause 3.27, and the chairperson, if they are not the mover of the motion, can speak to the motion before it is put.
- 3.29 If all Councillors are not present at the extraordinary meeting, the Council may only deal with business at the meeting that Councillors have not been given due notice of, where a resolution is adopted in accordance with clause 3.27 and the chairperson also rules that the business is urgent and requires a decision by the Council before the next scheduled ordinary meeting.
- 3.30 A motion of dissent cannot be moved against a ruling of the chairperson under clause 3.29 on whether a matter is urgent.

Prohibition of pre-meeting briefing sessions

- 3.31 Briefing sessions must not be held to brief Councillors on business listed on the agenda for meetings of the Council or committees of the Council.

Note: The prohibition on the holding of briefing sessions under clause 3.31 reflects the intent of Chapter 4, Part 1 of the Act which requires business of the Council to be conducted openly and transparently at a formal meeting of which due notice has been given and to which the public has access. Pre-meeting briefing sessions are inconsistent with the principles of transparency, accountability and public participation and have the potential to undermine confidence in the proper and lawful decision-making processes of the Council.

- 3.32 Nothing in clause 3.31 prevents a Councillor from requesting information from the **Chief Executive Officer** about a matter to be considered at a meeting, provided the information is also available to the public. Information requested under this clause must be provided in a way that does not involve any discussion of the information.

4 PUBLIC FORUMS

- 4.1 The Council may hold a public forum prior to meetings of the Council and committees of the Council for the purpose of hearing oral submissions from members of the public on items of business to be considered at the meeting. Public forums may also be held prior to meetings of other committees of the Council.
- 4.2 The Council may determine the rules under which public forums are to be conducted and when they are to be held.
- 4.3 The provisions of this code requiring the livestreaming of meetings also apply to public forums.

Note: The rules for conducting the public forum are provided in Appendix 1.

5 COMING TOGETHER

Attendance by Councillors at meetings

- 5.1 All Councillors must make reasonable efforts to attend meetings of the Council and of committees of the Council of which they are members.

Note: A Councillor may not attend a meeting as a Councillor (other than the first meeting of the Council after the Councillor is elected or a meeting at which the Councillor takes an oath or makes an affirmation of office) until they have taken an oath or made an affirmation of office in the form prescribed under section 233A of the Act.

- 5.2 The Council may determine standards of dress for Councillors when attending meetings.
- 5.3 A Councillor cannot participate in a meeting of the Council or of a committee of the Council unless personally present at the meeting, unless permitted to attend the meeting by audio-visual link under this code.
- 5.4 Where a Councillor is unable to attend one or more meetings of the Council or committees of the Council, the Councillor should submit an apology for the

meetings they are unable to attend, state the reasons for their absence from the meetings and request that the Council grant them a leave of absence from the relevant meetings.

- 5.5 The Council must not act unreasonably when considering whether to grant a Councillor's request for a leave of absence.
- 5.6 Where a Councillor makes an apology under clause 5.4, the Council must determine by resolution whether to grant the Councillor a leave of absence for the meeting for the purposes of section 234(1)(d) of the Act. If the Council resolves not to grant a leave of absence for the meeting, it must state the reasons for its decision in its resolution.
- 5.7 A Councillor's civic office will become vacant if the Councillor is absent from 3 consecutive ordinary meetings of the Council without prior leave of the Council, or leave granted by the Council at any of the meetings concerned, unless the holder is absent because they have been suspended from office under the Act, or because the Council has been suspended under the Act, or as a consequence of a compliance order under section 438HA.

The quorum for a meeting

- 5.8 The quorum for a meeting of the Council is a majority of the Councillors of the Council who hold office at that time and are not suspended from office.
- 5.9 Clause 5.8 does not apply if the quorum is required to be determined in accordance with directions of the Minister in a performance improvement order issued in respect of the Council.
- 5.10 A meeting of the Council must be adjourned if a quorum is not present:
- (a) at the commencement of the meeting where the number of apologies received for the meeting indicates that there will not be a quorum for the meeting, or
 - (b) within half an hour after the time designated for the holding of the meeting, or
 - (c) at any time during the meeting.
- 5.11 In either case, the meeting must be adjourned to a time, date, and place fixed:
- (a) by the chairperson, or
 - (b) in the chairperson's absence, by the majority of the Councillors present, or
 - (c) failing that, by the **Chief Executive Officer**.
- 5.12 The **Chief Executive Officer** must record in the Council's minutes the circumstances relating to the absence of a quorum (including the reasons for the absence of a quorum) at or arising during a meeting of the Council, together with the names of the Councillors present.

Note: If the meeting is to resume on another day, any decisions of the Council made prior to the lapsing of the meeting are to be implemented by the Chief Executive Officer and do not need to await the resumption

of the adjourned meeting. Unless urgent or resolved otherwise, it is the Council's practice not to implement decisions of the Council until 12 noon on the working day following the day on which the meeting was adjourned. The outstanding items are to be resubmitted to the adjourned meeting for determination.

- 5.13 Where, prior to the commencement of a meeting, it becomes apparent that a quorum may not be present at the meeting, or that the health, safety or welfare of Councillors, Council staff and members of the public may be put at risk by attending the meeting because of a natural disaster or a public health emergency, the Mayor may, in consultation with the Chief Executive Officer and, as far as is practicable, with each Councillor, cancel the meeting. Where a meeting is cancelled, notice of the cancellation must be published on the Council's website and in such other manner that the Council is satisfied is likely to bring notice of the cancellation to the attention of as many people as possible.
- 5.14 Where a meeting is cancelled under clause 5.13, the business to be considered at the meeting may instead be considered, where practicable, at the next ordinary meeting of the Council or at an extraordinary meeting called by the Mayor under clause 3.3.

Meetings held by audio-visual link

- 5.15 A meeting of the Council or a committee of the Council may be held by audio-visual link where the Mayor determines that the meeting should be held by audio-visual link because of a natural disaster or a public health emergency. The Mayor may only make a determination under this clause where they are satisfied that attendance at the meeting may put the health and safety of Councillors and staff at risk. The Mayor must make a determination under this clause in consultation with the Chief Executive Officer and, as far as is practicable, with each Councillor.
- 5.16 Where the Mayor determines under clause 5.15 that a meeting is to be held by audio-visual link, the Chief Executive Officer must:
- (a) give written notice to all Councillors that the meeting is to be held by audio-visual link, and
 - (b) take all reasonable steps to ensure that all Councillors can participate in the meeting by audio-visual link, and
 - (c) cause a notice to be published on the Council's website and in such other manner the Chief Executive Officer is satisfied will bring it to the attention of as many people as possible, advising that the meeting is to be held by audio-visual link and providing information about where members of the public may view the meeting.
- 5.17 This code applies to a meeting held by audio-visual link under clause 5.15 in the same way it would if the meeting was held in person.

Note: Where a Council holds a meeting by audio-visual link under clause 5.15, it is still required under section 10 of the Act to provide a physical venue for members of the public to attend in person and observe the meeting.

Attendance by Councillors at meetings by audio-visual link

5.18 Councillors may attend and participate in meetings of the Council and committees of the Council by audio-visual link with the approval of the Council or the relevant committee where they are prevented from attending the meeting in person because of ill-health or other medical reasons or because of unforeseen caring responsibilities.

Note: The chairperson of the meeting must be personally present in order to chair the meeting where there are Councillors participating in person and by remote audio visual link.

5.19 Clause 5.18 does not apply to meetings at which a Mayoral election is to be held.

5.20 A request by a Councillor for approval to attend a meeting by audio-visual link must be made in writing to the **Chief Executive Officer** prior to the meeting in question and must provide reasons why the Councillor will be prevented from attending the meeting in person.

5.21 Councillors may request approval to attend more than one meeting by audio-visual link. Where a Councillor requests approval to attend more than one meeting by audio-visual link, the request must specify the meetings the request relates to in addition to the information required under clause 5.20.

5.22 The Council must comply with the Health Privacy Principles prescribed under the *Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002* when collecting, holding, using and disclosing health information in connection with a request by a Councillor to attend a meeting by audio-visual link.

5.23 A Councillor who has requested approval to attend a meeting of the Council or a committee of the Council by audio-visual link may participate in the meeting by audio-visual link until the Council or committee determines whether to approve their request and is to be taken as present at the meeting. The Councillor may participate in a decision in relation to their request to attend the meeting by audio-visual link.

5.24 A decision whether to approve a request by a Councillor to attend a meeting of the Council or a committee of the Council by audio-visual link must be made by a resolution of the Council or the committee concerned. The resolution must state the meetings the resolution applies to.

5.25 If the Council or committee refuses a Councillor's request to attend a meeting by audio-visual link, their link to the meeting is to be terminated.

5.26 A decision whether to approve a Councillor's request to attend a meeting by audio-visual link is at the Council's or the relevant committee's discretion. The Council and committees of the Council must act reasonably when considering requests by Councillors to attend meetings by audio-visual link.

5.27 The Council and committees of the Council may refuse a Councillor's request to attend a meeting by audio-visual link where the Council or committee is satisfied that the Councillor has failed to appropriately declare and manage conflicts of interest, observe confidentiality or to comply with this code on one

or more previous occasions they have attended a meeting of the Council or a committee of the Council by audio-visual link.

- 5.28 This code applies to a Councillor attending a meeting by audio-visual link in the same way it would if the Councillor was attending the meeting in person. Where a Councillor is permitted to attend a meeting by audio-visual link under this code, they are to be taken as attending the meeting in person for the purposes of the code and will have the same voting rights as if they were attending the meeting in person.
- 5.29 A Councillor must give their full attention to the business and proceedings of the meeting when attending a meeting by audio-visual link. The Councillor's camera must be on at all times during the meeting except as may be otherwise provided for under this code.
- 5.30 A Councillor must be appropriately dressed when attending a meeting by audio-visual link and must ensure that no items are within sight of the meeting that are inconsistent with the maintenance of order at the meeting or that are likely to bring the Council or the committee into disrepute.

Entitlement of the public to attend Council meetings

- 5.31 Everyone is entitled to attend a meeting of the Council and committees of the Council. The Council must ensure that all meetings of the Council and committees of the Council are open to the public.
- 5.32 Clause 5.31 does not apply to parts of meetings that have been closed to the public under section 10A of the Act.
- 5.33 A person (whether a Councillor or another person) is not entitled to be present at a meeting of the Council or a committee of the Council if expelled from the meeting:
- (a) by a resolution of the meeting, or
 - (b) by the person presiding at the meeting if the Council has, by resolution, authorised the person presiding to exercise the power of expulsion.
- 5.34 On the adoption of this code and at the commencement of each Council term, the Council must determine whether to authorise the person presiding at a meeting to exercise a power of expulsion.

Livestreaming of meetings

- 5.35 Each meeting of the Council or a committee of the Council is to be recorded by means of an audio-visual device.
- 5.36 At the start of each meeting of the Council or a committee of the Council, the chairperson must inform the persons attending the meeting that:
- (a) the meeting is being recorded and made publicly available on the Council's website, and
 - (b) persons attending the meeting should refrain from making any defamatory statements.

- 5.37 The recording of a meeting is to be made publicly available on the Council's website at the same time as the meeting is taking place.
- 5.38 The recording of a meeting is to be made publicly available on the Council's website for at least 12 months after the meeting or for the balance of the Council's term, whichever is the longer period.
- 5.39 Clauses 5.35 - 5.38 do not apply to any part of a meeting that has been closed to the public in accordance with section 10A of the Act.
- 5.40 Recordings of meetings may be disposed of in accordance with the *State Records Act 1998*.

Attendance of the Chief Executive Officer and other staff at meetings

- 5.41 The Chief Executive Officer is entitled to attend, but not to vote at, a meeting of the Council or a meeting of a committee of the Council of which all of the members are Councillors.
- 5.42 The Chief Executive Officer is entitled to attend a meeting of any other committee of the Council and may, if a member of the committee, exercise a vote.
- 5.43 The Chief Executive Officer may be excluded from a meeting of the Council or a committee while the Council or committee deals with a matter relating to the standard of performance of the Chief Executive Officer or the terms of employment of the Chief Executive Officer.
- 5.44 The attendance of other Council staff at a meeting, (other than as members of the public) shall be determined by the Chief Executive Officer in consultation with the Mayor.

Note: In relation to clauses 14.13 and 14.14, Council staff may remain in a meeting when it is closed to the public if so determined in accordance with clause 5.44.

6 THE CHAIRPERSON

The chairperson at meetings

- 6.1 The Mayor, or at the request of or in the absence of the Mayor, the deputy Mayor (if any) presides at meetings of the Council.
- 6.2 If the Mayor and the deputy Mayor (if any) are absent, a Councillor elected to chair the meeting by the Councillors present presides at a meeting of the Council.

Election of the chairperson in the absence of the Mayor and deputy Mayor

- 6.3 If no chairperson is present at a meeting of the Council at the time designated for the holding of the meeting, the first business of the meeting must be the election of a chairperson to preside at the meeting.
- 6.4 The election of a chairperson must be conducted:

- (a) by the **Chief Executive Officer** or, in their absence, an employee of the Council designated by the **Chief Executive Officer** to conduct the election, or
 - (b) by the person who called the meeting or a person acting on their behalf if neither the **Chief Executive Officer** nor a designated employee is present at the meeting, or if there is no **Chief Executive Officer** or designated employee.
- 6.5 If, at an election of a chairperson, 2 or more candidates receive the same number of votes and no other candidate receives a greater number of votes, the chairperson is to be the candidate whose name is chosen by lot.
- 6.6 For the purposes of clause 6.5, the person conducting the election must:
- (a) arrange for the names of the candidates who have equal numbers of votes to be written on similar slips, and
 - (b) then fold the slips so as to prevent the names from being seen, mix the slips and draw one of the slips at random.
- 6.7 The candidate whose name is on the drawn slip is the candidate who is to be the chairperson.
- 6.8 Any election conducted under clause 6.3, and the outcome of the vote, are to be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

Chairperson to have precedence

- 6.9 When the chairperson rises or speaks during a meeting of the Council:
- (a) any Councillor then speaking or seeking to speak must cease speaking and, if standing, immediately resume their seat, and
 - (b) every Councillor present must be silent to enable the chairperson to be heard without interruption.

7 MODES OF ADDRESS

- 7.1 Where physically able to, Councillors and staff should stand when the Mayor enters the chamber and when addressing the meeting.

Note: The Mayor may excuse Councillors and staff from standing at any meeting.

- 7.2 If the chairperson is the Mayor, they are to be addressed as 'Mr Mayor', 'Madam Mayor' or 'Mayor'.
- 7.3 If the chairperson is the Deputy Mayor, they are to be addressed as 'Mr Deputy Mayor', or 'Madam Deputy Mayor' or 'Deputy Mayor'.
- 7.4 Where the chairperson is not the Mayor or deputy Mayor, they are to be addressed as either 'Mr Chairperson' or 'Madam Chairperson' or 'Chair'.
- 7.5 A Councillor is to be addressed as 'Councillor [surname]'.

ATTACHMENT 2 : DECEMBER COUNCIL MEETING - ITEM 9.2 OUTCOME OF PUBLIC EXHIBITION - DRAFT CODE OF MEETING PRACTICE - ITEM 14.1 - NORTHERN BEACHES COUNCIL MEETING - 17 MARCH 2026

ATTACHMENT 1 : DRAFT CODE OF MEETING PRACTICE - ITEM 9.2 - NORTHERN BEACHES COUNCIL MEETING - 16 DECEMBER 2025

- 7.6 A Council officer is to be addressed by their official designation or as Mr/Ms/Mx [surname].

8 ORDER OF BUSINESS FOR ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETINGS

- 8.1 At a meeting of the Council, the general order of business is as fixed by resolution of the Council.

NOTE: For the purposes of Clause 8.1 the order of business for an ordinary Council meeting is as follows (Council resolution 25/TBA):

1. Acknowledgement of Country
2. Apologies and applications for leave of absence and remote attendance by councillors
3. Confirmation of minutes
4. Disclosures of interests
5. Presentations
6. Items resolved by exception
7. Mayoral minutes
8. Reports to council
9. Confidential matters
10. Notices of motions
11. Matters of urgency
12. Notices of rescission
13. Questions with notice
14. Responses to questions with notice

- 8.2 The order of business as fixed under clause 8.1 may be altered for a particular meeting of the Council if a motion to that effect is passed at that meeting. Such a motion can be moved without notice.
- 8.3 Despite any other provision of this code, only the mover of a motion referred to in clause 8.2 and the chairperson, if they are not the mover of the motion, can speak to the motion before it is put.

Note: The chairperson will have regard to attendance of members of the public and may, where the chairperson considers appropriate, move a motion to change the order of business so as not to unreasonably delay the consideration of matters of interest to members of the public attending in the gallery.

9 CONSIDERATION OF BUSINESS AT COUNCIL MEETINGS

Business that can be dealt with at a Council meeting

- 9.1 The Council must not consider business at a meeting of the Council:
- (a) unless a Councillor has given notice of the business, as required by clause 3.10, and
 - (b) unless notice of the business has been sent to the Councillors in accordance with clause 3.7 in the case of an ordinary meeting or clause 3.9 in the case of an extraordinary meeting called in an emergency.
- 9.2 Clause 9.1 does not apply to the consideration of business at a meeting, if the business:

- (a) is already before, or directly relates to, a matter that is already before the Council, or
- (b) is the election of a chairperson to preside at the meeting, or
- (c) is a matter or topic put to the meeting by way of a Mayoral minute, or
- (d) is a motion for the adoption of recommendations of a committee of the Council.

- 9.3 Despite clause 9.1, business may be considered at a meeting of the Council at which all Councillors are present even though due notice has not been given of the business to Councillors, if the Council resolves to deal with the business on the grounds that it is urgent and requires a decision by the Council before the next scheduled ordinary meeting. A resolution adopted under this clause must state the reasons for the urgency.
- 9.4 A motion moved under clause 9.3 can be moved without notice. Despite any other provision of this code, only the mover of a motion referred to in clause 9.3 and the chairperson, if they are not the mover of the motion, can speak to the motion before it is put.
- 9.5 If all Councillors are not present at a meeting, the Council may only deal with business at the meeting that Councillors have not been given due notice of, where a resolution is adopted in accordance with clause 9.3, and the chairperson also rules that the business is urgent and requires a decision by the Council before the next scheduled ordinary meeting.
- 9.6 A motion of dissent cannot be moved against a ruling by the chairperson under clause 9.5.

Mayoral minutes

- 9.7 The Mayor may, by minute signed by the Mayor, put to the meeting without notice any matter or topic that the Mayor determines should be considered at the meeting.
- 9.8 A Mayoral minute, when put to a meeting, takes precedence over all business on the Council's agenda for the meeting. The Mayor may move the adoption of a Mayoral minute without the motion being seconded.
- 9.9 A recommendation made in a Mayoral minute put by the Mayor is, so far as it is adopted by the Council, a resolution of the Council.

Staff reports

- 9.10 A recommendation made in a staff report is, so far as it is adopted by the Council, a resolution of the Council.

Reports of committees of Council

- 9.11 The recommendations of a committee of the Council are, so far as they are adopted by the Council, resolutions of the Council.
- 9.12 If in a report of a committee of the Council distinct recommendations are made, the Council may make separate decisions on each recommendation.

Questions

9.13 A question must not be asked at a meeting of the Council unless it concerns a matter on the agenda of the meeting or notice has been given of the question in accordance with clauses 3.10 and 3.12, unless the Council determines otherwise in accordance with this code.

9.14 A Councillor may, through the chairperson, ask another Councillor about a matter on the agenda.

Note: The Council may move into closed session where a question will involve the discussion or receipt of matters referred to in clause 14.1.

9.15 A Councillor may, through the Mayor, ask the Chief Executive Officer about a matter on the agenda. The Chief Executive Officer may request another Council employee to answer the question.

Note: To avoid any potential for the perception of politicising staff, Councillors are discouraged from asking questions of staff that are more appropriately a matter for debate.

9.16 A Councillor or Council employee to whom a question is put is entitled to be given reasonable notice of the question and, in particular, sufficient notice to enable reference to be made to other persons or to information. Where a Councillor or Council employee to whom a question is put is unable to respond to the question at the meeting at which it is put, they may take it on notice and report the response to the next meeting of the Council.

9.17 Councillors must ask questions directly, succinctly, and without argument.

9.18 A Councillor is not permitted to ask a question under clause 9.14 or 9.15 that would constitute an act of disorder.

9.19 The chairperson must not permit discussion on any reply to, or refusal to reply to, a question put to a Councillor or Council employee. This includes questions with notice asked in accordance with clause 3.12, put to a Councillor or Council employee.

9.20 To ensure all matters on the agenda of the meeting can be dealt with, the chairperson may limit the time available for questions by Councillors on any one matter on the agenda, prior to debate of the motion, to 10 minutes. The chairperson is to ensure there is equitable opportunity amongst Councillors to ask questions within the 10 minute window.

10 RULES OF DEBATE

Motions to be seconded

10.1 Unless otherwise specified in this code, a motion or an amendment cannot be debated unless or until it has been seconded.

Notices of motion

- 10.2 A Councillor who has submitted a notice of motion under clause 3.10 is to move the motion the subject of the notice of motion at the meeting at which it is to be considered.

Note: The Chief Executive Officer may prepare a report/comment in relation to a notice of motion, where it is considered there may be legal, strategic, financial or policy implications which should be taken into consideration, for inclusion in the business papers for the meeting at which the notice of motion is to be considered by the Council.

Note: Where a notice of motion is adopted under 13.1, the Councillor/s that submitted the notice of motion will be noted in the minutes for that item.

Note: Where multiple Councillors have submitted a joint notice of motion, only one mover and one seconder will be recorded in the minutes.

- 10.3 If a Councillor who has submitted a notice of motion under clause 3.10 wishes to withdraw it, they may request its withdrawal at any time. If the notice of motion is withdrawn after the agenda and business paper for the meeting at which it is to be considered have been sent to Councillors, the chairperson is to note the withdrawal of the notice of motion at the meeting unless the Council determines to consider the notice of motion at the meeting.
- 10.4 In the absence of a Councillor who has placed a notice of motion on the agenda for a meeting of the Council:
- (a) any other Councillor may, with the leave of the chairperson, move the motion at the meeting, or
 - (b) the chairperson may defer consideration of the motion until the next meeting of the Council.

Chairperson's duties with respect to motions

- 10.5 It is the duty of the chairperson at a meeting of the Council to receive and put to the meeting any lawful motion that is brought before the meeting.
- 10.6 The chairperson must rule out of order any motion or amendment to a motion that is unlawful or the implementation of which would be unlawful.
- 10.7 Before ruling out of order a motion or an amendment to a motion under clause 10.6, the chairperson is to give the mover an opportunity to clarify or amend the motion or amendment.

Amendments to motions

- 10.8 An amendment to a motion must be moved and seconded before it can be debated.
- 10.9 An amendment to a motion must relate to the matter being dealt with in the original motion before the Council and must not be a direct negative of the original motion. An amendment to a motion which does not relate to the matter being dealt with in the original motion, or which is a direct negative of the original motion, must be ruled out of order by the chairperson.

- 10.10 The mover of an amendment is to be given the opportunity to explain any uncertainties in the proposed amendment before a seconder is called for.
- 10.11 If an amendment has been lost, a further amendment can be moved to the motion to which the lost amendment was moved, and so on, but no more than one motion and one proposed amendment can be before Council at any one time.
- 10.12 While an amendment is being considered, debate must only occur in relation to the amendment and not the original motion. Debate on the original motion is to be suspended while the amendment to the original motion is being debated.
- 10.13 If the amendment is carried, it becomes the motion and is to be debated. If the amendment is lost, debate is to resume on the original motion.
- 10.14 An amendment may become the motion without debate or a vote where it is accepted by the Councillor who moved the original motion.

Note: Where possible, it is helpful for proposed amendments to be circulated in advance of the meeting to allow the Chief Executive Officer to consider any legal, strategic, financial or policy implications to support Councillors in their consideration of the amendment.

Note: Councillors are encouraged to submit amendments to the minute taker prior to meetings to ensure the exact motion is captured and for the efficiency of the meeting. The Chief Executive Officer may request large or complex amendments to be sent in writing to the minute taker prior to the amendment being displayed at the meeting.

Limitations on the number and duration of speeches

- 10.15 A Councillor who, during a debate at a meeting of the Council, moves an original motion, has the right to speak on each amendment to the motion and a right of general reply to all observations that are made during the debate in relation to the motion, and any amendment to it at the conclusion of the debate before the motion (whether amended or not) is finally put.
- 10.16 A Councillor, other than the mover of an original motion, has the right to speak once on the motion and once on each amendment to it.
- 10.17 A Councillor must not, without the consent of the Council, speak more than once on a motion or an amendment, or for longer than 5 minutes at any one time.

Note: Councillors are not obligated to speak for 5 minutes and are encouraged to self-moderate debate time based on the size of the business agenda.

- 10.18 Despite clause 10.17, the chairperson may permit a Councillor who claims to have been misrepresented or misunderstood to speak more than once on a motion or an amendment, and for longer than 5 minutes on that motion or

amendment to enable the Councillor to make a statement limited to explaining the misrepresentation or misunderstanding.

- 10.19 Despite clauses 10.15 and 10.16, a Councillor (including the chairperson) may move that a motion or an amendment be now put:
- (a) if the mover of the motion or amendment has spoken in favour of it and no Councillor expresses an intention to speak against it, or
 - (b) if at least 2 Councillors have spoken in favour of the motion or amendment and at least 2 Councillors have spoken against it.
- 10.20 The chairperson must immediately put to the vote, without debate, a motion moved under clause 10.19. A seconder is not required for such a motion.
- 10.21 If a motion that the original motion or an amendment be now put is passed, the chairperson must, without further debate, put the original motion or amendment to the vote immediately after the mover of the original motion has exercised their right of reply under clause 10.15.
- 10.22 If a motion that the original motion or an amendment be now put is lost, the chairperson must allow the debate on the original motion or the amendment to be resumed.
- 10.23 All Councillors must be heard without interruption and all other Councillors must, unless otherwise permitted under this code, remain silent while another Councillor is speaking.
- 10.24 Once the debate on a matter has concluded and a matter has been dealt with, the chairperson must not allow further debate on the matter.
- 10.25 Clause 10.24 does not prevent a further motion from being moved on the same item of business where the original motion is lost provided the motion is not substantially the same as the one that is lost.

Note: Rules of debate process guide

1. Call for mover
2. Call for seconder
3. Questions to staff
4. Call for any dissent
 - If no dissent, the chairperson may declare the item carried
5. Mover to speak
6. Secunder to speak
7. First dissent speaker
8. Second dissent speaker
9. Ask whether Councillors seek for the item to be put
 - If item is not requested to be put, the chairperson will call for other speakers/amendments
10. Invite original mover to have right of reply
11. Vote on item

11 VOTING

Voting entitlements of Councillors

- 11.1 Each Councillor is entitled to one vote.
- 11.2 The person presiding at a meeting of the Council has, in the event of an equality of votes, a second or casting vote.
- 11.3 Where the chairperson declines to exercise, or fails to exercise, their second or casting vote, in the event of an equality of votes, the motion being voted upon is lost.

Voting at Council meetings

- 11.4 A Councillor who is present at a meeting of the Council but who fails to vote on a motion put to the meeting is taken to have voted against the motion.
- 11.5 If a Councillor who has voted against a motion put at a Council meeting so requests, the **Chief Executive Officer** must ensure that the Councillor's dissenting vote is recorded in the Council's minutes.
- 11.6 The decision of the chairperson as to the result of a vote is final unless the decision is immediately challenged and not fewer than 2 Councillors rise and call for a division.
- 11.7 When a division on a motion is called, the chairperson must ensure that the division takes place immediately. The **Chief Executive Officer** must ensure that the names of those who vote for the motion and those who vote against it are recorded in the Council's minutes for the meeting.
- 11.8 When a division on a motion is called, any Councillor who fails to vote will be recorded as having voted against the motion in accordance with clause 11.4 of this code.
- 11.9 Voting at a meeting, including voting in an election at a meeting, is to be by open means (such as on the voices, by show of hands or by a visible electronic voting system **as determined by the chairperson**). However, the Council may resolve that the voting in any election by Councillors for Mayor or Deputy Mayor is to be by secret ballot.

Voting on planning decisions

- 11.10 The Council or a Council committee must not make a final planning decision without receiving a staff report containing an assessment and recommendation in relation to the matter put before the Council for a decision.
- 11.11 Where the Council or a Council committee makes a planning decision that is inconsistent with the recommendation made in a staff report, it must provide reasons for its decision and why it did not adopt the staff recommendation.
- 11.12 The **Chief Executive Officer** must keep a register containing, for each planning decision made at a meeting of the Council or a Council committee (including, but not limited to a committee of the Council), the names of the Councillors

who supported the decision and the names of any Councillors who opposed (or are taken to have opposed) the decision.

- 11.13 For the purpose of maintaining the register, a division is taken to have been called whenever a motion for a planning decision is put at a meeting of the Council or a Council committee.
- 11.14 Each decision recorded in the register is to be described in the register or identified in a manner that enables the description to be obtained from another publicly available document.
- 11.15 Clauses 11.12–11.14 apply also to meetings that are closed to the public.

Note: The requirements of clause 11.12 may be satisfied by maintaining a register of the minutes of each planning decision.

12 COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

- 12.1 The Council may resolve itself into a committee to consider any matter before the Council.
- 12.2 All the provisions of this code relating to meetings of the Council, so far as they are applicable, extend to and govern the proceedings of the Council when in committee of the whole, except the provisions limiting the number and duration of speeches and encouraging Councillors and staff to stand when addressing the meeting.

Note: Clauses 10.15 – 10.25 limit the number and duration of speeches.

- 12.3 The **Chief Executive Officer** or, in the absence of the **Chief Executive Officer**, an employee of the Council designated by the **Chief Executive Officer**, is responsible for reporting to the Council the proceedings of the committee of the whole. It is not necessary to report the proceedings in full, but any recommendations of the committee must be reported.
- 12.4 The Council must ensure that a report of the proceedings (including any recommendations of the committee) is recorded in the Council's minutes. However, the Council is not taken to have adopted the report until a motion for adoption has been made and passed.

13 DEALING WITH ITEMS BY EXCEPTION

- 13.1 The Council or a committee of Council may, at any time, resolve to adopt multiple items of business on the agenda together by way of a single resolution where it considers it necessary to expedite the consideration of business at a meeting.
- 13.2 Before the Council or committee resolves to adopt multiple items of business on the agenda together under clause 13.1, the chairperson must list the items of business to be adopted and ask Councillors to identify any individual items of business listed by the chairperson that they intend to vote against the recommendation made in the business paper or that they wish to speak on.

- 13.3 The Council or committee must not resolve to adopt any item of business under clause 13.1 that a Councillor has identified as being one they intend to vote against the recommendation made in the business paper or to speak on.
- 13.4 Where the consideration of multiple items of business together under clause 13.1 involves a variation to the order of business for the meeting, the Council or committee must resolve to alter the order of business in accordance with clause 8.2.
- 13.5 A motion to adopt multiple items of business together under clause 13.1 must identify each of the items of business to be adopted and state that they are to be adopted as recommended in the business paper.
- 13.6 Items of business adopted under clause 13.1 are to be taken to have been adopted unanimously.
- 13.7 Councillors must ensure that they declare and manage any conflicts of interest they may have in relation to items of business considered together under clause 13.1.
- 13.8 Where a Councillor wishes to commend Council staff on an item of business due to be adopted under clause 13.1 a notation in the minutes can be included at the discretion of the Chief Executive Officer. If Councillors wish to include specific wording this must be submitted to the Chief Executive Officer by 12 noon on the working day following the meeting.

14 CLOSURE OF COUNCIL MEETINGS TO THE PUBLIC

Grounds on which meetings can be closed to the public

- 14.1 The Council or a committee of the Council may close to the public so much of its meeting as comprises the discussion or the receipt of any of the following types of matters:
- (a) personnel matters concerning particular individuals (other than Councillors),
 - (b) the personal hardship of any resident or ratepayer,
 - (c) information that would, if disclosed, confer a commercial advantage on a person with whom the Council is conducting (or proposes to conduct) business,
 - (d) commercial information of a confidential nature that would, if disclosed:
 - (i) prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it, or
 - (ii) confer a commercial advantage on a competitor of the Council, or
 - (iii) reveal a trade secret,
 - (e) information that would, if disclosed, prejudice the maintenance of law,
 - (f) matters affecting the security of the Council, Councillors, Council staff or Council property,
 - (g) advice concerning litigation, or advice that would otherwise be privileged from production in legal proceedings on the ground of legal professional privilege,
 - (h) information concerning the nature and location of a place or an item of Aboriginal significance on community land,

- (i) alleged contraventions of the Council's code of conduct.

14.2 The Council or a committee of the Council may also close to the public so much of its meeting as comprises a motion to close another part of the meeting to the public.

Matters to be considered when closing meetings to the public

14.3 A meeting is not to remain closed during the discussion of anything referred to in clause 14.1:

- (a) except for so much of the discussion as is necessary to preserve the relevant confidentiality, privilege or security, and
- (b) if the matter concerned is a matter other than a personnel matter concerning particular individuals, the personal hardship of a resident or ratepayer or a trade secret – unless the Council or committee concerned is satisfied that discussion of the matter in an open meeting would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest.

14.4 A meeting is not to be closed during the receipt and consideration of information or advice referred to in clause 14.1(g) unless the advice concerns legal matters that:

- (a) are substantial issues relating to a matter in which the Council or committee is involved, and
- (b) are clearly identified in the advice,
- (c) are fully discussed in that advice, and
- (d) are subject to legal professional privilege.

14.5 If a meeting is closed during the discussion of a motion to close another part of the meeting to the public (as referred to in clause 14.2), the consideration of the motion must not include any consideration of the matter or information to be discussed in that other part of the meeting other than consideration of whether the matter concerned is a matter referred to in clause 14.1.

14.6 For the purpose of determining whether the discussion of a matter in an open meeting would be contrary to the public interest, it is irrelevant that:

- (a) a person may misinterpret or misunderstand the discussion, or
- (b) the discussion of the matter may:
 - (i) cause embarrassment to the Council or committee concerned, or to Councillors or to employees of the Council, or
 - (ii) cause a loss of confidence in the Council or committee.

14.7 In deciding whether part of a meeting is to be closed to the public, the Council or committee concerned must consider any relevant guidelines issued by the Departmental Chief Executive of the Office of Local Government.

Notice of likelihood of closure not required in urgent cases

14.8 Part of a meeting of the Council, or of a committee of the Council, may be closed to the public while the Council or committee considers a matter that has not been identified in the agenda for the meeting under clause 3.19 as a matter

that is likely to be considered when the meeting is closed, but only if:

- (a) it becomes apparent during the discussion of a particular matter that the matter is a matter referred to in clause 14.1, and
- (b) the Council or committee, after considering any representations made under clause 14.9, resolves that further discussion of the matter:
 - (i) should not be deferred (because of the urgency of the matter), and
 - (ii) should take place in a part of the meeting that is closed to the public.

Note: Clause 14.8 reflects section 10C of the Act.

Representations by members of the public

- 14.9 The Council, or a committee of the Council, may allow members of the public to make representations to or at a meeting, before any part of the meeting is closed to the public, as to whether that part of the meeting should be closed.

Note: Clause 14.9 reflects section 10A(4) of the Act.

- 14.10 A representation under clause 14.9 is to be made after the motion to close the part of the meeting is moved and seconded.
- 14.11 Despite clauses 14.9 and 14.10, the Council may resolve to close the meeting to the public in accordance with this Part to hear a representation from a member of the public as to whether the meeting should be closed to consider an item of business where the representation involves the disclosure of information relating to a matter referred to in clause 14.1.
- 14.12 Where the matter has been identified in the agenda of the meeting under clause 3.19 as a matter that is likely to be considered when the meeting is closed to the public, in order to make representations under clause 14.9, members of the public must first make an application to the Council in a manner determined by the Council.

Expulsion of non-Councillors from meetings closed to the public

- 14.13 If a meeting or part of a meeting of the Council or a committee of the Council is closed to the public in accordance with section 10A of the Act and this code, any person who is not a Councillor and who fails to leave the meeting when requested, may be expelled from the meeting as provided by section 10(2)(a) or (b) of the Act.
- 14.14 If any such person, after being notified of a resolution or direction expelling them from the meeting, fails to leave the place where the meeting is being held, a police officer, or any person authorised for the purpose by the Council or person presiding, may, by using such force as is reasonably necessary, remove the first-mentioned person from that place and, if necessary restrain that person from re-entering that place for the remainder of the meeting.

Note: Failure to comply with a direction to leave a meeting is an offence under section 660 of the Act carrying a maximum penalty of 20 penalty units.

Obligations of Councillors attending meetings by audio-visual link

- 14.15 Councillors attending a meeting by audio-visual link must ensure that no other person is within sight or hearing of the meeting at any time that the meeting is closed to the public under section 10A of the Act.

Information to be disclosed in resolutions closing meetings to the public

- 14.16 The grounds on which part of a meeting is closed must be stated in the decision to close that part of the meeting and must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. The grounds must specify the following:
- (a) the relevant provision of section 10A(2) of the Act,
 - (b) the matter that is to be discussed during the closed part of the meeting,
 - (c) the reasons why the part of the meeting is being closed, including (if the matter concerned is a matter other than a personnel matter concerning particular individuals, the personal hardship of a resident or ratepayer or a trade secret) an explanation of the way in which discussion of the matter in an open meeting would be, on balance, contrary to the public interest.

Resolutions passed at closed meetings to be made public

- 14.17 If the Council passes a resolution during a meeting, or a part of a meeting, that is closed to the public, the chairperson must make the resolution public as soon as practicable after the meeting, or the relevant part of the meeting, has ended, and the resolution must be recorded in the publicly available minutes of the meeting.
- 14.18 Resolutions passed during a meeting, or a part of a meeting, that is closed to the public must be made public by the chairperson under clause 14.17 during a part of the meeting that is livestreamed where practicable.
- 14.19 The **Chief Executive Officer** must cause business papers for items of business considered during a meeting, or part of a meeting, that is closed to public, to be published on the Council's website as soon as practicable after the information contained in the business papers ceases to be confidential.
- 14.20 The **Chief Executive Officer** must consult with the Council and any other affected persons before publishing information on the Council's website under clause 14.19 and provide reasons for why the information has ceased to be confidential.

15 KEEPING ORDER AT MEETINGS

Points of order

- 15.1 A Councillor may draw the attention of the chairperson to an alleged breach of this code by raising a point of order. A point of order does not require a seconder.
- 15.2 A point of order must be taken immediately it is raised. The chairperson must suspend the business before the meeting and permit the Councillor raising the

point of order to state the provision of this code they believe has been breached. The chairperson must then rule on the point of order – either by upholding it or by overruling it.

Questions of order

- 15.3 The chairperson, without the intervention of any other Councillor, may call any Councillor to order whenever, in the opinion of the chairperson, it is necessary to do so.
- 15.4 A Councillor who claims that another Councillor has committed an act of disorder, or is out of order, may call the attention of the chairperson to the matter.
- 15.5 The chairperson must rule on a question of order immediately after it is raised but, before doing so, may invite the opinion of the Council.
- 15.6 The chairperson's ruling must be obeyed unless a motion dissenting from the ruling is passed.

Motions of dissent

- 15.7 A Councillor can, without notice, move to dissent from a ruling of the chairperson on a point of order or a question of order. If that happens, the chairperson must suspend the business before the meeting until a decision is made on the motion of dissent.
- 15.8 If a motion of dissent is passed, the chairperson must proceed with the suspended business as though the ruling dissented from had not been given. If, as a result of the ruling, any motion or business has been rejected as out of order, the chairperson must restore the motion or business to the agenda and proceed with it in due course.
- 15.9 Despite any other provision of this code, only the mover of a motion of dissent and the chairperson can speak to the motion before it is put. The mover of the motion does not have a right of general reply.

Acts of disorder

- 15.10 A Councillor commits an act of disorder if the Councillor, at a meeting of the Council or a committee of the Council:
 - (a) contravenes the Act, the Regulation or this code, or
 - (b) assaults or threatens to assault another Councillor or person present at the meeting, or
 - (c) moves or attempts to move a motion or an amendment that has an unlawful purpose or that deals with a matter that is outside the jurisdiction of the Council or the committee, or addresses or attempts to address the Council or the committee on such a motion, amendment or matter, or
 - (d) uses offensive or disorderly words, or
 - (e) makes gestures or otherwise behaves in a way that is sexist, racist, homophobic or otherwise discriminatory, or, if the behaviour occurred in the Legislative Assembly, would be considered disorderly, or

- (f) imputes improper motives to or unfavourably personally reflects upon any other Council official, or a person present at the meeting, except by a motion, or
- (g) says or does anything that would promote disorder at the meeting or is otherwise inconsistent with maintaining order at the meeting.

Note: The Legislative Assembly's Speaker's Guidelines state that "Members are not to use language, make gestures, or behave in any way in the Chamber that is sexist, racist, homophobic or otherwise exclusionary or discriminatory. Such conduct may be considered offensive and disorderly, in accordance with Standing Order 74".

Note: Standing Order 74 'Quarrels not permitted' states that "74. The Speaker may intervene: 1. When offensive or disorderly words are used by a Member. 2. To prevent a quarrel between Members arising out of debates or proceedings in the House."

Note: Councillors must be mindful of their own and Council's obligations under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 and related regulations.

- 15.11 The chairperson may require a Councillor:
- (a) to apologise without reservation for an act of disorder referred to in clauses 15.10(a), (b), (d), (e), or (g), or
 - (b) to withdraw a motion or an amendment referred to in clause 15.10(c) and, where appropriate, to apologise without reservation, or
 - (c) to retract and apologise without reservation for any statement that constitutes an act of disorder referred to in clauses 15.10(d), (e), (f) or (g).
- 15.12 A failure to comply with a requirement under clause 15.11 constitutes a fresh act of disorder for the purposes of clause 15.10.
- 15.13 Where a Councillor fails to take action in response to a requirement by the chairperson to remedy an act of disorder under clause 15.11 at the meeting at which the act of disorder occurred, the chairperson may require the Councillor to take that action at each subsequent meeting until such time as the Councillor complies with the requirement. If the Councillor fails to remedy the act of disorder at a subsequent meeting, they may be expelled from the meeting under clause 15.18.

How disorder at a meeting may be dealt with

- 15.14 If disorder occurs at a meeting of the Council, the chairperson may adjourn the meeting for a period of not more than 15 minutes and leave the chair. The Council, on reassembling, must, on a question put from the chairperson, decide without debate whether the business is to be proceeded with or not. This clause applies to disorder arising from the conduct of members of the public as well as disorder arising from the conduct of Councillors.

Expulsion from meetings

- 15.15 All chairpersons of meetings of the Council and committees of the Council are authorised under this code to expel any person, including any Councillor, from**

a Council or committee meeting, for the purposes of section 10(2)(b) of the Act.

- 15.16 Clause 15.15 does not limit the ability of the Council or a committee of the Council to resolve to expel a person, including a Councillor, from a Council or committee meeting, under section 10(2)(a) of the Act.
- 15.17 A Councillor may, as provided by section 10(2)(a) or (b) of the Act, be expelled from a meeting of the Council for having failed to comply with a requirement under clause 15.11 or clause 15.13. The expulsion of a Councillor from the meeting for that reason does not prevent any other action from being taken against the Councillor for the act of disorder concerned.
- 15.18 A member of the public may, as provided by section 10(2)(a) or (b) of the Act, be expelled from a meeting of the Council for engaging in or having engaged in disorderly conduct at the meeting.
- 15.19 Members of the public attending a meeting of the Council:
- (a) must remain silent during the meeting unless invited by the chairperson to speak,
 - (b) must not bring flags, signs or protest symbols to the meeting, and
 - (c) must not disrupt the meeting.
- 15.20 Without limiting clause 15.18, a contravention of clause 15.19 or an attempt to contravene that clause, constitutes disorderly conduct for the purposes of clause 15.18. Members of the public may, as provided by section 10(2) of the Act, be expelled from a meeting for a breach of clause 15.19.
- 15.21 Where a Councillor or a member of the public is expelled from a meeting, the expulsion and the name of the person expelled, if known, are to be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.
- 15.22 If a Councillor or a member of the public fails to leave the place where a meeting of the Council is being held immediately after they have been expelled, a police officer, or any person authorised for the purpose by the Council or person presiding, may, by using such force as is reasonably necessary, remove the Councillor or member of the public from that place and, if necessary, restrain the Councillor or member of the public from re-entering that place for the remainder of the meeting.

Note: Failure to comply with a direction to leave a meeting is an offence under section 660 of the Act carrying a maximum penalty of 20 penalty units.

How disorder by Councillors attending meetings by audio-visual link may be dealt with

- 15.23 Where a Councillor is attending a meeting by audio-visual link, the chairperson or a person authorised by the chairperson may mute the Councillor's audio link to the meeting for the purposes of enforcing compliance with this code.
- 15.24 If a Councillor attending a meeting by audio-visual link is expelled from a meeting for an act of disorder, the chairperson of the meeting or a person

authorised by the chairperson, may terminate the Councillor's audio-visual link to the meeting.

Use of mobile phones and the unauthorised recording of meetings

15.25 Councillors, Council staff and members of the public must ensure that mobile phones are turned to silent during meetings of the Council and committees of the Council.

15.26 A person must not live stream or use an audio recorder, video camera, mobile phone or any other device to make a recording (including a photograph) within the Council chambers, immediately before, during or directly after the proceedings of a meeting of the Council or a committee of the Council without the prior authorisation of the Council or the committee. Authorisation requires a resolution of the Council or committee on the request, and the Council or committee shall consider the implications for the privacy of residents or other individuals who may be recorded when considering whether to pass such a resolution.

Note: Clause 15.26 does not apply to circumstances where the Chief Executive Officer or delegate arranges for photographs of Councillors and/or the chambers for record keeping purposes.

Note: Clause 15.26 does not apply to media organisations where prior approval from the Chief Executive Officer or delegate in consultation with the chairperson is granted.

15.27 Without limiting clause 15.18, a contravention of clause 15.26 or an attempt to contravene that clause, constitutes disorderly conduct for the purposes of clause 15.18. Any person who contravenes or attempts to contravene clause 15.26, may, as provided for under section 10(2) of the Act, be expelled from the meeting.

15.28 If any such person, after being notified of a resolution or direction expelling them from the meeting, fails to leave the place where the meeting is being held, a police officer, or any person authorised for the purpose by the Council or person presiding, may, by using such force as is reasonably necessary, remove the first-mentioned person from that place and, if necessary, restrain that person from re-entering that place for the remainder of the meeting.

Note: Failure to comply with a direction to leave a meeting is an offence under section 660 of the Act carrying a maximum penalty of 20 penalty units.

16 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

16.1 All Councillors and, where applicable, all other persons, must declare and manage conflicts of interest they have in matters being considered at meetings of the Council and committees of the Council in accordance with the Council's code of conduct. All declarations of conflicts of interest must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting at which the declaration was made.

16.2 Councillors attending a meeting by audio-visual link must declare and manage

any conflicts of interest they have in matters being considered at the meeting in accordance with the Council's code of conduct. Where a Councillor has declared a conflict of interest in a matter being discussed at the meeting, the Councillor's audio-visual link to the meeting must be suspended or terminated and the Councillor must not be in sight or hearing of the meeting at any time during which the matter is being considered or discussed by the Council or committee, or at any time during which the Council or committee is voting on the matter.

17 DECISIONS OF THE COUNCIL

Council decisions

- 17.1 A decision supported by a majority of the votes at a meeting of the Council at which a quorum is present is a decision of the Council.
- 17.2 Decisions made by the Council must be accurately recorded in the minutes of the meeting at which the decision is made.

Rescinding or altering Council decisions

- 17.3 A resolution passed by the Council may not be altered or rescinded except by a motion to that effect of which notice has been given in accordance with this code.
- 17.4 If a notice of motion to rescind a resolution is given at the meeting at which the resolution is carried, the resolution must not be carried into effect until the motion of rescission has been dealt with.
- 17.5 If a motion has been lost, a motion having the same effect must not be considered unless notice of it has been duly given in accordance with this code.
- 17.6 A notice of motion to alter or rescind a resolution, and a notice of motion which has the same effect as a motion which has been lost, must be signed by 3 Councillors if less than 3 months has elapsed since the resolution was passed, or the motion was lost.

Note: Where a notice of rescission that was submitted without a replacement motion is carried, a new replacement motion cannot be considered unless prior notice has been given in accordance with clause 3.10.

Note: The provisions of clause 9.2 and 9.3 have no effect in respect of a replacement motion given without notice in accordance with clause 3.10, where clause 17.6 applies.

- 17.7 If a motion to alter or rescind a resolution has been lost, or if a motion which has the same effect as a previously lost motion is lost, no similar motion may be brought forward within 3 months of the meeting at which it was lost. This clause may not be evaded by substituting a motion differently worded, but in principle the same.

- 17.8 The provisions of clauses 17.5–17.7 concerning lost motions do not apply to motions of adjournment.
- 17.9 A notice of motion submitted in accordance with clause 17.6 may only be withdrawn under clause 3.11 with the consent of all signatories to the notice of motion.
- 17.10 A motion to alter or rescind a resolution of the Council may be moved on the report of a committee of the Council and any such report must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting of the Council.
- 17.11 Subject to clause 17.7, in cases of urgency, a motion to alter or rescind a resolution of the Council may be moved at the same meeting at which the resolution was adopted, where:
- (a) a notice of motion signed by 3 Councillors is submitted to the chairperson at the meeting, and
 - (b) the Council resolves to deal with the motion at the meeting on the grounds that it is urgent and requires a decision by the Council before the next scheduled ordinary meeting of the Council.
- 17.12 A motion moved under clause 17.11(b) can be moved without notice. Despite any other provision of this code, only the mover of a motion referred to in clause 17.12(b) and the chairperson, if they are not the mover of the motion, can speak to the motion before it is put.
- 17.13 A resolution adopted under clause 17.11(b) must state the reasons for the urgency.

Recommitting resolutions to correct an error

- 17.14 Despite the provisions of this Part, a Councillor may, with the leave of the chairperson, move to recommit a resolution adopted at the same meeting:
- (a) to correct any error, ambiguity or imprecision in the Council's resolution, or
 - (b) to confirm the voting on the resolution.
- 17.15 In seeking the leave of the chairperson to move to recommit a resolution for the purposes of clause 17.14(a), the Councillor is to propose alternative wording for the resolution.
- 17.16 The chairperson must not grant leave to recommit a resolution for the purposes of clause 17.14(a), unless they are satisfied that the proposed alternative wording of the resolution would not alter the substance of the resolution previously adopted at the meeting.
- 17.17 A motion moved under clause 17.14 can be moved without notice. Despite any other provision of this code, only the mover of a motion referred to in clause 17.14 and the chairperson, if they are not the mover of the motion, can speak to the motion before it is put.
- 17.18 A motion of dissent cannot be moved against a ruling by the chairperson under clause 17.14.

- 17.19 A motion moved under clause 17.14 with the leave of the chairperson cannot be voted on unless or until it has been seconded.

18 TIME LIMITS ON COUNCIL MEETINGS

- 18.1 Meetings of the Council and committees of the Council are to conclude no later than 10pm.
- 18.2 A short break of not less than 10 minutes is to be taken within the first 2 hours at each ordinary and extraordinary meeting of Council and committees of the Council.
- 18.3 If the business of the meeting is unlikely to be finished by, or is unfinished at 10pm, the Council or the committee of Council may by resolution extend the time of the meeting by one 30-minute interval for the purpose of dealing with the remaining items on the agenda. If at 10.30pm the business of the meeting is not concluded, an automatic extension will occur to enable the completion of debate and voting on the current matter (where the matter under consideration has already been moved and seconded).

Note: Clause 18.3 provides for the welfare and safety of Councillors and staff attending meetings.

- 18.4 If the business of the meeting is unfinished at 10pm and the Council does not resolve to extend the meeting or at the conclusion of any extensions in accordance with clause 18.3, the chairperson must following conclusion of debate and voting on the current matter (where the matter under consideration has already been moved and seconded) then either:
- (a) defer consideration of the remaining items of business on the agenda to the next ordinary meeting of the Council, or
 - (b) adjourn the meeting to a time, date and place fixed by the chairperson.
- 18.5 Clause 18.4 does not limit the ability of the Council or a committee of the Council to resolve to adjourn a meeting at any time. The resolution adjourning the meeting must fix the time, date and place that the meeting is to be adjourned to.
- 18.6 Where a meeting is adjourned under clause 18.4 or 18.5, the Chief Executive Officer must:
- (a) individually notify each Councillor of the time, date and place at which the meeting will reconvene, and
 - (b) publish the time, date and place at which the meeting will reconvene on the Council's website and in such other manner that the Chief Executive Officer is satisfied is likely to bring notice of the time, date and place of the reconvened meeting to the attention of as many people as possible.

Note: If the meeting is to resume on another day, any decisions of the Council made prior to the lapsing of the meeting are to be implemented by the Chief Executive Officer and do not need to await the resumption of the adjourned meeting. Unless urgent or resolved otherwise, it is the

Council's practice not to implement decisions of the Council until 12 noon on the working day following the day on which the meeting was adjourned. The outstanding items are to be resubmitted to the adjourned meeting for determination.

19 AFTER THE MEETING

Minutes of meetings

19.1 The Council is to keep full and accurate minutes of the proceedings of meetings of the Council.

Note: Clause 19.1 reflects section 375(1) of the Act.

19.2 At a minimum, the **Chief Executive Officer** must ensure that the following matters are recorded in the Council's minutes:

- (a) the names of Councillors attending a Council meeting and whether they attended the meeting in person or by audio-visual link,
- (b) details of each motion moved at a Council meeting and of any amendments moved to it,
- (c) the names of the mover and seconder of the motion or amendment,
- (d) whether the motion or amendment was passed or lost, and
- (e) such other matters specifically required under this code.

Note: The wording of motions ruled out of order by the Mayor/ chairperson will not be included in the minutes (in this case only the Mayor's ruling will be included).

19.3 Notations in minutes requested by individual Councillors, except those identified in clause 13.8, will only be included following a resolution of Council approving their inclusion.

19.4 The minutes of a Council meeting must be confirmed at a subsequent meeting of the Council.

19.5 Any debate on the confirmation of the minutes is to be confined to whether the minutes are a full and accurate record of the meeting they relate to.

19.6 When the minutes have been confirmed, they are to be signed by the person presiding at the subsequent meeting.

19.7 The confirmed minutes of a meeting may be amended to correct typographical or administrative errors after they have been confirmed. Any amendment made under this clause must not alter the substance of any decision made at the meeting.

19.8 The confirmed minutes of a Council meeting, **when the meeting was open to the public**, must be published on the Council's website. This clause does not prevent the Council from also publishing unconfirmed minutes of its meetings on its website prior to their confirmation.

Access to correspondence and reports laid on the table at, or submitted to, a

meeting

- 19.8 The Council and committees of the Council must, during or at the close of a meeting, or during the business day following the meeting, give reasonable access to any person to inspect correspondence and reports laid on the table at, or submitted to, the meeting.
- 19.9 Clause 19.8 does not apply if the correspondence or reports relate to a matter that was received or discussed or laid on the table at, or submitted to, the meeting when the meeting was closed to the public.
- 19.10 Clause 19.8 does not apply if the Council or the committee resolves at the meeting, when open to the public, that the correspondence or reports are to be treated as confidential because they relate to a matter specified in section 10A(2) of the Act.
- 19.11 Correspondence or reports to which clauses 19.9 and 19.10 apply are to be marked with the relevant provision of section 10A(2) of the Act that applies to the correspondence or report.

Implementation of decisions of the Council

- 19.12 The **Chief Executive Officer** is to implement, without undue delay, lawful decisions of the Council.

20 COUNCIL COMMITTEES

Application of this Part

- 20.1 This Part only applies to committees of the Council whose members are all Councillors.

Council committees whose members are all Councillors

- 20.2 The Council may, by resolution, establish such committees as it considers necessary.
- 20.3 A committee of the Council is to consist of the Mayor and such other Councillors as are elected by the Councillors or appointed by the Council.
- 20.4 The quorum for a meeting of a committee of the Council is to be:
- (a) such number of members as the Council decides, or
 - (b) if the Council has not decided a number – a majority of the members of the committee.

Functions of committees

- 20.5 The Council must specify the functions of each of its committees when the committee is established but may from time to time amend those functions.

Notice of committee meetings

- 20.6 The **Chief Executive Officer** must send to each Councillor, regardless of whether they are a committee member, at least 3 days before each meeting of the committee, a notice specifying:
- (a) the time, date and place of the meeting, and
 - (b) the business proposed to be considered at the meeting.
- 20.7 Notice of less than 3 days may be given of a committee meeting called in an emergency.

Non-members entitled to attend committee meetings

- 20.8 A Councillor who is not a member of a committee of the Council is entitled to attend, and to speak at a meeting of the committee. However, the Councillor is not entitled:
- (a) to give notice of business for inclusion in the agenda for the meeting, or
 - (b) to move or second a motion at the meeting, or
 - (c) to vote at the meeting.

Chairperson and deputy chairperson of Council committees

- 20.9 The chairperson of each committee of the Council must be:
- (a) the Mayor, or
 - (b) if the Mayor does not wish to be the chairperson of a committee, a member of the committee elected by the Council, or
 - (c) if the Council does not elect such a member, a member of the committee elected by the committee.
- 20.10 The Council may elect a member of a committee of the Council as deputy chairperson of the committee. If the Council does not elect a deputy chairperson of such a committee, the committee may elect a deputy chairperson.
- 20.11 If neither the chairperson nor the deputy chairperson of a committee of the Council is able or willing to preside at a meeting of the committee, the committee must elect a member of the committee to be acting chairperson of the committee.
- 20.12 The chairperson is to preside at a meeting of a committee of the Council. If the chairperson is unable or unwilling to preside, the deputy chairperson (if any) is to preside at the meeting. If neither the chairperson nor the deputy chairperson is able or willing to preside, the acting chairperson is to preside at the meeting.

Procedure in committee meetings

- 20.13 Subject to any specific requirements of this code, each committee of the Council may regulate its own procedure. The provisions of this code are to be taken to apply to all committees of the Council.
- 20.14 Whenever the voting on a motion put to a meeting of the committee is equal,

the chairperson of the committee is to have a casting vote as well as an original vote unless the Council or the committee determines otherwise in accordance with clause 20.13.

- 20.15 Voting at a Council committee meeting is to be by open means (such as on the voices, by show of hands or by a visible electronic voting system).

Mayoral minutes

- 20.16 The provisions of this code relating to Mayoral minutes also apply to meetings of committees of the Council in the same way they apply to meetings of the Council.

Closure of committee meetings to the public

- 20.17 The provisions of the Act and Part 14 of this code apply to the closure of meetings of committees of the Council to the public in the same way they apply to the closure of meetings of the Council to the public.
- 20.18 If a committee of the Council passes a resolution, or makes a recommendation, during a meeting, or a part of a meeting that is closed to the public, the chairperson must make the resolution or recommendation public as soon as practicable after the meeting or part of the meeting has ended and report the resolution or recommendation to the next meeting of the Council. The resolution or recommendation must also be recorded in the publicly available minutes of the meeting.
- 20.19 Resolutions passed during a meeting, or a part of a meeting that is closed to the public must be made public by the chairperson under clause 20.18 during a part of the meeting that is livestreamed where practicable.
- 20.20 The **Chief Executive Officer** must cause business papers for items of business considered during a meeting, or part of a meeting, that is closed to public, to be published on the Council's website as soon as practicable after the information contained in the business papers ceases to be confidential.
- 20.21 The **Chief Executive Officer** must consult with the committee and any other affected persons before publishing information on the Council's website under clause 20.20 and provide reasons for why the information has ceased to be confidential.

Disorder in committee meetings

- 20.22 The provisions of the Act, the Regulation, and this code relating to the maintenance of order in Council meetings apply to meetings of committees of the Council in the same way they apply to meetings of the Council.

Minutes of Council committee meetings

- 20.23 Each committee of the Council is to keep full and accurate minutes of the proceedings of its meetings. At a minimum, a committee must ensure that the following matters are recorded in the committee's minutes:

- (a) the names of Councillors attending a meeting and whether they attended

- the meeting in person or by audio-visual link,
 - (b) details of each motion moved at a meeting and of any amendments moved to it,
 - (c) the names of the mover and seconder of the motion or amendment,
 - (d) whether the motion or amendment was passed or lost, and
 - (e) such other matters specifically required under this code.
- 20.24 The minutes of meetings of each committee of the Council must be confirmed at a subsequent meeting of the committee.
- 20.25 Any debate on the confirmation of the minutes is to be confined to whether the minutes are a full and accurate record of the meeting they relate to.
- 20.26 When the minutes have been confirmed, they are to be signed by the person presiding at the subsequent meeting.
- 20.27 The confirmed minutes of a meeting may be amended to correct typographical or administrative errors after they have been confirmed. Any amendment made under this clause must not alter the substance of any decision made at the meeting.
- 20.28 The confirmed minutes of a meeting of a committee of the Council must be published on the Council's website. This clause does not prevent the Council from also publishing unconfirmed minutes of meetings of committees of the Council on its website prior to their confirmation.

21 IRREGULARITIES

- 21.1 Proceedings at a meeting of a Council or a Council committee are not invalidated because of:
 - (a) a vacancy in a civic office, or
 - (b) a failure to give notice of the meeting to any Councillor or committee member, or
 - (c) any defect in the election or appointment of a Councillor or committee member, or
 - (d) a failure of a Councillor or a committee member to declare a conflict of interest, or to refrain from the consideration or discussion of, or vote on, the relevant matter, at a Council or committee meeting in accordance with the Council's code of conduct, or
 - (e) a failure to comply with this code.

22 DEFINITIONS

the Act	means the <i>Local Government Act 1993</i>
act of disorder	means an act of disorder as defined in clause 15.10 of this code
amendment	in relation to an original motion, means a motion moving an amendment to that motion
audio recorder	any device capable of recording speech
audio-visual link	means a facility that enables audio and visual communication between persons at different places
business day	means any day except Saturday or Sunday or any other day the whole or part of which is observed as a public holiday throughout New South Wales
chairperson	in relation to a meeting of the Council – means the person presiding at the meeting as provided by section 369 of the Act and clauses 6.1 and 6.2 of this code, and in relation to a meeting of a committee – means the person presiding at the meeting as provided by clause 20.9 of this code
Chief Executive Officer	Refers to the statutory General Manager as defined by the <i>Local Government Act 1993</i>
this code	means the Council's adopted code of meeting practice
committee of the Council	means a committee established by the Council in accordance with clause 20.2 of this code (being a committee consisting only of Councillors) or the Council when it has resolved itself into committee of the whole under clause 12.1
Council official	includes Councillors, members of staff of a Council, administrators, Council committee members, delegates of Council and any other person exercising functions on behalf of the Council
day	means calendar day
division	means a request by two Councillors under clause 11.7 of this code requiring the recording of the names of the Councillors who voted both for and against a motion
livestream	a video broadcast of a meeting transmitted across the internet concurrently with the meeting
open voting	means voting on the voices or by a show of hands or by a visible electronic voting system or similar means
planning decision	means a decision made in the exercise of a function of a Council under the <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979</i> including any decision relating to a development application, an environmental planning instrument, a development control plan, a planning agreement or a development contribution plan under that Act, but not including the making of an order under Division 9.3 of Part 9 of that Act

ATTACHMENT 2 : DECEMBER COUNCIL MEETING - ITEM 9.2 OUTCOME OF PUBLIC EXHIBITION - DRAFT CODE OF MEETING PRACTICE - ITEM 14.1 - NORTHERN BEACHES COUNCIL MEETING - 17 MARCH 2026

ATTACHMENT 1 : DRAFT CODE OF MEETING PRACTICE - ITEM 9.2 - NORTHERN BEACHES COUNCIL MEETING - 16 DECEMBER 2025

performance improvement order	means an order issued under section 438A of the Act
quorum	means the minimum number of Councillors or committee members necessary to conduct a meeting
the Regulation	means the <i>Local Government (General) Regulation 2021</i>
year	means the period beginning 1 July and ending the following 30 June

APPENDIX 1 – CONDUCTING THE PUBLIC FORUM

A1.1 A public forum will be conducted prior to each ordinary meeting of the Council for the purpose of hearing oral submissions from members of the public on mayoral minutes, reports to council and notices of motion (collectively, items of business), to be considered at the meeting.

A1.2 The public forum will be held in Council Chambers from 6.00pm 7 days prior to an ordinary meeting of the Council.

A1.3 The Mayor or their nominee will preside as chairperson at the forum with all Councillors invited to attend.

Note: As the forum is not part of the Council meeting, a quorum is not required.

A1.4 For each forum a person may apply to speak on no more than 2 items of business on the agenda of the Council meeting.

A1.5 No more than 2 speakers are to be permitted to speak 'for' or 'against' each item of business on the agenda for the Council meeting. The order of speakers for each item is determined by the order of receipted 'for' and 'against' applications.

A1.6 To speak at a public forum, a person must first make an application to the Council in the approved form. Applications to speak open when the business papers are published and must be received by 5pm on the business day prior to the date on which the public forum is to be held. Applications must identify the item of business on the agenda of the Council meeting the person wishes to speak on, and whether they wish to speak 'for' or 'against' the item.

Note: The Chief Executive Officer or their delegate may refuse an application to speak at a public forum where the application does not meet the outlined requirements or there is a genuine and demonstrable concern relating to the applicant or their dealings with the Council or their intentions.

A1.7 To speak at a public forum, a speaker must attend in person.

A1.8 Legal representatives acting on behalf of others must identify their status as a legal representative when applying to speak.

A1.9 When speaking at the forum, speakers will be granted 3 minutes each to address the forum and this time limit is to be managed by the chairperson.

A1.10 The chairperson may permit a speaker an extension of one minute where time permits, and, in consideration of the impact on the remaining speakers.

A1.11 Speakers must not digress from the item of business on which they applied to speak. If a speaker digresses to irrelevant matters, the chairperson is to direct the speaker not to do so. If the speaker fails to observe a direction from the chairperson, the chairperson may immediately require the person to stop speaking and they will not be further heard.

- A1.12 A public forum should not be used to raise questions or complaints. Such matters should be forwarded in writing to the council where they will be responded to by appropriate council officers.
- A1.13 Any Councillors in attendance must disclose and manage any conflicts of interest they may have in relation to any item of business at public forum.
- A1.14 Speakers must comply with this code and all other relevant Council codes, policies and procedures. Speakers must refrain from engaging in disorderly conduct, publicly alleging breaches of the Council's Code of Conduct or making other potentially defamatory statements.
- A1.15 If the chairperson considers that a speaker has engaged in conduct of the type referred to in clause A1.14, the chairperson may direct the person to refrain from the inappropriate behaviour and to withdraw and unreservedly apologise for any inappropriate comments. Where the speaker fails to comply with the chairperson's direction, the chairperson may immediately require the person to stop speaking.
- A1.16 Clause A1.15 does not limit the ability of the chairperson to deal with disorderly conduct by speakers in accordance with the provisions of Part 15 of the Code of Meeting Practice.
- A1.17 Where a speaker engages in conduct of the type referred to in clause A1.16, the Chief Executive Officer or their delegate may refuse further applications from that person to speak at public forums for such a period as the Chief Executive Officer or their delegate considers appropriate.
- A1.18 Where, prior to the commencement of the public forum, it becomes apparent that the health, safety or welfare of Councillors, Council staff and members of the public may be put at risk by attending the forum, the chairperson may, in consultation with the Chief Executive Officer, cancel the forum. Where a forum is cancelled, notice of the cancellation must be published on the Council's website and in such other manner that the council is satisfied is likely to bring notice of the cancellation to the attention of as many people as possible.



Community and Stakeholder Engagement Report

Code of Meeting Practice 2025

Consultation period: 24 October to 4 December 2025

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1. Summary

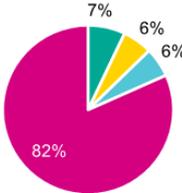
This report outlines the outcomes of community and stakeholder engagement as part of a legislative obligation on Council to implement a Code of Meeting Practice that is consistent with the NSW Government’s mandated Model Code of Meeting Practice.

The feedback provided during consultation indicated a broad dissatisfaction with the Code of Meeting Practice generally, with key themes being:

- Concerns about democratic values, restriction of participation, public voices and expression
- Lack of transparency and accountability
- Excessive authority and control

The main issue raised was the proposal to move the public forum one week prior to Council meetings instead of keeping it during or just prior to the Council meeting, with a number of respondents indicating a preference for the forum to be retained on the same evening as the Council meeting. While holding a public forum is, and has always been, optional; the mandatory requirements of the Model Code operate so that the forum cannot be part of the formal Council meeting, and Council’s options in relation to this requirement are limited by practical considerations such as the start and finish times of the meeting.

1.1. Key outcomes

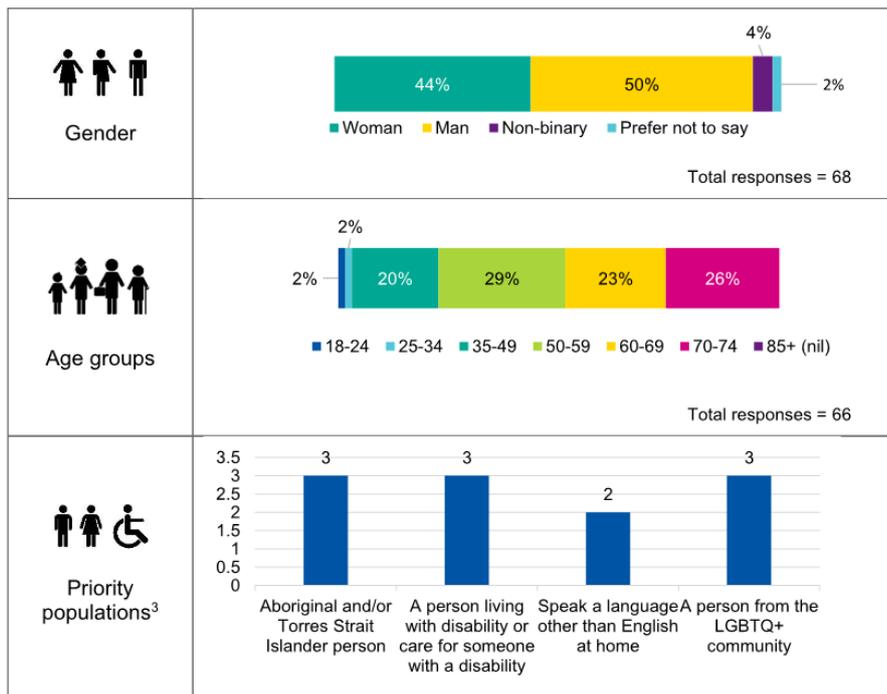
 Total unique responses	73 ¹	
 How responses were received	Submission/Comment form Written responses (email/letter)	Completions: 71 Number received: 2
 Online sentiment question: How supportive are you of the draft Code of Meeting Practice (2025)	<div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <div style="margin-top: 10px;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Very supportive ■ Somewhat supportive ■ Not very supportive ■ Not at all supportive </div> <p style="text-align: right; margin-top: 10px;">Total responses = 71</p>	

¹ We note that while this was a survey-style feedback form, it was not a statistically representative survey, and participants opted-in to provide feedback

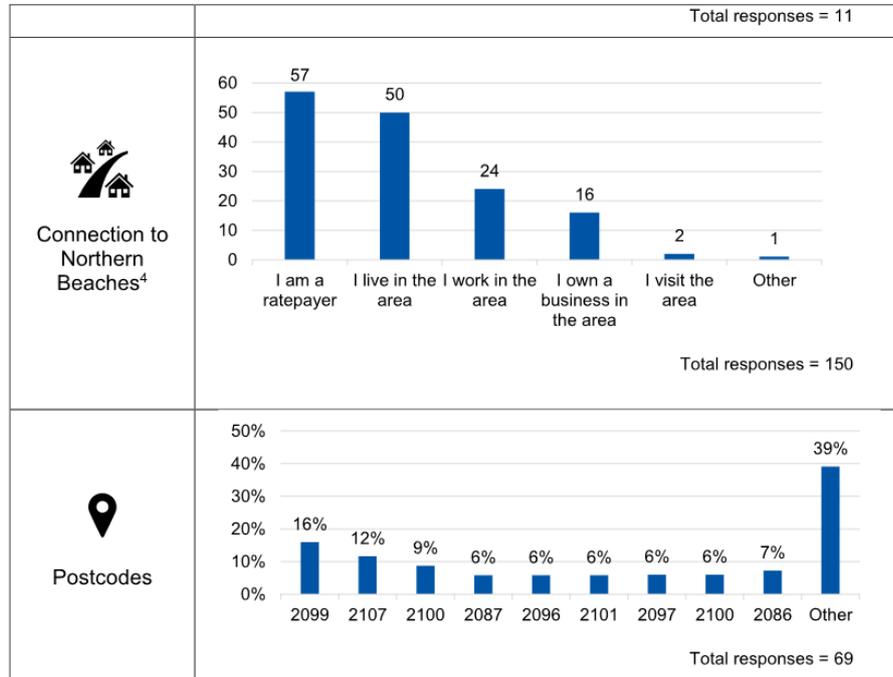
1.2. How we engaged

 Have Your Say: visitation stats	Visitors: 987	Visits: 1,276
 Electronic direct mail (EDM)	Community Engagement (fortnightly) newsletter: 3 editions Council (weekly) e-News: 2 editions The Drift (Library newsletter): 1 edition The Wave (Disability newsletter): 1 edition	Distribution: 20,476 subscribers Distribution: 56,860 subscribers Distribution: 59,525 Distribution: 1,411

1.3. Who responded²



² Demographic data was gathered by request only. The data represented only includes those respondents who provided this detail.
³ Respondents could select more than one option



⁴ Respondents could select more than one option

2. Background

As part of a tranche of reforms to the Councillor Conduct Framework, the NSW Government released a revised Model Code of Meeting Practice in August 2025 (2025 Model Meeting Code) with the stated aim to 'ensure meetings are conducted in a dignified and orderly way befitting to a chamber of democracy and to promote community confidence in councils and their decisions.'

The 2025 Model Meeting Code has 2 elements:

- **mandatory provisions**
- **non-mandatory provisions** covering areas of meeting practice that are common to most councils but where there may be a need for some variation in practice between councils based on local circumstances. The non-mandatory provisions also operate to set a benchmark based on what the Office of Local Government sees as best practice.

Council is obligated to adopt a new Code of Meeting Practice which includes the mandatory provisions of the 2025 Model Meeting Code by 31 December 2025. In order to meet this obligation, Council undertook an exhibition of a draft Code of Meeting Practice that is compliant with the Model Code.

While the exhibition of the draft Northern Beaches Council Code of Meeting Practice provided the opportunity for the community to consider and comment on the framework governing Council meetings, the Code predominantly consists of mandatory provisions set by the NSW Government.

3. Engagement objectives

Community and stakeholder engagement aimed to:

- build community and stakeholder awareness of participation activities
- provide accessible information so community and stakeholders can participate in a meaningful way
- identify community and stakeholder concerns, local knowledge and values
- communicate to community and stakeholders how their input was incorporated into the planning and decision making process
- provide vulnerable and marginalised groups access to the engagement process.

4. Engagement approach

Community and stakeholder engagement for the Code of Meeting Practice was conducted between 24 October to 4 December 2025 and consisted of a series of activities that provided opportunities for community and stakeholders to contribute.

The engagement was planned, implemented and reported in accordance with Council's [Community Engagement Strategy](#) (2022).

A project page⁵ was established on our engagement platform with information provided in an accessible and easy to read format.

The project was primarily promoted through our regular email newsletter (EDM) channels.

Feedback was captured through an online comment form embedded onto the project page.

An open-field comments box provided community members a space to explain or elaborate on their support, not support or neutral sentiment as well as any other feedback they wished to contribute.

The submission form also recorded demographic information (including postcode, age and gender) to support analysis of LGA representation. **A total of 73 submissions were received.** No weighting was applied to the data.

Email and written comments were also invited.⁵

⁵ <https://yoursay.northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au/code-meeting-practice-2025>

1. Findings

The overwhelming sentiment is negative, with many submissions describing the changes as anti-democratic and a threat to free speech and community participation. There is also a perception that moving the public forum to a week before the Council meeting will create a disconnect between community input and decision-making.

Some hold a view that Council has misrepresented the mandatory components of the Model Code of Meeting Practice by removing the public forum from the Council meeting. There also appears to be a misconception that the community would no longer be able to attend the Council meeting as a result of the changes. This is incorrect.

Some submissions provided more general feedback rather than commenting directly on the draft Code of Meeting Practice.

Table 1: Issues, change requests and other considerations

Theme	Issues, change requests and other considerations raised	Council's response
Concerns about democratic values	<p>Multiple submissions express a general belief that the proposed changes (in particular changes to public forum) undermine democratic principles, limit public participation, and erode community influence in local government decisions.</p> <p>Some submissions are concerned that the proposed timing gap between the public forum and the Council meeting will limit the 'impact' the views raised in the forum will have on the final decisions made.</p>	<p>We acknowledge the community's general feedback. While council meetings are formal decision-making forums and not designed for open debate from members of the public, the public's right to attend remains protected, and meetings will continue to be open and livestreamed. Staff recommend Council retain the optional public forum to be held one week prior to the Council meeting to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure there is sufficient time to allow for up to 2 speakers for and 2 against each agenda item ensure both Councillors and the community are able to attend by being held outside business hours provide time for Councillors to consider the matters addressed by speakers, prior to the Council meeting.
Restriction of participation and public voice and expression	<p>There is a recurring theme around the restriction of public forums, removal of protest symbols, and limitations on expressing dissent,</p>	<p>Removal of protest signs are a mandatory provision in the Code. Council has no option to amend this provision.</p>

Theme	Issues, change requests and other considerations raised	Council's response
	which are viewed as attacks on freedom of speech and individual rights.	
Lack of transparency and accountability	<p>Submissions highlight concerns about decision-making processes lacking openness, with Council perceived as acting without sufficient community input or clear communication.</p> <p>Some submissions indicate a misunderstanding that the meetings will no longer be open to the public to attend.</p> <p>Some submissions highlight concerns that the changes to the public forum will not require Councillors to attend and there is a perception that Councillors will decide not to attend.</p>	<p>Council remains committed to transparency and public accountability. All Council meetings and the public forum will continue to be open to the public, recorded and livestreamed, ensuring real-time open access for the community on the deliberations of the Council.</p> <p>With regards to Councillor attendance at the public forum, the forum will continue to be livestreamed which will provide a public record of Councillor attendance.</p> <p>In addition, minutes are made publicly available as per the mandatory requirements.</p>
Excessive authority and control	Concerns are raised about councils and mayors being given too much power, including the ability to exclude dissenting voices, which is seen as undemocratic and potentially leading to authoritarian practices.	The Model Code provides an option for the chairperson to be granted the authorisation to expel any person, including any Councillor, from a Council meeting or committee meeting. This provision is put forward so as not to limit the options available to the chairperson in exercising their duties. Local government is a representative democracy where councillors are elected via a democratic process to represent the local community. Decisions made by the Council require a majority vote by those elected representatives who are obligated to consider the interests of the broader local government area and community members.
Support for proposed changes to public forum	Some respondents indicated support for the proposed changes.	Noted

Appendix 1 Verbatim community and stakeholder responses*

Number	Submission
1	<p>This is clearly a move by council members to avoid public scrutiny and accountability. There are many council members who are already under fire for their lack of accountability, virtue signalling and egregious expenses for utterly irrelevant topics for them.</p>
2	<p>Council's change to the public forum via the code of meeting practice is a slap in the face to all ratepayers and to the concept of Local Government. It has been advertised as a forced change by the NSW Government, where in fact the changes to Public Forum are totally in Council's hands. On this basis, the policy as it stands should not proceed until Council takes full ownership of this. Furthermore, it should not be called a "public forum", it is a discussion on Council's agenda, so a better name would be "Agenda Forum".</p> <p>Below I have outlined why these changes to the Public Forum are anti-democratic, anti-free speech and anathema to a functioning liberal democracy.</p> <p>A1.2 The public forum will be held in Council Chambers from 6.00pm 7 days prior to an ordinary meeting of the Council.</p> <p>This point separates the public from the elected council, with no mandatory Councillor attendance a divide between the issues and the ratepayer will exist. Councillors are elected to represent and hear from the people, not be separate for them. Councillors can hide behind emails and not return calls because they don't want to a deal with a "problem" ratepayer. Public Forum allows for that divide to be breached.</p> <p>A1.6 To speak at a public forum, a person must first make an application to the Council in the approved form. Applications to speak open when the business papers are published and must be received by 5pm on the business day prior to the date on which the public forum is to be held. Applications must identify the item of business on the agenda of the Council meeting the person wishes to speak on, and whether they wish to speak 'for' or 'against' the item.</p> <p>Note: The Chief Executive Officer or their delegate may refuse an application to speak at a public forum where the application does not meet the outlined requirements or there is a genuine and demonstrable concern relating to the applicant or their dealings with the Council or their intentions.</p> <p>The issue is with the note. An unelected bureaucrat has final say on who is they consider should be allowed to speak at Council. If they do not like a group that disagrees with said unelected bureaucrat, they can shut them down. This is censorship and impedes the implied right of political communication.</p> <p>A1.11 Speakers must not digress from the item of business on which they applied to speak. If a speaker digresses to irrelevant matters, the chairperson is to direct the speaker not to do so. If the speaker fails to observe a direction from the chairperson, the chairperson may immediately require the person to stop speaking and they will not be further heard.</p> <p>While succinctness in three minutes is extremely important, this point can be weaponized by the Council to shut down the implied right of political communication. Often an issues need to explained with comparison, if the chairperson doesn't like what's being said for a politically motivated reason, they can shut down the speech.</p> <p>This is a free speech issue and impedes the right to political communication.</p> <p>A1.12 A public forum should not be used to raise questions or complaints. Such matters should be forwarded in writing to the council where they will be responded to by appropriate council officers.</p> <p>The point of a public forum is to address Council on matters that they have not addressed properly. It is the ratepayers chance to make their voice heard when the system seems to have failed them. This once again disrupts the implied right of political communication.</p>

*Personal identifying information, and content which is discriminatory, hateful or which may defame, offend, insult, humiliate or intimidate has been redacted. Spelling and grammatical errors have been amended only where misinterpretation or offence may be caused.

	<p>A1.14 Speakers must comply with this code and all other relevant Council codes, policies and procedures. Speakers must refrain from engaging in disorderly conduct, publicly alleging breaches of the Council's Code of Conduct or making other potentially defamatory statements. This point states that speakers must refrain for alleging breaches of Council's Code of conduct – this here means that if a Councillor or staff does in fact breach the code of conduct</p> <p>A1.15 If the chairperson considers that a speaker has engaged in conduct of the type referred to in clause A1.14, the chairperson may direct the person to refrain from the inappropriate behaviour and to withdraw and unreservedly apologise for any inappropriate comments. Where the speaker fails to comply with the chairperson's direction, the chairperson may immediately require the person to stop speaking. This doesn't define what "disorderly conduct" is. Again this can be used for political motives by the Chair and Councillors to shut down anyone speaking against their actions and trying or trying to hold them accountable for their actions. The key words in that sentence is "considers" meaning that it is not objective, but subjective to the chairperson. This can be used to censor speakers with genuine concern about the actions of Councillors and the staff of Northern Beaches Council.</p> <p>A1.16 Clause A1.15 does not limit the ability of the chairperson to deal with disorderly conduct by speakers in accordance with the provisions of Part 15 of the Code of Meeting Practice.</p> <p>A1.17 Where a speaker engages in conduct of the type referred to in clause A1.16, the Chief Executive Officer or their delegate may refuse further applications from that person to speak at public forums for such a period as the Chief Executive Officer or their delegate considers appropriate. A1.18 Where, prior to the commencement of the public forum, it becomes apparent that the health, safety or welfare of Councillors, Council staff and members of the public may be put at risk by attending the forum, the chairperson may, in consultation with the Chief Executive Officer, cancel the forum. Where a forum is cancelled, notice of the cancellation must be published on the Council's website and in such other manner that the council is satisfied is likely to bring notice of the cancellation to the attention of as many people as possible. This clause here is a way to shut down speakers that council does not like. Ultimately, the Chair and the CEO will censor speakers and groups if they do not like what they have to say. This is in violation of the implied right to political communication.</p> <p>A1.18 Where, prior to the commencement of the public forum, it becomes apparent that the health, safety or welfare of Councillors, Council staff and members of the public may be put at risk by attending the forum, the chairperson may, in consultation with the Chief Executive Officer, cancel the forum. Where a forum is cancelled, notice of the cancellation must be published on the Council's website and in such other manner that the council is satisfied is likely to bring notice of the cancellation to the attention of as many people as possible. While Health and Safety is paramount, this item can be used to silence inconvenient debate. If there is another rate rise, whats to stop the CEO and Chair from shutting down the forum so no one can speak against it. Our community deserves more than a token forum. We deserve genuine participation, open dialogue, and the right to raise concerns without fear of being silenced. These provisions do not strengthen democracy, they weaken it. They do not empower residents, they constrain them. I urge councillors to reject this framework and instead design a process that truly welcomes community voice: one that is accessible, inclusive, and accountable. Because democracy is not tidy, it is not convenient, and it cannot be reduced to three minutes behind a microphone — nor cancelled when it becomes politically inconvenient.</p>
3	<p>A significant backwards step in openness, transparency and accountability to the northern beaches community.</p> <p>Another factor in diminishing the community's trust in this Council</p>

4	<p>I would like to see the public forum remain. This gives the community the only opportunity to address councillors on matters that mean a lot to them. Removing public forum diminishes confidence the public has with council</p>
5	<p>Introduction Council's proposed changes to the Public Forum are a serious concern. They represent a step away from genuine community engagement and accountability. While these changes have been advertised as a forced requirement of the NSW Government, in reality the decision rests entirely in Council's hands. On this basis, the policy should not proceed until Council takes full ownership of it. Furthermore, the term "Public Forum" is misleading. What is being proposed is not a true forum for public voice, but a controlled discussion on Council's agenda. A more accurate name would be "Agenda Forum."</p> <p>Concerns with Specific Clauses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A1.2 — Separation Between Council and the People The forum is scheduled seven days prior to the ordinary meeting, with no requirement for councillors to attend. This separates the public from their elected representatives. Councillors are elected to hear from the people, not avoid them. Without mandatory attendance, councillors can hide behind emails and avoid accountability. Public Forum should bridge that divide, not reinforce it. • A1.6 — Unelected Bureaucrats Controlling Speech Applications to speak must be lodged in advance, and the Chief Executive Officer or their delegate may refuse them. This gives unelected officials the power to decide who is allowed to speak. If they dislike a group or its message, they can shut it down. This is censorship and impedes the implied right of political communication. • A1.11 — Chairperson's Subjective Power Speakers must not digress from the item of business. While brevity is important, this rule can be weaponised. Issues often require comparison or context, but if the chairperson does not like what is being said, they can silence it. This undermines free speech and the implied right of political communication. • A1.12 — Silencing Complaints The forum cannot be used to raise questions or complaints. Yet the purpose of a public forum is to give ratepayers a chance to speak when the system has failed them. This restriction denies residents their voice and disrupts the implied right of political communication. • A1.14–A1.15 — Vague Definitions of Disorderly Conduct Speakers must refrain from alleging breaches of the Code of Conduct or making "potentially defamatory" statements. Clause A1.15 allows the chairperson to demand an apology or cut the speaker off. The problem is that "disorderly conduct" is undefined, and the chairperson's power is subjective — based on what they consider inappropriate. This opens the door to politically motivated censorship of genuine concerns. • A1.16–A1.17 — Banning Speakers Clause A1.16 extends the chairperson's powers under Part 15 of the Code, and A1.17 allows the CEO to refuse future applications from a speaker for any period they deem appropriate. This punishes dissent rather than engaging with it, silencing voices instead of hearing them. • A1.18 — A Political Weapon Disguised as Safety Clause A1.18 allows the chairperson, in consultation with the CEO, to cancel a forum if they believe health, safety, or welfare may be at risk. While health and safety are paramount, this clause is dangerously broad. It can be invoked not for genuine threats but to silence inconvenient debate. For example, if there is another rate rise, what is to stop the CEO and Chair from cancelling the forum so no one can speak against it? This is not about safety — it is about control. It is a political weapon to shut down dissent and violates the implied right of political communication. <p>Conclusion Our community deserves more than a token forum. We deserve genuine participation, open dialogue, and the right to raise concerns without fear of being silenced. These provisions do not strengthen democracy — they weaken it. They do not empower residents — they constrain them.</p> <p>Council should reject this framework and instead design a process that truly welcomes</p>

	<p>community voice: one that is accessible, inclusive, and accountable. Democracy is not tidy, it is not convenient, and it cannot be reduced to three minutes behind a microphone — nor cancelled when it becomes politically inconvenient.</p>
<p>6</p>	<p>To: Northern Beaches Council Re: Submission on Proposed Code of Meeting Practice – Public Participation Changes Dear Councillors, I write to express concern regarding the proposed changes to the Council’s Code of Meeting Practice, specifically the removal of public addressing rights during Council meetings and the requirement that community submissions be made only via a separate “public forum” held seven days prior.</p> <p>While alignment with the Model Code is acknowledged, the proposal as drafted risks unintentionally weakening transparency, accountability, and genuine participatory democracy within the Northern Beaches local government area.</p> <p>1. Timing and Disconnection From Decision-Making</p> <p>Holding the public forum a full week before the Council meeting creates an artificial disconnect between community input and decision-making. Seven days is long enough for circumstances, information, staff recommendations, or amendments to change—yet too long for community presenters to respond.</p> <p>At present, speaking at a meeting allows residents to directly influence debate in real time, at the point when elected representatives are actually making decisions. This immediacy is critical to genuine democracy.</p> <p>A pre-meeting forum, detached from the session of decision-making, risks becoming symbolic rather than meaningful.</p> <p>2. Public Visibility and Accountability</p> <p>Public interaction at Council meetings creates accountability—Councillors must listen to residents in the same space and context in which they vote.</p> <p>Moving submissions to an earlier separate event:</p> <p>Removes the public from the forum in which decisions are made</p> <p>Diminishes witness accountability</p> <p>Reduces the pressure on elected representatives to hear and weigh community sentiment at the decisive moment</p> <p>This will inevitably reduce confidence in Council processes.</p> <p>3. Reduced Flexibility for Residents</p> <p>Many residents only become aware of agenda items when the business papers are published—often a few days before meetings. Requiring registration and attendance seven days before removes their ability to participate meaningfully if new issues emerge, amendments are introduced, or information changes.</p> <p>This disadvantages citizens who:</p> <p>Work full time</p>

	<p>Care for family</p> <p>Have mobility/transport limitations</p> <p>Cannot commit a week in advance</p> <p>Public participation should not become harder.</p> <p>4. Livestreaming Alone Is Not Sufficient Public Access</p> <p>Although livestreaming the forum increases public visibility, it is not a substitute for participation at Council meetings. A broadcast without decision-making linkage is performative and not deliberative democracy.</p> <p>Livestreaming does not give residents a voice at the table—it simply documents their exclusion from it.</p> <p>5. Risk of Perception of Reduced Transparency</p> <p>At a time when trust in institutions is fragile, any change that reduces public presence in decision-making forums may be perceived as Council insulating itself from scrutiny or dissent, even if that is not the intention.</p> <p>A healthy democracy requires not just actual transparency, but visible transparency.</p> <p>6. Alternative Solutions Council Should Consider</p> <p>I respectfully propose that Council adopt a model consistent with both the Model Code and genuine community engagement:</p> <p>Option A – Maintain public address rights at Council meetings</p> <p>If the Model Code allows councils discretion, this option should be preserved.</p> <p>Option B – Hybrid participation framework</p> <p>Keep the pre-meeting forum for early commentary</p> <p>Retain the option for speakers on the night of the meeting (even if time-limited or subject to registration)</p> <p>This preserves efficiency while safeguarding democracy.</p> <p>Option C – Permit speaking requests in response to late amendments or new business</p> <p>Ensuring the public can respond when the agenda or staff reports change.</p> <p>Option D – Provide evidence demonstrating need for this change</p> <p>Before implementation, Council should publish:</p> <p>How many speakers have caused delay or disorder</p> <p>Whether current processes fail efficiency standards</p>
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	<p>Consultation analysis showing community support for the change</p> <p>Without demonstrated necessity, the change appears retrograde.</p> <p>7. Principle of Local Government – Public Ownership of Meetings</p> <p>Council meetings do not belong to Councillors—they belong to the community. Removing the public from the very forum where their representatives debate and vote alters the nature of local democracy.</p> <p>Residents elect councillors, and therefore residents must retain the right to address them at the point of decision-making—not merely at a separate preliminary event.</p> <p>Conclusion</p> <p>I urge Council to reconsider the proposed removal of public addressing rights at Council meetings and adopt a model that enhances—rather than diminishes—public connection, responsiveness, and democratic accountability.</p> <p>Community confidence is strengthened when elected representatives welcome scrutiny and value direct engagement.</p> <p>Thank you for considering this submission. I would welcome the opportunity to speak further or present in person should the final model continue to restrict democratic access.</p>
7	<p>My concerns relate solely to the Public Forum. As a person who spoke at meetings about general community issues as well as agenda items, I am disappointed that Council has so readily fallen in line with a draft code devised by State Government officers. Was Council given any options and if so what points of view were conveyed to the Minister for Local Government or Departmental officers? The removal of what I consider to be a democratic system is evidence of how current State and Federal Labor Governments are heading. Freedom of speech and access to information about government decisions is being gradually and stealthily removed. Obviously certain of the current Councillors are happy to fall in line with limiting opportunities for a community voice. This will not be forgotten by the community.</p>
8	<p>Prohibiting the public taking part in Council Meetings and exiling them to Public Fora to which no Councillor is required to attend, seems to be aimed more at shutting out the public than actually listening to public concerns. Despite the declared purpose of these fora to hear input from the public, in truth they are clearly designed to silence the public, or at the very least provide a platform to enable ignoring all public contributions. We should not be surprised at this given the Council track record af asking for feedback and input, then promptly ignoreing the very feedback requested (rate rises being a case in point). There is also an additional cost associated with these proposed public fora. Council is already poor money managers and this is just another example of profligate spending on unnecessary meetings to which Councillors are invited but not obligated to attend. So how will the purpose of them be met, managed, responded to and acted on? They won't.</p>
9	<p>For due process, a Public forum must be held immediately before the Council meeting starts.</p>
10	<p>The draft code is little more than an attempt to thwart democracy. The code stifles transparency and simply aids an inefficient and seriously hopeless bunch of inept councillors.</p>
11	<p>Our members of the public who pay local rates that find the council should be allowed to talk on matters with the public address segment. If this is done separately from the actual meeting costs will blow out which NBC can not currently afford.</p>
12	<p>The option of public forum before council meeting should be adopted but definitely not seven days prior. It looses all relevance in terms of the opportunity of public comment</p>

	because of length of time between forum and meeting. It should be prior to the meeting of council on the same evening
13	<p>The government states "The council may hold a public forum prior to meetings of the council and committees of the council for the purpose of hearing oral submissions from members of the public on items of business to be considered at the meeting." and yet this council is stating they will not hold these prior to meetings. So; inaccurate presentation once again which seems to be spin to fit in with this council's agenda - to silence and keep any dissent 'behind closed doors' - more so when under the draft terms in the council document is listed; "A public forum should not be used to raise questions or complaints. Such matters should be forwarded in writing to the council where they will be responded to by appropriate council officers."</p> <p>As a Public Forum is a place to make such matters public this reads as another means of silencing dissent and keeping such subjects hidden so just the spin is heard.</p> <p>What happens when an Item is added late to an Agenda - too late for anyone to apply to address it? This would allow the council to structure meetings and anything it does not want scrutinised, or addressed by others, to be pushed through via the mechanisms the council itself has put in place and may be a form of corruption and being too heavy handed in trying to keep the council narrative unchallenged. It reads of yet another attempt to silence community and also infers a heavy-handed bullying approach.</p> <p>The council would do well to stick to being accurate - the sleight of hand interpretation of what is actually stated by the state government's documents and that coming out of this council reads like an attempt to shut down the Public Forum, and the Public Address. No wonder people want their former councils back. It's very disappointing to be met with council spin, again, in so serious a matter - more so when the council claims to have the bulk of its staff drawn from locals.</p>
14	The fact that it costs money to host a separate night and some or all councillors will not be there is totally disrespectful. I don't feel listened to as a ratepayer as it is. You do not have to do this, you have a choice.
15	This is the further erosion of accountability by a PR driven anti-democratic council that should be dismissed.
16	<p>I believe that Council exists to serve the community, and that genuine community participation is a cornerstone of transparent and accountable local government. For this reason, I am concerned that the proposed Code of Meeting Practice limits the ability of residents and ratepayers to listen, speak, or otherwise engage during council meetings.</p> <p>Local councils are the level of government closest to the people. Residents should therefore have the opportunity not only to observe, but also to contribute to discussions on matters that directly affect them. Restricting public access or speaking rights undermines public trust and weakens the democratic process.</p>
17	Because it is part of a control agenda that presumes that people are to have no voice, in fact to be imprisoned in 15 minute cities or smart cities with 24/7 surveillance and living under communist style regime with a point system, credit points and no freedom. Wake up NBC and see where you are placing not only the citizens but your own imprisonment
18	<p>I am not at all supportive of the above draft as I believe that it directly conflicts with the values of the democratic society that Australia claims to uphold.</p> <p>Foremost, section four and twelve of the draft are gross attacks on the freedom's of the public and will create a disconnect between communities and their local governments. Giving councils the power to prohibit, relocate, and schedule public forums on their own terms dangerously limits the public's ability to stay informed with, and contribute to, the local government, which will in turn create a disconnect and entirely cripple the voice of the people. Furthermore, live-streaming council meetings is far from an adequate replacement for two primary reasons - 1), It does not allow for any form of public participation in council meetings. 2), It limits the ability of those inapt with technology (such as elderly people), to view council meetings. In sum, I believe section four of the draft to be attack on the ability of the people to involve themselves in local government and it will wholly degrade the ability of communities to voice their concerns, these issues are a betrayal of democratic</p>

	<p>values</p> <p>Furthermore, section 15 further undermines the values of democracy. I believe that the removal of flags, signs and protest symbols is breach of individual expression and ability to voice concerns, whilst also lacking any substantial logical basis. A sign is not violent, nor is a flag, nor is a symbol, and there is no reason to ban them. These things are simply expressions of ideas, by limiting individual ability to express ideas in such a way and by stripping away the means of protest the ability of local's to voice their concerns is further eroded by this draft.</p> <p>To summarise, i do not support this draft as i believe it to be regressive and an attack on the fundamental, citizen-centered values of a democratic system. The council must be open to the influence, voice, and expression of the community it seeks to represent. The council must not become an echo-chamber.</p>
19	<p>Comment 1: Counselors are not obliged to sit and listen to the public forum, so no one is likely to attend to hear. The forum is designed to be separate by a week from the agenda item that the form is to refer to thereby losing its impact with counselors. The Mireille's powers are too great and completely inappropriate to throw out counselors that ask questions or might be seem to be annoying the mayor should be thrown out not the counselors. This is undemocratic and very bad for democracy. Also.</p> <p>Comment 2: Keep the Public Forum where it belongs — in the main meeting, with all Councillors present. That's accountability. That's respect.</p>
20	<p>We live in a democracy and these changes are not democratic. Council and other government agencies work for the people and do not decide what is good for us, unless a vote or referendum is held. I do not consent to these changes nor does my family and friends. Councilors represent the residents, so therefore the decision making should be clear and transparent which this is the not the case with these changes.</p>
21	<p>I feel this is a loss of democracy . The proposed changes to public address and public forum are detrimental to the community, The new Model Code which allows councils to determine whether or not to hold a public forum is a serious backward step for democratic free speech. This new Model code could be used to avoid hearing inconvenient views and speeches . Council should not be cocooned in an echo chamber. Additionally the new code that if Council decides to hold a forum, mandatory provisions in the Model Code will require the forum to be held before the Council meeting (not during), this is also regressive as it removes the residents ability to have more direct effect on councillors on the night of the decision making.</p>
22	<p>Council needs to be held to account. Council is serving the constituents of this community and shutting down their capacity to object or shine a light on misuse of ratepayers money is simply undemocratic.</p>
23	<p>Public forums and public representation during council meetings are an essential component of democracy. It is the use of our money that is being discussed and decisions made upon. This is not a private affair. Public attendance at all council meetings must be maintained</p>
24	<p>Public forum must be maintained, we the rate payers should not be silenced. It is only right that the people who you represent are given a voice. If this is taken away it is a very sad day. The council is there to serve the people NOT TO SELF SERVE.</p>
25	<p>This is a loss of democracy and a backward step for democratic free speech. The proposed changes to public address and public forum are detrimental to the community. We do not want council to avoid hearing inconvenient views and speeches and to remove the residents ability to have more direct effect on councillors on the night of the decision making.</p>
26	<p>The public has a legal right to attend council meetings and speak — this is not optional, and it is not subject to arbitrary restriction.</p> <p>Under the Local Government Act 1993 (NSW) and the NSW Model Code of Meeting Practice, residents must be allowed to:</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Enter council meetings (except during lawfully declared confidential matters)</p>

	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Speak in public forums</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Participate in democratic processes without intimidation or exclusion Council exists to serve the community — not to silence or block it. Any attempt to prevent public attendance or shut down community voice without lawful grounds is a breach of governance obligations, transparency requirements, and democratic rights. I formally request:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Written confirmation that the public is permitted to attend council meetings 2. The procedure to register to speak 3. The link to the adopted Code of Meeting Practice <p>Residents will not accept closed-door governance. We expect transparency, accountability, and respect for lawful democratic rights.</p>
27	<p>It is paramount that the public can address the council on matters on the agenda at the council meeting to ensure that the voice of the community is heard. Council is elected to represent the community and any decision of council needs to first and foremost reflect the opinions and values of the community it is meant to represent. There is no guarantee that councillors would even attend or listen to a seperate 'community forum'. This suggestion is abhorrent and undemocratic and council needs to reject and condemn the Minn's government attempt to reduce community input. What has been happening under this Labor government has been an absolute disgrace. 37 storeys imposed onto our community without adequate investment in public transport infrastructure to cope with the increase is just one example. Council has overall been to complacent and complicit and we need more actual courage and determination to object to these unacceptable impositions by a government that does not align with the interests and values if our community. It is time to show some courage and reject this nonsense.</p>
28	<p>I feel this is a loss of democracy . The proposed changes to public address and public forum are detrimental to the community, The new Model Code which allows councils to determine whether or not to hold a public forum is a serious backward step for democratic free speech. This new Model code could be used to avoid hearing inconvenient views and speeches . Council should not be cocooned in an echo chamber. Additionally the new code that if Council decides to hold a forum, mandatory provisions in the Model Code will require the forum to be held before the Council meeting (not during), this is also regressive as it removes the residents ability to have more direct effect on councillors on the night of the decision making.</p>
29	<p>I do not support the draft Code. This is a loss to our democratic rights. These proposed changes to public address and public forum are a retreat from free speech. The public should be allowed to have their say at Council meetings on the day of the meeting and not just 7 days before.</p>
30	<p>The public forum from my observation has been well attended , this change I feel will lead to disengagement by citizens which I feel will inevitably lead to negative views about engagement and representation which we as a society can ill afford . Having the public meeting before a Council meeting where Councillors vote on various issues related or unrelated sets the tone that at all times rate payers are not just addresses or postcodes but real visible people in their communities and no second meeting on another night keeps that front and centre on actual voting night in my opinion.</p>
31	<p>I feel this is a loss of democracy . The proposed changes to public address and public forum are detrimental to the community, The new Model Code which allows councils to determine whether or not to hold a public forum is a serious backward step for democratic free speech. This new Model code could be used to avoid hearing inconvenient views and speeches . Council should not be cocooned in an echo chamber. Additionally the new code that if Council decides to hold a forum, mandatory provisions in the Model Code will require the forum to be held before the Council meeting (not during),</p>

	this is also regressive as it removes the residents ability to have more direct effect on councillors on the night of the decision making,
32	Members of the public should be able to attend and hear about all council business and also be allowed to speak without having to comply with a convoluted process to obtain prior approval
33	We should be allowed to attend council meeting and speak on matters that are important to us. These changes take that away
34	Blocking freedom of speech is contrary to National and International human rights. https://www.ag.gov.au/rights-and-protections/human-rights-and-anti-discrimination/human-rights-scrutiny/public-sector-guidance-sheets/right-freedom-opinion-and-expression
35	It's enough that they don't listen but intolerable that we won't even be heard
36	It is essential that the public can attend council meetings. It is a part of our democratic rights, and it is the councils obligation to keep their work open for review - in particular in light of recent declining support and trust and the need for the council to restore it. The solution to inefficient meetings is not to lock out the public - which is the one and only customer and target audience of the councils work. The solution is proper conduct and respectful behaviour from all parties. Listening to recent meetings, it is clear that the public is not the issue here, it is the internal bickering between councillors. The chair of the meeting needs to lead, and lead by example.
37	No more development NB is already overcrowded.. NB is already densely populated. Stop more development.
38	We live in a democracy supposedly, we have rights and the dictatorship you are creating is totally against free speech and our rights to demonstrate. Council has a poor reputation for just about everything and you really need to start listening to the people, and really listen to those of us who actually have some commonsense.
39	"The new Model Code allows councils to determine whether or not to hold a public forum. This is an optional provision". Could you clarify this? Does this mean the council can decide to have a forum on whatever topic NOT in a public forum if it so decides? What are the conditions to decide not to hold a forum publicly and who gets to decide? With regards to our current federal government direction and increasing secrecy on matters that affect the general public, especially as our elected officials, I don't agree with this at all.
40	I am all for council meetings being efficient, balanced by giving people to live in the community an opportunity to be heard on issues that are on the agenda. How does putting on a meeting before the meeting for community members to be heard make it more efficient? Perhaps vet the community people who wish to speak more carefully to ensure their speech is on a specific topic on the agenda and ask them to put their key points in their submission and only allow up to 5 members of the public to speak.
41	I dont think council should be making decisions based on what a few people in the public forum say. Council represents the whole of the northern beaches, not just the tiny percentage who go to the public forum. Having the forum as part of the meeting puts pressure on councillors to make a decision on what they have been told in public forum, which is just one persons version or opinion. There's no chance for the comments to be fact checked. Having it a week before the meeting allows councillors to hear the speakers point, but then additional time to research what they've heard before a decision has to be made. Also, having speakers in the viewing area appears to encourage a lot of grandstanding from a particular councillor.

ATTACHMENT 2 : DECEMBER COUNCIL MEETING - ITEM 9.2 OUTCOME OF PUBLIC EXHIBITION - DRAFT CODE OF MEETING PRACTICE - ITEM 14.1 - NORTHERN BEACHES COUNCIL MEETING - 17 MARCH 2026

ATTACHMENT 2 : COMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT - ITEM 9.2 - NORTHERN BEACHES COUNCIL MEETING - 16 DECEMBER 2025

42	The proposed CONDUCTING THE PUBLIC FORUM is effectively stopping the community from having a fair say on topics by limiting the number of people that are allowed to speak and holding the forum without councillors needing to be at the forum to hear the community views.
43	This is nothing other than a blatant attempt by an incompetent council to preclude ratepayers from having their say on matters that affect them . Councillors should be ashamed to allow these changes to pass. This is not good government as it merely masks incompetence by not permitting the ratepayers to have their say simply on a whim of Council. This is not transparency, this is bad governance.
44	Ratepayers and all communities should be allowed to voice opinions etc to councillors and have a say on matters. We have seen that if you would just leave all decisions to our councillors the local area would deteriorate beyo beyond repair
45	Once again this council is attempting to completely silence residents by removing the Public Forum. What's more what you have stated this means is inaccurate and does not put forward accurately what the state government has stated the changes are; is this matter really just another subject to apply 'spin' to - is that really appropriate - free speech being turned into spin to suit your won agenda? The state government has said it is " Encouraging councils to hold public forums preferably before committee meetings," - this council is stating that they said; "public forums may not be held as part of the council meeting for hearing submissions on items of business on the agenda for the meeting" and yet that does not appear ONCE in any of the documents the state government as made available to everyone. Are you lying on purpose or is that 'permissible spin' under this council? What else has become 'permissible spin'? We've been hearing it since May 2016 by now - and it's getting worse. 'Out of sight, out of mind' seems to be this council's approach Conditions listed in the form a Public Forum would take place under such as 'A public forum should not be used to raise questions or complaints.' will not silence dissent or the hide the many failures of this council, and reads of authoritarism and trying to bully residents; which seems to be an ever increasing experinece - but then this is the 3rd time this council has tried to silence or remove the public forum. A big NO from us. Another FAIL on accuracy - another fail on working for residents - smacks of Warringah council culture and policy; yuck.
46	The public pay the salaries of public 'servants'. The Public have a right to present to their 'servants'. The 'servants' are responsible to the Public. The 'servants' need to hear and respond to the Publics' demands
47	It is imperative that Ratepayers and residents of the Northern Beaches are allowed to attend the one and only monthly meeting to present, make suggestions and request reply on any issues that affect the community from the Council that we OWE. We pay the rates and you REPORT TO US, we make the rules - certainly not you or the bureaucrats who think that they are a law unto themselves Council should be transparent, listen to their constituents and represent us in the manner that we see fit ... I do not agree with the proposed 2025 Model Meeting Code and demand that ALL counsellors vote NO on the proposed draft code. If you approve this proposal it will be duly noted at the next election cycle
48	Most of the counselors are already completely out of touch with the public and seen to forget they are public servants working on behalf of the rate payers. Further separating the public from the decision making would he to make this disconnect so much worse. It's a shame there are only a small handful of counselors like De Luca that truly care about the public. Instead we have idiots like hijack spending public money on foolish ventures to Newcastle. There is little oversight and accountability. Do not make it worse but then I suspect that these counselors do wish for less accountability.
49	We attend NB Council meetings every month and feel it is so important for the community to have a voice and for the councillors and CEO and Mayor to listen to us on the same night. By your own admission, it is not mandatory for councillors to attend the public form if it was on another night and I feel they will not be willing to attend two meetings. Already

	<p>there is over 50 percent of pollsters who voted to keep the public form before the regular meeting each Month. As per the way it is. Perhaps if there wasn't so much procedural formality and council etiquette the real issues could be addressed effectively. Last meeting there were so many points of order and interruptions that the speaker lost time. It's a surprise that Mr Hoenig could devise such a plan. A hard stop at 11pm is better than attending a seperate meeting. Have discipline and structure and don't argue all points and you might be more efficient. Also control content constituents submissions to new content. We've heard about, rates, rubbish, roads and dog park submissions many times. Be selective, keep relevant and on point. Structure! It was like a school yard squabble last meeting.!</p>
50	<p>The intention of the Minister's draft is to separate Councillors/staff members from meetings in which community members are involved/concerned with regard to whatever motion is to be tabled. This is Socialism at play, not Democracy. Local Councils are all about SERVING the community and spending rate payer's money wisely. Currently, rate payers who wish to address Councillors gathered for a meeting, are able to speak on matters so that their three minute address remains fresh in the minds of Councillors before a vote takes place. For rate payers to be forced to speak one week prior to the meeting in which Councillors will vote, loses the importance of being heard, avoids transparency/accountability and makes a mockery of fair governance and due diligence. The draft gives the Mayor far too much power to dismiss from meetings those who might oppose his/her views. It's currently the Mayor's function to ensure Council meetings follow the Code of meeting Practice and from attending many previous Council meetings, the Mayor does not know or strictly follow such Practice. Rate payers and other community members, including small business owners, must be heard in a timely manner, not weeks before certain Motions are to be debated/ruled upon. The whole of this 'draft' needs to be dismissed as being far too autocratic for it's intended purpose.</p>
51	<p>Loss of community interaction with their elected councilors.</p>
52	<p>We are in a democracy.</p>
53	<p>I appreciate the chance to comment on the draft Code. My feedback concerns public participation — specifically the proposed removal of public address within Council meetings and the operation of public forums.</p> <p>1. Retain Public Address in Meetings</p> <p>I do not support removing the opportunity for residents to speak during the formal Council meeting. Public address is a vital accountability mechanism. It ensures Councillors hear community views directly before voting, those comments become part of the webcast and record, and residents see their concerns acknowledged in real time.</p> <p>The Model Code does not require councils to abolish in-meeting public address — it only provides an optional framework for public forums. Retaining a short, well-managed public address segment (for example, two speakers for and against each listed item, three minutes each) would preserve transparency without unduly extending meeting times.</p> <p>2. Councillor Attendance at Public Forums</p> <p>I support allowing the public forum to be held on another night or in another format if that encourages more participation.</p> <p>However, if the forum is separated from the ordinary meeting, Councillors should be required to make reasonable efforts to attend in person. Clause 5.1 of the draft code already requires reasonable attendance at Council and committee meetings; extending this expectation to public forums would ensure elected representatives remain directly engaged with community views that inform the decisions they later make in the chamber.</p> <p>3. Summary of Requested Changes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Re-introduce or retain a "Public Address" section within the formal meeting agenda. 2. Add a clause requiring Councillors to make reasonable efforts to attend public forums held on different nights. 3. Continue livestreaming both sessions so that community contributions are recorded and visible.

	Public participation underpins trust in local government. These adjustments would balance efficiency with accountability and demonstrate Northern Beaches Council's commitment to genuine, accessible community engagement.
54	Because Councillors are to represent the community and the community deserve a voice as its rate payer funded.
55	The council is there for for the community. The closed nature of this feels like a dictatorship not a democracy.
56	'Conflict of interest' should be defined (for the info of both Councillors and the public). What a shame a 'Code' is thought to be necessary.
57	Because your spending rate payers money, and rate payers should be entitled to voice their opinions Wether council.like it or not. It's called democracy
58	Silence the public is outrageous
59	I like having the public forum on a different night. I like not having political banners or symbols. I don't like that briefings are being stopped, how do councillors have the information they need to make considered decisions? I don't like that public address is being removed
60	<p>I do not support moving the public forum to seven days before the Council meeting. The NSW Government's Model Code does not require this change - it simply says councils may hold a forum "prior to meetings". That includes the same day.</p> <p>The current same-day forum works because councillors hear the community directly before they vote, in full public view. Shifting it earlier risks councillors not attending, leaving residents to speak to an empty room. The benefit of "more reflection time" is meaningless if they're not there to listen.</p> <p>I've also witnessed poor standards during public addresses – councillors talking among themselves, backs to speakers, or scrolling on phones. This behaviour disrespects residents and breaches the Code's principles of order and respect. The Code should clearly require all councillors to face the speaker, no side conversations, and stay off devices unless needed for the meeting. Respect goes both ways. The public are told to behave - councillors are not likewise admonished.</p> <p>Finally, I strongly oppose limiting speakers to agenda items only. Community members must be able to speak on any topic of local relevance – including ongoing projects, new issues or emerging concerns. Not every matter fits neatly into a business paper, and removing this right undermines transparency and early community input.</p> <p>If you want to limit time spent in the meeting, make sure what's on the agenda is relevant, instead of cutting the public's voice.</p> <p>Please:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Keep the public forum on the same day; 2. Require councillor attendance and respectful conduct; 3. Allow residents to speak on any community topic. <p>That's how genuine accountability and trust are built.</p>
61	It's a joke, why split them apart? Enable more costs and allow issues fo be seperate. Can we start thinking about the people the council is meant to serve rather than some councillors and beaurocrats and their own agenda.
62	It's important that council meetings are able to operate efficiently and effectively. While community input is crucial, this shouldn't be able to be used to hijack council meetings and stop the council from doing its work. We all want council's to operate efficiently and for the benefit of everyone in the community - not just a vocal minority.
63	This draft is just another blatant attempt to dismiss community concerns by totally expelling them, or brutally restricted them from addressing Councillors at meetings regarding issues that are part of that meeting's agenda. The Code of Meeting Practice is not compulsory reading/learning matter for the rate payers, it is structured for all Councillors, including the Mayor and CEO, with most of those individuals not

	understanding it or not adhering to it anyway. The proposed changes will do nothing to enhance the relationship between Council and those who foot the bill for Council's money wasting practices/projects, the rate payers. This amounts to autocracy, not democracy.
64	Need to keep an open and transparent meeting process
65	The rules are too complicated and should be simplified. Too much time and ratepayer money is being wasted on uneneccessary complexity
66	I think it is sensible to have all councils across NSW following agreed guidelines when holding meetings.
67	Another great use of our tax money...
68	the points brought up are very relevant
69	The changes to public forums don't seem sensible.
70	Having public forum 1 week before the meeting gives Councillors the ability to properly consider resident responses.
71	Seems sensible.
72	(1) The cowardly behaviour of this council has now been further reinforced by the decision to stop members of the public from directly addressing councillors. Seems this council REALLY dos not like being held accountable. I am also still waiting to hear from Ethan about his use of ratepayers' money to fund his education. You will have no place to hide at the next election. Thank you once again to Vincent, who continues to show his integrity in opposing this. (2) Thank you Jody for your response and for your commitment to be present at the public fora. I guess that is the point though- unlike the council meetings, there is no obligation for councillors to be present at the public fora and I would therefore ask all the councillors and the CEO to provide a similar commitment to attend these. Very hard to continue being a representative voice of the people when you distance yourselves from that voice.
73	Dear Mr Phillips and Mr Farrington, Being able to speak at a public forum on issues/decisions about to be addressed at council meetings is key for transparency and adequate public consultation. To abandon or curtail such public meetings is a travesty perpetrated against the community. It violates basic principles of fairness and justice. Speaking at Public Forums prior to council meetings is essential for our democracy and for good governance. Before decisions are taken at council meetings they need broad airing and public inputs since they impact directly on the community. The public needs to have its voices heard on all matters affecting them, whether directly or indirectly. Along with many others in our community, I urge you to nether interfere with nor curtail the longstanding, reasonable and prudent practice of allowing the public to speak at Public Forums prior to council meetings.

Personal identifying information, and content which is discriminatory, hateful or which may defame, offend, insult, humiliate or intimidate has been redacted. Spelling and grammatical errors have been amended only where misinterpretation or offence may be caused.

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ATTACHMENT 2 : DECEMBER COUNCIL MEETING - ITEM 9.2 OUTCOME OF PUBLIC EXHIBITION - DRAFT CODE OF MEETING PRACTICE - ITEM 14.1 - NORTHERN BEACHES COUNCIL MEETING - 17 MARCH 2026

ATTACHMENT 2 : COMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT - ITEM 9.2 - NORTHERN BEACHES COUNCIL MEETING - 16 DECEMBER 2025

Related Projects	Code of Meeting Practice 2025 review
Notes	Community and stakeholder views contained in this report do not necessarily reflect the views of the Northern Beaches Council or indicate a commitment to a particular course of action.

ATTACHMENT 2 : DECEMBER COUNCIL MEETING - ITEM 9.2 OUTCOME OF PUBLIC EXHIBITION - DRAFT CODE OF MEETING PRACTICE - ITEM 14.1 - NORTHERN BEACHES COUNCIL MEETING - 17 MARCH 2026

ATTACHMENT 3 : EMAIL FROM OLG ON LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL MOTION - ITEM 9.2 - NORTHERN BEACHES COUNCIL MEETING - 16 DECEMBER 2025

Contact: Governance Team
Phone: 02 4428 4100
Mr Scott Phillips
General Manager
Northern Beaches Council
[REDACTED]

Dear Mr Phillips

I write regarding an update on the introduction of the Model Meeting Code for councils.

Earlier this week the Legislative Council debated a motion to disallow the Local Government (General) Amendment (Model Code of Meeting Practice) Regulation 2025 (the Amendment Regulation). This is the amending regulation that prescribed the updated 2025 Model Code of Meeting Practice for Local Councils in NSW (2025 Model Meeting Code).

While the motion was debated in the Legislative Council (25 November 2025), there wasn't a vote on whether the regulation should be disallowed. With the adjournment of Parliament for the year, we need to wait until Parliament resumes in February 2026 to see if there will be a vote.

Because Parliament didn't vote on the disallowance motion, the Amendment Regulation and the 2025 Model Meeting Code still have legal force and the new provisions will come into effect on 1 January 2026.

If the disallowance motion passes in February 2026, it will have the effect of repealing the Amendment Regulation and restoring the previous 2021 Model Meeting Code, as of the day the Amendment Regulation is disallowed.

In response to misunderstandings in the sector, including some raised during the debate, we are working through an updated FAQs on the 2025 Model Meeting Code, which will include supplementary guidance.

In the meantime, councils should continue working towards the adoption of a code of meeting practice based on the current 2025 Model Meeting Code. Councils must adopt a code of meeting practice that incorporates the mandatory provisions of the 2025 Model Meeting Code no later than 31 December 2025.

The 2025 Model Meeting Code and FAQs are available on the [Model Code of Meeting Practice for Local Councils in NSW – Office of Local Government NSW](#) webpage of OLG's website.

If you have further questions, please contact the Office of Local Government's Council Governance Team on [02 4428 4100](tel:0244284100) or by email at olg@olg.nsw.gov.au."

Regards

Brett Whitworth PSM

Deputy Secretary, Local Government

Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure

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