

# *REGULATORY & OPERATING ENVIRONMENT*

A BROADER LOOK AT THE CONTEXT IN WHICH WE OPERATE

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In the following pages we take a step back and provide an overview of the environment we operated in during the financial year. In setting our strategic direction for 2012-2013 and beyond we considered a range of social, cultural, political and economic factors. We also monitored these factors closely throughout the year to ensure our organisation remained well positioned to execute its strategic direction and deliver what we said we would to our community - on time, within budget and with the most effective and efficient use of our resources.

We believe this contextual information helps our community and stakeholders assess our performance and also provide some insight into the factors we need to consider in planning for our future. We needed to abide by certain regulatory obligations, but some of the issues unique to local government and Warringah require us to find sustainable solutions for the immediate and longer term.

Council has set eight strategic directions in our new Environmental Sustainability Strategy to inspire change and guide our progress in the long term. These directions have a foundation in what we see as the key focus areas for a more sustainable Warringah.

We distinguish between two types of strategic directions:

### COMMITMENTS

These targets relate to Council operations and are within our sphere of control:

- 40% reduction in Council's corporate carbon emissions by 2020 (using a 2000 baseline)
- Support a 40% minimum reduction of carbon emissions in Warringah by 2020 (2000 baseline)
- 50% increase in neighbourhood food production and distribution by 2020 (using 2010 baseline)
- 80% less food waste in the general waste stream by 2020 (using a 2000 baseline)

### ASPIRATIONS

These targets relate to areas where Council has only partial ability to influence outcomes and where partnerships with the community and other levels of government are critical to our success:

- Maintain and enhance local indigenous biodiversity in Warringah
- Maintain and enhance waterway function in Warringah
- Minimise the risk to life, property and the environment from natural hazards through partnerships with other levels of government and the community
- Protect the natural and cultural values of council-managed lands while ensuring that visitor access and use is sustainable

Environmental education is a key tool to help our community achieve these aspirations.

Adapting to climate change impacts is a challenge that goes hand in hand with reducing our greenhouse gas emissions. We are building capacity for adapting to climate change in a range of planning and operational contexts including flood studies, coastline hazard mapping, management plans and education.

## WHAT ARE SOCIAL JUSTICE PRINCIPLES?

To meet the diverse needs, wants and aspirations of our community we ensure social justice PRINCIPLES inform our planning. The NSW Government's social justice strategy identifies these PRINCIPLES as follows:

**EQUITY** - there should be fairness in decision making, prioritising and allocation of resources, particularly for those in need. Everyone should have a fair opportunity to participate in the future of the community. The planning process should take particular care to involve and protect the interests of people in vulnerable circumstances.

**ACCESS** - all people should have fair access to services, resources and opportunities to improve their quality of life.

**PARTICIPATION** - everyone should have the maximum opportunity to genuinely participate in decisions which affect their lives.

**RIGHTS** - equal rights should be established and promoted, with opportunities provided for people from diverse linguistic, cultural and religious backgrounds to participate in community life.

## WARRINGAH COUNCIL SOCIAL PLAN

To help us understand and plan for the diverse needs, wants and aspirations of our community we produced a Social Plan in 2010. The Social Plan provides valuable demographic information and analyses key issues relevant to the following target groups:

- Children and families
- Women and men
- Young people
- Older people
- People with disabilities, including those with chronic illness
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds

General subject areas relevant to Warringah are also analysed, including:

- Community connectedness and community capacity building
- Community and safety
- Health and wellbeing
- Transport
- Community information provision
- Housing
- Recreation and cultural provision and development

Our Social Plan provides a wealth of information which can help inform future decision making. It defines 'how' we propose to improve social outcomes for Warringah and therefore helps guide 'what' we are going to do in the future. It also forms part of our broader integrated and holistic approach to planning and reporting, helping us to negotiate often complex interdependencies for the benefit of our community. Take a look at the Social Plan on our website for a comprehensive account of local community needs and the kinds of strategies we have in mind to address these.



# State and Regional Directions

As a Local Government organisation, we operate within a much broader social, cultural, political and economic environment. We need to negotiate a range of factors to successfully plan for our future. On the following pages we discuss our regulatory and operating environment and some of the issues unique to local government or Warringah.

## PLANNING COLLABORATIVELY FOR THE FUTURE

When it comes to planning we need to be mindful of the broader context and impact. Our planning is subject to regional, state and national priorities and we have to plan accordingly, taking into account this framework and our community's needs.

## STATE PLAN - NSW 2021

The new State Government was elected in March 2011 and released its State Plan "NSW 2021" in September 2011. It defines the overarching goals that will shape State policy over a ten-year period, driving the actions of government agencies in areas such as health, education, transport and economic development.

Priorities in NSW 2021 include improving the economy and cost of living; jobs and skill development;

investing in critical infrastructure; and improving local environments, community life and transport. The government has been working with local councils, Regional Organisations of Councils (ROCs) and communities to develop local and regional action plans to deliver priority needs for each area. The final regional action plans were released in early 2013 and focus on meeting healthcare needs; improving transport connections from and across the region; protecting the ecological and cultural values of the area; and improving housing availability.

## METROPOLITAN PLANNING

The new government will be changing a number of central aspects of the planning system. Provisions for state significant development (Part 3A) have been repealed and a review of the planning legislation is underway.

The Metropolitan Plan from the previous State Government has been reviewed and an updated plan was released in mid 2013. The plan details housing and employment growth targets for the north region (Hornsby, Ku-ring-gai, Manly, Pittwater and Warringah). In anticipation of a predicted growth in population for the region of 81,000 by 2031, State Government has set targets of 37,000 new dwellings and 39,000

new jobs to be created by 2031. While there are no details of the specific targets for Warringah, the plan does identify Dee Why/Brookvale as a major centre for the region with a target of an additional 3,000 jobs by 2031.

## REGIONAL DIRECTIONS

The Shore Regional Organisation of Councils (SHOROC) includes Warringah, Pittwater, Manly and Mosman. It undertakes collaborative planning and service delivery for the mutual benefit of the councils and their communities. We provide a contribution of \$138,000 per year to the resourcing of SHOROC. The benefits provided include some savings from joint tendering and contracting, as well as planning and advocacy to State and Federal Government for our region's needs. All four councils have developed and endorsed a SHOROC regional strategy "Shaping our Future", with directions and priorities on transport, roads, health services, housing and jobs. An accompanying sustainability plan addresses the natural environment, waste, energy, transport, development and climate change.

A number of initiatives have arisen from this, including working towards a common waste service by 2014. The strategy also assists in gaining State and Federal Government support for the region's needs, including feasibility studies on a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system for the northern beaches, input into other transport infrastructure planning and developing local and regional action plans with the new NSW Government.

## INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

The *'State Infrastructure Strategy 2012 – 2032'* is Infrastructure NSW's independent advice to State Government on priority infrastructure investment and reform. The strategy recommends the northern beaches bus corridor improvement plan incorporating Spit Bridge augmentation and priority lanes as a necessary program of works to be undertaken within five to 10 years. Linked to this is a recommendation to construct a tunnel from the Harbour Bridge to the Town Hall for a BRT.

## DESTINATION 2036 – LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM

Governments at all levels have recognised the increasing pressures on Local Government, and the need for some major shifts if the sector is to serve its communities well into the future. Under its *'Destination 2036'* Action Plan, the NSW Government has continued to consult, research and develop a range of reforms aimed at improving service delivery, governance, financial sustainability, structures and strengthening the state-local government partnership. Potential council groupings for our region were released in the *'Future Directions'* paper from the Independent Local Government Review Panel, which proposed combining the three northern beaches councils into one regional council, or alternatively under an additional County Council structure.

Council has been very active in the discussions, scoping options for our region and developing three comprehensive submissions. We have kept our community closely informed, with access to a range of documents on Your Say Warringah. During 2013-2014 the Minister for Local Government will consider final recommendations from its working groups on the reforms.

## KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

To help contextualise our regulatory and operating environment we have put together this table. It identifies key issues for our community and outlines the roles of the State Government alongside our own.

TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT	STATE	LOCAL
Strategic transport planning to accommodate projected housing and population growth on the peninsula (e.g. designated bus lanes).	✓	✓
Plan for and improve the efficiency of the state road network (e.g. Spit Bridge improvements).	✓	
Advocate for efficiency of the state road network.		✓
Provide grant funding for local roads.	✓	
Maintenance of state roads (e.g. Warringah Road, Mona Vale Road, Pittwater Road, Forest Way, Condamine Road) and planning to reduce congestion.	✓	
Maintenance of local roads and planning to reduce congestion.		✓
Provision and maintenance of traffic lights and road regulatory signage (e.g. Give Way, speed limits).	✓	
Construct traffic calming devices on regional and local roads (e.g. speed humps, pedestrian crossings etc) to reduce speed and improve safety for pedestrians and other road users as approved by the Traffic Committee.		✓
Road safety education.	✓	✓
Liaise with the Roads and Maritime Services, the police and other key agencies to improve road safety and the efficiency of the road network.		✓
Operate Sydney Buses and manage regional bus contracts (e.g. Forest Coach Lines).	✓	
Liaise with State Government and bus operators about service gaps in public transport.		✓
Provision and maintenance of infrastructure that supports the efficiency of the bus network i.e. provision of bus shelters and seats.		✓
Promote public transport as a way of reducing congestion and impact on the environment.	✓	✓
Enforcement of road rules (e.g. speeding, load limits).	✓	
Enforcement of load limits in local streets (e.g. 4 tonne load limit).		✓
Enforcement of on and off-street parking restrictions.		✓
Provision and maintenance of Council off street car parks.		✓

BIKE PATHS / CYCLE WAYS / FOOTPATHS	STATE	LOCAL
Provide grant funding for bike paths, cycle ways and footpaths.	✓	
Promote and plan for cycle ways, bike paths and footpaths as alternate modes of transport.	✓	✓
Plan for interconnected networks of cycle ways, bike paths and footpaths across Warringah and the region (i.e. Bike Plan and Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan).		✓
Maintain and build new cycle ways, bike paths and footpaths associated with state roads.	✓	
Maintain existing pavements and bike infrastructure.		✓
Build new sections of bike paths, footpaths, cycle ways and associated bike infrastructure.		✓

UTILITIES – ENERGY (ELECTRICITY AND GAS), WATER AND SEWERAGE	STATE	LOCAL
Plan and deliver new energy, water, and sewerage infrastructure to meet service gaps and/or increased loads from business, housing and population growth.	✓	
Plan for improvements to the storm water network in response to local flooding or development.		✓
Maintenance and renewal of the storm water network including sweeping of streets and clearing of pits and pipes.		✓
Operation of public corporations that provide energy, water, and sewerage.	✓	
Education programs and incentives to reduce consumption of energy and water.	✓	
Information and education programs for households to reduce energy and water consumption that complement the state’s program.		✓
Water and energy savings initiatives to reduce our overall usage i.e. installation of water tanks at the Aquatic Centre.		✓
Paying for street lighting and lighting in public places.		✓
Installation and maintenance of street lighting and lighting in public places.	✓	
Working with the energy provider to determine safety lighting needs in streets and public places.		✓
Lopping of street trees under power lines (i.e. trimming).	✓	
Removal and trimming of trees on public land.		✓



HEALTH SERVICES	STATE	LOCAL
Development of public health policy.	✓	
Provision and planning for state wide public health services and infrastructure (e.g. public hospitals, ambulance service, the new Northern Beaches Hospital).	✓	
Work with the community to identify gaps in health service / emerging health needs within Warringah and advocate for solutions on behalf of our community.		✓
Ensure land use plans provide appropriate locations for health services.		✓
Health promotion and education.	✓	
Provide an information and referral service on health issues to target groups in the community (e.g. youth and aged).		✓

LAW ENFORCEMENT	STATE	LOCAL
Provision and management of NSW Police Force (primary law enforcement agency in NSW) to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• prevent, detect and investigate crime</li> <li>• monitor and promote road safety</li> <li>• maintain social order (e.g. dealing with noisy parties and drunk and disorderly conduct)</li> <li>• perform and coordinate emergency and rescue operations</li> </ul>	✓	
Provision of Council Rangers, Building Surveyors, Environmental Health Officers and Development Control Officers who enforce compliance and issue infringement notices relating to: illegal parking (on and off street parking); abandoned vehicles on public streets; dog attacks; illegal building work; unauthorised land uses; environmental; public health and safety breaches.		✓
Issuing and revoking licences for restaurants, clubs and pubs to serve alcohol, including conditions of operation.	✓	
Working with relevant agencies to develop and implement crime prevention initiatives.		✓

RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT	STATE	LOCAL
Development of state, regional and sub-regional planning strategies.	✓	
Provide growth targets for residential and commercial developments (e.g. Metropolitan Strategy).	✓	
Establish State Environmental Planning Policies (SEPP) to address significant issues of the state and for the people of NSW. SEPPs override council local environmental plans.	✓	
Approve development applications that are significant to the state of NSW and its residents.	✓	
Assess and determine development applications in accordance with the Local Environmental Plan, Development Control Plan and SEPPs.		✓
Hear appeals against Council decisions on development applications (Land and Environment Court).	✓	
Provide a standard framework for councils to develop local land use plans (e.g. Local Environment Plan and Development Control Plan).	✓	
Approve local land use plans (e.g. Warringah Local Environmental Plan).	✓	
Develop local land use plans for Warringah (e.g. Local Environmental Plan and Development Control Plan) that define the activities (e.g. residential, commercial uses) and the structures that can be built on the land. The Local Environmental Plan needs to accommodate growth targets for business, housing and population growth set by the State Government.		✓
Adopt Development Control Plans.		✓
Accredit private certifiers to oversee compliance with development conditions and construction certificates (Building Professionals Board). Investigate non compliance with approvals that they have been appointed to oversee.	✓	
Ensure compliance with development consent conditions when Council is appointed the principal certifying authority. Where a private certifier is appointed principal certifying authority, Council reports any breaches of approval to the Building Professionals Board – State Government.		✓

ENVIRONMENT	STATE	LOCAL
Natural resource management policies, plans and education (e.g. biodiversity, climate change, adaptation and mitigation, coastal zone, floodplains, waterways, water cycle and heritage).	✓	✓
Protecting native animals and plants, including threatened species, tree preservation orders and development conditions of consent.	✓	✓
Managing national parks, aquatic reserves, intertidal protected zones and crown land.	✓	*
Managing local reserves and lagoons (e.g. water quality, biodiversity, bush regeneration, weeds and pests, fire, recreation and access).		✓
Pollution (water, air, noise and land) by a licensed industry and premises, vehicles, dangerous goods, boats and ships, algal blooms and fish kills.	✓	
Pollution (water, air, noise and land) on all unlicensed premises including residences, small business and development sites.		✓
Drinking water quality and supply and sewer overflows.	✓	
Waste collection, recycling and cleaning of streets and facilities.		✓
Waste – illegal dumping.	✓	✓

\* Long Reef Aquatic Reserve is jointly managed with the National Parks and Wildlife Service, to protect wildlife from dogs, illegal harvesting of fish and shellfish and other activities.

**WHAT AND WHY?**

In April 2013, some 600 Warringah residents participated in the community survey to measure overall satisfaction and importance of services. This information provides valuable insights into the needs and priorities of our residents, and is a good basis for further engagement, consultation and research. It informs our strategic planning, quality improvement processes and ultimately the delivery of services.

**MAJOR ISSUES OF CONCERN**

	2013
Traffic management	21%
Roads	11%
Public Transport	7%
Development	6%
Housing	6%
Overpopulation	4%
	2012
Traffic management	12%
Transport	12%
Development issues	11%
Housing	6%
Population growth	6%
Roads	6%

**OVERALL SATISFACTION**

Overall satisfaction with Council has significantly increased from a low of 57% in 2010 to 78% in 2013. For the most part we consolidated gains in 2013 although there was a slight overall decrease in satisfaction from 2012.

The top three factors that contribute to overall satisfaction with Council, from the highest to lowest, are community engagement, environmental services and planning and development.

SURVEY	% SATISFIED (score greater than 6 out of 10)
2007	69%
2008	67%
2009	69%
2010	57%
2011	67%
2012	79%
2013	78%

The number of satisfied residents, that scored Council more that 6 out of 10, is 78% of respondents.

## SURVEY MEAN SCORE 2013

SURVEY	MEAN SCORE
Warringah	6.5
NSW benchmark mean	5.8
NSW best	7.0
NSW worst	3.5
Warringah 2012	6.6
Warringah 2011	6.0

Warringah's mean score for overall satisfaction of 6.5 out of 10 is above the NSW average satisfaction score of 5.8.

## INDIVIDUAL COUNCIL SERVICES AND FACILITIES

The survey covered 45 Council services and facilities. The majority maintained high satisfaction levels of 2012 with nine showing a significant decrease. Satisfaction with a number of essential services exceeded the NSW benchmark including satisfaction with maintaining local roads, facilities and services for people with disabilities, facilities and services for youth, provision of car parking, environmental protection and enforcement, parks and recreation areas and household waste collection.

In-depth analysis revealed a number of priorities for improvement. Traffic management remains the highest ranked item while managing residential development has moved from second in 2012 to seventh.

1. Traffic management
2. Council responsiveness to community needs
3. Maintaining major roads
4. Consultation with the community by Council
5. Development approvals process
6. Maintaining local roads
7. Managing residential development

## STAFF AND COUNCILLOR PERFORMANCE

Satisfaction with staff remains high with 75% of residents who had contact with Council staff satisfied with their performance. However, satisfaction with the performance of the Mayor and Councillors was moderate coming in at 53%. This is down from 59% in 2012, but well above 29% and 44% respectively achieved in 2010 and 2011.

## COMMUNITY CONNECTEDNESS

Our residents continue to feel they live in a safe community with increases in most measures of neighbourhood perceptions and Warringah as a place to live. Some 95% feel safe in their own homes and there was a significant increase in the number of people who feel safe walking around their neighbourhood, from 86% in 2012 to 90% in 2013.

Warringah continues to have a strong sense of community connectedness, 85% felt that they belonged to the community they lived in, 90% felt their community was a friendly place to live and 89% felt they could call on a neighbour or local relative if they needed assistance.

Our residents also have a strong sense of local identity, with 89% of survey respondents agreeing that people in Warringah are proud of where they live.

## FUTURE OUTLOOK

The results of the survey will inform Council's activities and projects into the future. The results also indicate a number of areas that could potentially be the focus of business improvement approaches. They will continue to guide Council in its decision making and future long term planning.